

Mass Intentions

Sun., October 8 XXVII in Ordinary Time

7:30 am ... ♦Our Parish Family
9:30 am ... †Gertrude Doherty, †Lucille M. Kelley, †Lucy Kelley
by the Kelley family
5 pm ... †Brian McGorry by Bridget Heroux

Mon. October 9 Saints Denis & John Leonardi

~OFFICE CLOSED~

9 am ... †Brian McGorry (1st Anniv.) by Ellen McGorry

Tue., October 10

12 pm ... †Dot, †Ray, †Roger LaRoche by Lil LaRoche

Wed., October 11 Saint John XXIII

12 pm ... †Donal Doyle by Michael & Michelle Browne

Thur., October 12

8:30 am ... †Dustin T. Blake by Lionel & Lillian Coulon

Fri., October 13

6 pm ... †Joseph Handy by Gregory Handy

Sat., October 14 Saint Callistus

4 pm ... †Jeannie Cauty Barrett by Jack & Colleen Byrne

Sun., October 15 XXVIII in Ordinary Time

7:30 am ... †Mary Marszal by Richard Bienvenue
9:30 am ... †Alberta Sullivan by Al & Barbara Heidenreich
5 pm ... †Colette Roy by Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Henault



Sanctuary candle The sanctuary candle burns this week for †**Christopher Margaritis** by Mikki Margaritis. The candle burned last week for †**James Harnden** by Stu & Denise Harnden.

Weekly Collection

Weekend of October 1, 2017

Regular Offertory \$3,450.00
Make-Up Offertory 331.00
Loose Offertory 429.65
Online Offertory 230.00
Total Offertory \$4,440.65

Stewardship Make Up \$ 15.00

Food Pantry \$ 95.00

Last Year: Wknd of Oct. 2, 2016

Total Offertory \$5,103.85



Saint Raphael Food Pantry

On Monday, September October 2, the Food Pantry served 26 families and gave out 54 bags of food. We

could use canned soup and canned baked beans. Thank you!



Book Discussion Group

Please join the parish book group as it continues its exploration of great American novels. We'll be reading Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1946. Then novel examines both the corruption and the beauty of the American political system through the character of charismatic, self-made Willie Stark, who climbs from obscurity to power, and then begins to self-destruct. We'll meet at 7 PM Thursday, Oct. 19, upstairs in the church conference room. Books are available at the rectory for \$11.



On Saturday, Oct. 14 at 10 a.m., Fr. Stephen Brian Lawson, O.S.B., will be ordained a priest at Saint Anselm Abbey by Bishop Peter A. Libasci of Manchester. All are welcome to attend. On Nov. 4 at the 4 p.m. Mass, he will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving for the Saint Raphael Parish community.



Saint Raphael Parish Christmas Fair: **Saturday, Nov. 18, 9 AM—2 p.m.** Have a craft you'd like to sell? Go to www.st-raphael-parish.org for details on the event and how to register to have a table!

Congratulations to Nashua Catholic Junior HS, which has been named a 2017 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. Saint Raphael parishioner **Glenda L. McFadden**, who serves as principal! Go Glenda! Go Wildcats! Best wishes to Jim and Glenda McMadden and the entire Nashua Catholic JHS community.

SAVE THE DATE! Our Annual Men's Evening of Reflection will take place **Thursday, Oct. 26 at 6 PM**. Watch for additional info in next week's bulletin.

Calling all high school youth! Check out the things we are doing in October!

Monday, Oct. 16, 6:30—8 PM: Discussion—Making Choices

Monday, Oct. 23, 6:30—8 PM: Jeopardy Game

Friday—Sunday, Oct. 27-29: Youth Retreat

Questions? Please call Lynne at 603.533.4574 or email jlphotiades@comcast.net

ENTER THE YOUTH CORNER

READINGS FOR THE WEEK of October 8, 2017

Monday: Jon 1:1 — 2:2, 11; Jon 2:3-5, 8; Lk 10:25-37
Tuesday: Jon 3:1-10; Ps 130:1b-4ab, 7-8; Lk 10:38-42
Wednesday: Jon 4:1-11; Ps 86:3-6, 9-10; Lk 11:1-4
Thursday: Mal 3:13-20b; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Lk 11:5-13
Friday: J1 1:13-15; 2:1-2; Ps 9:2-3, 6, 16, 8-9; Lk 11:15-26
Saturday: J1 4:12-21; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Lk 11:27-28
Sunday: Is 25:6-10a; Ps 23:1-6; Phil 4:12-14, 19-20; Mt 22:1-14 (1-10)



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 p.m.** 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. We will also be celebrating Fr. Stephen Lawson's first Mass of Thanksgiving at the 4 PM Mass prior to the event.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mon., October 9

7 pm ... Food Pantry
7:30 pm ... Finance Council meeting

Tue., October 10

12:45 pm ... Parish Nurse
6:30 pm ... *Mary of Nazareth* film

Wed., October 11

7 pm ... Knit & Crochet



Goal: \$27,500
Raised: \$16,575
Balance: \$10,925

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



We close the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Apparition of Our Lady at Fatima ... We will watch the

second part of the movie

Mary of Nazareth, on Tuesday, Oct. 10 at 6:30 PM in the parish hall.

Saint Francis meets a wolf and teaches us how to treat our world

They were all gathered on the front steps of the church. They were making quite the racket. They had attracted the attention of a number of neighborhood children, some from cultures rather different from what we traditionally understand as life on **the West Side**. They were waiting – and they were anxious. On some level, they knew what they wanted, and they wanted what they'd come for on this day.

"They" were the dogs and cats of Saint Raphael, assembled with their owners on their blessing day, this past Wednesday, **Oct. 4, the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi**. The feast is a time when the Church throughout the world remembers *il Poverello*, "little poor man" whose love for Christ Crucified and Risen would **transform medieval Catholicism and continue to shape the Mystical Body** into the 21st Century.

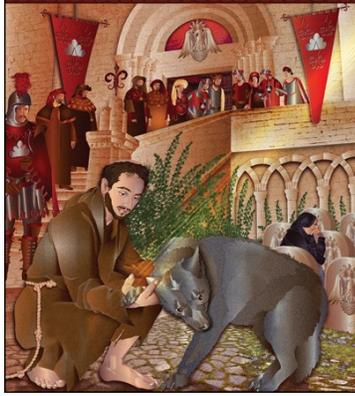
Having lived only 34 years, from 1182 to 1226, **Francesco Bernadone**, son of an Umbrian cloth merchant and his French wife, the man the world came to know as Bro. Francis exerted an impact only the Holy Spirit could have fanned into a fire of ardent love. Leaving his raucous and dissolute military life after having been wounded and imprisoned, Francis was looking for something more. He found it one day when he was out in the fields and rested at an abandoned chapel.

The chapel, known as **San Damiano**, still had a crucifix on the wall. In a vision, Francis heard the Crucified Jesus summon him to "**rebuild my Church**." Francis took the summons literally, and began a project to repair the tumble-down chapel. Eventually, however, he came to understand that he was being called to rebuild the whole Church bit by bit through the transformation of lives imbued with his evangelical zeal for Christ and his Mystical Body.

Francis would welcome brothers to his movement. He would transform the life of **his beloved friend, Clare of Assisi**, who would join his band and open it to women, who would serve the poor from within the confines of their convents. Francis would go to the feet of the Holy Father, the pope, to win approval for the rule of life he set before his followers. He would have another vision of the Crucified One, and embrace the Lord Jesus. Francis would **encounter a leper** – and despite physical appearance, Francis embraced and assisted him.

The poor and the suffering were not the only creatures who attracted the interest and attention of Saint Francis. Frequently, **Francis was seen drawing animals to his side**. I suppose he himself is to blame for being assigned to garden bird baths for the ages! It seemed he could communicate with them, calm them and reassure them. His writings speak of **the unity between all living things in the wonders of God's creation**.

One of the loveliest stories of Francis concerns his encounter with **a ferocious wolf** living outside the town of **Gubbio** in Umbria, not far from Assisi. Wolves were much more prevalent in Europe in the Middle Ages, even as far south as Italy, and they could pose significant dan-



were terrified, and word came to Francis of their distress. Despite warnings to avoid Gubbio and under no circumstances encounter the wolf, Francis trudged to the village, then went out toward the wolf's lair.

Out of the cave came **a large snarling, snapping wolf**. Francis calmly blessed himself and the wolf, commanding the beast be silent and listen to his words. Amazingly, accounts say, the wolf calmed himself, listened and then approached Francis humbly. **The wolf even raised his paw into the saint's lap**.

From that day forward, Gubbio was never troubled by the wolf, except insofar as he was constantly underfoot, **going from house to house for a pat and a treat and greeting villagers in the streets and lanes**. Amazingly, when renovations in the 1870s on the church built centuries earlier to commemorate the miracle of Francis and the wolf, workmen found a tomb not far from the sanctuary. Not one for Francis, but for a remarkably large wolf buried there hundreds of years earlier!

Surely, something of **the spirit of Saint Francis descended upon us** this Wednesday evening at the porch of Saint Raphael. There, along with **Patriot**, the Irish cob representing the equine constituency, we had plenty of critters from the feline and canine divisions: Maine coon, mixed tabby, Great Dane, shepherds, mutts and three members of **a tiny Chinese mixed breed** whose owner made me smile when he quipped "they used to guard the emperor!" Each year, the population changes somewhat. We've had greyhounds, dachshunds, poodles, horses from the Manchester Police mounted patrol, turtles, cockatiels, lizards and so on. No snakes that I can recall.

gers. This particular wolf had been lunching on sheep and dining on cattle for some time, and then he developed a taste for **garnishing his meals with human flesh**. The villagers

They have a **bad reputation in Scripture** (see Genesis 3:1-7, 14), but properly housed, they would be welcome too. Even bad guys can repent!

The great thing about the short service of blessing is that it is a time to remind ourselves that God has made men and women **stewards of his creation**, not masters free to exploit, dominate and destroy at will. We share the Earth with myriads of other creatures. Our **greed and folly** has helped eliminate some species and pushed others to the very brink of extinction. Happily, in some cases, careful management has restored species. But the fundamental challenge is recognizing that **the biblical principle of the unity of creation under God and the scientific understanding of ecology** are, in fact, two sides of the same truth. Ecology teaches us that every living creature thrives or fails within a system of life-giving processes. When any one of those processes is altered significantly, the action can put any species, plant, animal or human, at grave risk. What we do and how we do it must be undertaken with care.

The environment we share with the animals is Mother Earth, a gift from our Eternal Father in Heaven. **Certainly, we have to live, and living will cause us to impact the world around us. But we must proceed with care, in ways that are both sensitive and sustainable**. Our surroundings – physical, botanical and biological – are not primarily about making money but about cherishing life, not about making us feel comfortable but about making us be responsible. Blessing the critters we share our lives with

at the door of the parish church each year is a small step in helping us remember **an essential truth of divine creation** – one Saint Francis of Assisi understood well, and one he invites us to contemplate and live out in the choices we make as individuals, as members of a family and community, and as citizens.



P. Jerome, O.S.B., pastor, and some of the participants at the Blessing of the Animals this year.

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Rev. Jerome Joseph Day, O.S.B.