

 *Mass Intentions*

Sat., September 23 **Saint Pius of Pietrelcina**
4 pm ... ☩ Robert "Bob" Breault by Dennis & Eileen Smith

Sun., September 24 **XXV in Ordinary Time**
7:30 am ... ☩ Clayton Raymond by Connie Raymond
9:30 am ... ❖ Christopher & Hannah Brent by Ann-Maria Contarino
5 pm ... ❖ Our Parish Family

Mon. September 25
12 pm ... ☩ Jacquelline M. Bland by Margaret-Ann Moran

Tue., September 26 **Saints Cosmas & Damian**
12 pm ... ☩ Julie Caron Duquette by Denny & Eileen Smith

Wed., September 27 **Saint Vincent de Paul**
12 pm ... ☩ Bernice Huot (10th Anniv.) by Jane Daly

Thur., September 28 **Sts Wenceslaus & Lawrence Ruiz**
8:30 am ... ☩ Craig Bamberger (1st Anniv.) by St Raphael Parish

Fri., September 29 **Saints Michael, Gabriel, Raphael**
6 pm ... ☩ Mary C. Powers by P. Jerome

Sat., September 30 **Saint Jerome**
4 pm ... ☩ Peggy Moran by Margaret-Ann Moran

Sun., October 1 **XXVI in Ordinary Time**
7:30 am ... ☩ Anne & ☩ David Foley by Connie Raymond
9:30 am ... ☩ Edward Heroux by Bridget Heroux
5 pm ... ☩ Sylvia M. Hobbs by Cynthia Hobbs

Weekly Collection

Weekend of September 17, 2017

Regular Offertory	\$2,849.00
Make-Up Offertory	147.00
Loose Offertory	882.35
Online Offertory	440.00
Total Offertory	\$4,318.35
Stewardship Make Up	\$ 206.00

Food Pantry	\$ 25.00
Poor Boxes	\$ 447.00

Hurricane Relief	\$3,775.75
Last Year: Wknd of Sep. 16, 2016	
Total Offertory	\$4,895.00

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mon., September 25
6:30 pm ... Youth Ministry
7 pm ... Food Pantry

Tue., September 26
12:45 pm ... Parish Nurse

Thur., September 28
7 pm ... Book Group Discussion / Dinner

 **Goal: \$27,500**
Raised: \$16,375
Balance: \$11,125

We are close to reaching our goal! Please consider helping extend Christ's compassion!

Voluntary Special Collection: Hurricanes Harvey and Irma Thank you to all who generously donated towards the emergency relief collection last weekend for the hurricane victims. We collected a total of \$3,775.75.

 **Food Pantry**

Saint Raphael Food Pantry On Monday, September 18, the Food Pantry served 26 families and gave out 52 bags of food. We could use canned soup and canned baked beans. Thank you!

 **Sanctuary candle** The sanctuary candle burns this week for ☩ Clara & ☩ Walter Pictrowski by Diane Pictrowski

READINGS FOR THE WEEK of September 24, 2017

Monday: Ezr 1:1-6; Ps 126:1b-6; Lk 8:16-18
Tuesday: Ezr 6:7-8, 12b, 14-20; Ps 122:1-5; Lk 8:19-21
Wednesday: Ezr 9:5-9; Tb:13:2, 3-4abefghn, 7-8; Lk 9:1-6
Thursday: Hg 1:1-8; Ps 149:1b-6a, 9b; Lk 9:7-9
Friday: Dn 7:9-10, 13-14 or Rv 12:7-12a; Ps 138:1-5; Jn 1:47-51
Saturday: Zec 2:5-9, 14-15a; Jer 31:10-12ab, 13; Lk 9:43b-45
Sunday: Ez 18:25-28; Ps 25:4-9; Phil 2:1-11 [1-5]; Mt 21:28-32

 **Blessing of the Animals** In honor of the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Raphael Parish will celebrate this great saint's love "for all creatures great and small" Bring your family pets to the parish, where P. Jerome, O.S.B., pastor, will bless the animals during a short service **Wednesday, Oct. 4 at 6:30 pm** at the church entrance. Please have your animals on a leash or in a restrainer. Crocodiles OK but only with a muzzle and explicit permission!

SINCERE THANKS from P. Jerome, O.S.B., to those parishioners and friends of Saint Raphael who remembered his birthday earlier this September with cards, messages and gifts. "Please know that you and your loved ones are in my prayers! Your support, prayers and encouragement are deeply appreciated." P. Jerome, O.S.B.

 **Welcome to Oktoberfest at Saint Raphael Parish!** No need to put on your Lederhosen or Dirndl—come join us for an evening of good German food and conviviality with authentic oompah music! Oktoberfest at Saint Raphael will be **Saturday, Nov. 4, from 5-8 pm**. OK, maybe we should call it Novemberfest, but Oktoberfest is a state of mind, not just a calendar date. Want to bring a dessert? We'll be grateful! More info at www.st-raphael-parish.org. There are no tickets, but a suggested donation of \$8 per person/\$16 per family would be appreciated.

 **Got a question? Have an interest? Want to 'come home'?** We'd love to have you back! Our Saint Raphael programs for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) & Catholics Come Home plan a **Night of Inquiry!** Often, people in our lives seek a closer relationship with Jesus and we are unsure how or when to explain what we believe or why we believe what the Catholic Church teaches. On behalf of Father Jerome, O.S.B., and the staff, we invite you to attend **a Night of Inquiry at Saint Raphael on Tuesday, Oct. 17, at 7 PM** with someone you know who might be interested in learning more about our Catholic faith. This is an opportunity to help you to present information and answer questions that may seem difficult. The Lord makes it easy! Please contact Therese Dame, director of religious education, at 603.647.2283. or at therese.dame@saint-raphael-parish.com to register or if you have questions.

 **II**
Kevin Roller & Samantha Webb
BANNS MARRIAGE

 Save the date! Saint Raphael Parish Christmas Fair: **Saturday, Nov. 18, 9am—2pm**. Go to www.st-raphael-parish.org for details!

Michael, Gabriel and Raphael can teach us how to follow Christ

This weekend, we are anticipating our patronal feast. Although the **Solemnity of the Archangels** this coming Friday, we will celebrate our heavenly protector, Saint Raphael, this weekend. Along with **Saint Michael and Saint Gabriel**, **Saint Raphael** is one of the great archangels in the heavenly choir. These three heavenly messengers have **important roles to play in our salvation** – and it is helpful to review just exactly who they are and what they do that makes them so significant to us. **Their collective feast is on Sept. 29**, so we are bumping them up a little in the calendar so that the whole parish can enjoy their special liturgy.

As Catholics, we know that our salvation was won for us in the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus on the Cross. In his mercy, however, the Lord invites other creatures to **share in the process by which we respond to Christ's grace**. This means that members of the Church Triumphant in heaven, the Church suffering in purgatory and the Church Militant here on earth. By the very nature of their role as "messengers," "*angeloi*" in Greek, the archangels participate in two, sometimes three orders, of creation – heaven, purgatory and earth.

Tradition tells us that there are **seven archangels who stand before the throne of God** ready to do his bidding. Only three appear in the Bible, however. The others, whose names often change from tradition to tradition, are **Phanuel, Selaphiel (Salathiel), Jegudiel (Jehudiel) and Barachiel**. Some sources even recognize an eighth, **Jerahmeel (Jeremiel)**.

Saint Michael, the most famous, is prince of the heavenly host, the armies of God. He is in the **Book of Daniel in the Old Testament and the Letter of Jude and the Book of Revelation** in the New, and in each case, he commands the angelic forces loyal to God. Relying on biblical tradition, the English poet John Milton's 1667 account of the Fall of Man in his epic *Paradise Lost* includes a poignant section on all three of the Great Archangels.

I remember as a little guy in first and second grade, my mom and aunts made sure I was well supplied with *Treasure Chest*, a publication of the **Maryknoll Sisters**. One of its best stories, complete with captivating artwork, in *Treasure Chest* was the story of the rebellion of Lucifer, or Satan, whose pride would not allow him to acknowledge God as, well, God. Lucifer led myriads of angels away from the Lord through the misuse of their free will. The Archangel Michael stands as a shining example of the power God gives us to love him or reject him through **free will**, and, likewise, of **the beauty of fidelity and the consequences of sin**. Michael, whose name asks "who is like unto God?" is the patron of both Israel and of the New Israel, the Church.

From my perspective, **Saint Gabriel**, the most profound of the archangels, is **the world's greatest news reporter!** To Gabriel is assigned the awe-inspiring duty of bringing to Mary of Nazareth the news that she has been



chosen by the Eternal Father to be the mother of his only-begotten Son. Luke 1 lays out this scene of the Annunciation. In a lyrically mystical scene in **the 1949 novel *Mary*** by Jewish author Sholem Asch, Gabriel comes before Mary.

He, like all the archangels, has the function of a messenger. But Gabriel, like all the seven archangels, may in fact belong to one of the highest ranks of the angelic host, **the seraphim and the cherubim**. His name means "**the strength [or power] of God**." He stands in the full majesty of heaven before a mere Jewish girl of humble circumstances. True, she is a descendant of David, the great king of Israel, but there is nothing in her circumstances to suggest royalty – except **the nobility of her character and the purity of her heart**. She looks at the Archangel Gabriel first with puzzlement, then with growing understanding, and finally, with deepening faith in and love of God. Before her gaze, the archangel lowers his eyes, then bows before the woman who conceives at the instant she declares, "Be it done unto me according to thy word!" **The Word becomes incarnate** and begins to dwell, in her womb, among us.

Tradition tells us that Gabriel is the angel who gives **Joseph** the news about Mary's conception and dissolves his fears, the archangel who leads him toward Egypt to save the divine Child from King Herod, and the archangel who comes to **console Jesus himself in the Garden of Gethsemane**. Gabriel teaches us that our Catholic faith summons to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, the God-Man, who is crucified and risen, who breathes the Holy Spirit into his Mystical Body. In his Mystical Body, **we experience our personal relationship with the communion of relationship in the Church**.

Our own beloved archangel, Saint Raphael appears in the Old Testament Book of Tobit – and yet everything about him suggests what the New Testament tells us about following Jesus Christ. Raphael is assigned by God to **accompany the young Tobiah** to recover a family fortune and find a wife in the faraway land of Media. They journey across the desert, eventually arriving at their destination only to discover that **Sarah**, who is given to Tobiah in marriage, is possessed by a demon, **Asmodeus**, who has slain each of her previous seven husbands on their wedding night.

Raphael, who is disguised during much of the narrative, teaches Tobiah and Sarah how to pray and **set their love and their marriage within the context of God's greater love**. They offer their praise to God, and they rejoice in their wedding night and live to establish a happy marriage. They learn that **our vocation is the way we are meant to respond to divine grace**. Next, Raphael leads them back to Tobiah's father, Tobit, who is blind. To cure the

blindness, Tobiah must smear **the gall of a fish** on Tobit's eyes, and so he performs the ritual act, and, suddenly, Tobit can see. The Archangel Raphael, whose name means "**the healing of God**," reveals himself to Tobiah as one of the seven archangels who stand before the divine throne.

Traditional depictions of Raphael often show him **holding a fish and carrying a pilgrim's staff**. The staff speaks clearly to our Christian pilgrimage through life – a journey toward our eternal reunion with God in Christ. Ancient Christians used the fish as a symbol of Christ based on the acronym, **ICTHUS**, which, translated from Greek, means **Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior**. Raphael instructs us that life is a pilgrimage, a journey toward a destination – eternal life and happiness with the God who made, saves, sustains and heals us. This archangel shows us **the great irony of Christian life** – the God we seek is already with us! We journey to God not alone but together with Christ. **Raphael makes clear that Christ is the way we experience God's loving presence**, as John 9:37 puts it when Jesus heals and speaks to the man born blind, "You have seen him, and he is the one speaking with you now."

How blessed we are in this parish to have one of the three great archangels presented in Sacred Scripture as our own patron, the very one who most involves himself in human affairs. The whole Church, of course, is blessed by the biblical witness of all three, **the Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael**, each of whom shows us how God reveals himself to us and shares his gifts. © Rev. Jerome Joseph Day, O.S.B.