

April 2019

Saint Raphael



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Divine Mercy Sunday

By Dianne Borowski

The origin of Divine Mercy Sunday can be traced back to the life of Helena Kowalska, the third of ten children born on a small farm in Glogowiec, Poland, on August 25, 1905. Helena was a quiet child with limited educational opportunities. At the age of fifteen she began work as a nanny to help support her poor family. Throughout her life, Helena reported having visions of Jesus and conversations with him. It was a vision of the suffering Jesus in 1924 that led her to enter the convent of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy.

Upon receiving her habit in 1925, she took the name of Sister Maria Faustina of the Blessed Sacrament. During her time at the convent, she received several visits from Jesus and began to record them in her diary. In 1931, Jesus appeared to her wearing a white garment with red and pale rays emanating from his heart and told her:

“Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: ‘Jesus, I trust in You’. I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and then throughout the world.

I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish.”

Sister Faustina died of tuberculosis in 1938 at the age of thirty three. On April 30, 2000, she was canonized by Pope John Paul II, making her the first saint of the new Millennium. Five days after her canon-

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We Are An Easter People!

- A Letter from our Pastor

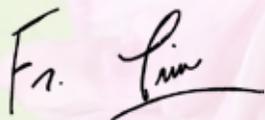
Easter is quickly drawing upon us; and we, as a faith community, look to celebrate God's saving activity in the gift of the Resurrection. How deeply we long and yearn for our God who loves us unconditionally. Jesus is risen, just as He foretold! This new and everlasting covenant has been established by the blood of His cross and remains with us forevermore! What a blessing, what a gift! May we continue to be drawn deeply into the mysteries of our faith and the miracle of Easter this year.

During these final days of Lent, be sure to take the opportunity to spend some quality time with Our Lord. Let us openly walk with Jesus through Holy Week and fully embrace the passion, death, and

resurrection of Jesus through the ceremonies that are made available to us. The mystery of Passion Sunday with the palms reminds us of the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, the city where He gave His life for us; Holy Thursday recalls the institution of the Eucharist (the source and summit of our faith) and the gift of priesthood (the source of service in Jesus); Good Friday asks us to follow the path of Jesus' suffering and death on the cross and embrace the redemptive value that the cross holds out to us; and Easter is the culmination of these days of grace and strength.

Please join us during Holy Week, Easter and well beyond. How important it is to gather as a faith community to remember and celebrate what God has done for us. All are welcomed and encouraged.

The Pastoral Staff here at St. Raphael extends a heartfelt "thank you" to all of our parishioners. Your dedication, support, and love for the Lord encourage us in our ministry. You are an Easter People! You live in the light and the love of the Lord and inspire us greatly! May we continue to work together in building God's Kingdom and extending Easter joy to all those we meet. May the grace of the Risen Christ be with you and your loved ones. God bless and keep you!



Rev. Timothy W. Gareau, Pastor



Rev. Eric Garris
Deacon Mark Cunningham
Deacon Larry Gregg
Deacon Frank Semancik
Deacon David Stavarz
Roger Andrachik
Susan Andregg
Keith Benya

Rachael Brusky
Tish Bush
Ellen Grady
Nick Gresko
Kelly Helbig
Andy Kereky
Colleen Maher
Maureen Mayer

Ann Miller
Candy Reese
Marilyn Senn
Sara Seybold
Bill Sheehan
Terri Telepak
Bill Toler
Kelley Tonegato

Catholics Coming Home *by Joy Horvath*

Wednesdays, May 1 through June 12, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room

*Come back to me with all your heart
Don't let fear keep us apart.*

*Long have I waited for
Your coming home to me
And living deeply our new lives.*

- Hosea, Gregory Norbet, OSB -

Most practicing Catholics can name at least one family member, friend, or acquaintance who has "fallen away" from the Catholic Church. One of the many ministries at St. Raphael Parish, Catholics Coming Home, stands ready to help heal wounds and welcome back those reaching out to reconnect with our faith. The program is a series of seven sessions including information about our Catholic faith, plus extensive question and answer opportunities. This evening program at St. Raphael is offered once each year in the spring. The seven team members are inspired by the Holy Spirit and lead by Deacon Larry Gregg. Participants usually number eight to twelve men and women, both from our community and the surrounding area.

Deacon Larry states that the goal of the program is to let everyone know that God has His arms open to welcome them back. Sometimes people lose sight of God's unconditional love, and drift away from full participation in the sacraments. In Deacon Larry's fifteen-year experience with this ministry, he has found that the majority of participants have simply wandered away from the church, and are seeking some reassurance and support so that they are comfortable coming back to the Mass.

Team members are active parishioners who have chosen to give their time, their encouragement, and their support to those seeking a path back to the church. They've made the returning experience deeply personal, giving their phone numbers and contact information to participants, offering to go with them to Mass, reaching out as long-term friends. Deacon Larry

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Holy Week 2019

Confessions

Wednesday, April 17

5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Saturday, April 20

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Passion Sunday, April 14

Saturday Vigil Masses, April 13

4:30 pm

Sunday Masses, April 14

8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm

Monday, April 15

Mass

7:45 am, 9:15 am

Tuesday, April 16

Mass

7:45 am, 9:15 am

Chrism Mass at St. John Cathedral

7:00 pm

Wednesday, April 17

Mass

7:45 am

Confessions

5:00 - 7:00 pm

Tenebrae

8:30 pm (Church)

Holy Thursday, April 18

(No Morning Masses)

Mass of the Lord's Supper

7:30 pm

Eucharistic Adoration in the

Community Rooms until 11:00 pm

GOOD FRIDAY, April 19

(No Masses)

Stations of the Cross

12:00 pm

Celebration of Our Lord's Passion

3:00 pm

Liturgy of the Word

Veneration of the Cross

Holy Communion

HOLY SATURDAY, April 20

(No Morning Masses)

Blessing of Food

1:00 pm

Confessions

2:00 - 4:00 pm

Easter Vigil Mass

8:30 pm

EASTER SUNDAY, April 21

Resurrection of Our Lord

Mass

7:30 am, 9:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:00 pm



God's Natural Gift to Young Couples

by Maggie Brady

Natural, authentic, clean, green, unprocessed. In the 21st century, that's how we like our food, our homes, and even our laundry soap. So it's no surprise that Natural Family Planning is trending, especially with young families.

What is Natural Family Planning? It's not the old-fashioned "rhythm method" that prompted much snorting back in the day. Natural Family Planning, sometimes called Fertility Awareness Based Methods (NFP or FABM), includes several modern systems developed by researchers and validated for effectiveness in avoiding pregnancy. Some methods are high tech and involve FDA-approved smart phone apps and devices that can be used at home to test hormones. Others are as simple and low cost as a piece of paper, a pencil and a thermometer.

What all the methods have in common is that they are based on empowering a woman to plan her family by observing daily changes in her body – called biomarkers - and understanding how her reproductive system actually works. With NFP, a woman's natural fertility is not considered a disease that needs to be treated with medication; rather, it's like a vital sign that can give her and her doctor priceless information about her health.

And it works. "In 2013, there was a systemic review of the current research of FABMs and their effective rates, published in the peer-reviewed journal *Osteopathic Family Physician*," says Jessica Davidson, an instructor with Couple to Couple League International who teaches alongside her husband Bill in Lakewood. "Depending on the method, they are up to 99% effective for postponing pregnancy."



s – *Happy, Healthy Family Planning*



St. Raphael parishioner Katie Kelly and her husband Mike, both doctors, incorporated NFP into their marriage preparation. “I always wanted to avoid chemical contraception like the pill, hormonal IUDs, and hormone injections because of the side effects of these,” Katie says. “As a medical student at the time, it made no sense to me to use medication or a medical device to alter the normal and healthy physiology of a woman’s body.”

According to Katie, “The richness of Catholic teaching gets lost on lots of people because they just see it as a rule. But it’s not a rule, it’s a worldview that we are called to marriage and parenthood and that people shouldn’t fear the gift of sexuality and fertility that God has given us.”

And again, she underlines that it works. “Mike and I both made it through 8 years of surgical residency/fellowship using NFP.”

Family planning the natural way can be greener, too. A months-long investigation by the Associated Press found that tens of millions of Americans have prescription drugs, including birth control, in their drinking water. A report in *Scientific American* found that hormones are entering the water supply through the sanitary system, with unknown effects for humans. Many

people must take hormonal medications to treat serious health problems, but for the millions who are using them strictly for family planning, FABMs could be a positive improvement for our environment.

Jessica points out that from a health standpoint, “many women are concerned with eliminating hormones in their diet and containers (i.e., plastics)... to put it in perspective, if you [read] about hormones in beef, the amount of hormone given to a 3000 pound steer, once, is only slightly more than what is given in just one day’s dose of the birth control pill.”

So how to get started with NFP? Jessica urges couples to take a class, either online or (preferably) in person, so that both partners will understand the science involved. Few women have completely consistent cycles, so having an instructor as a teammate while learning can be key. She invites couples to check out www.neo-nfp.com, or even email her at davidsonnfp@gmail.com if they have questions. A list of classes is available on the site, including an upcoming course at University Hospitals Westlake Health Center. “There are several different methods available and the best method is the one that will work for the couple who is practicing,” Jessica emphasizes.

Helpful Resources

Neo-nfp.com

A wealth of local NFP/FABM resources.

Green Sex, by Jason Evert

A funny, comprehensive presentation on why Catholic couples should choose NFP. Available to all parishioners through St. Raphael’s Formed.org subscription.

Naturalwomanhood.org/learn

A comprehensive resource for choosing which NFP method is best for you.

The Mary Month of May – Honoring our Blessed Mother

By Kathleen Maloney

Mary is honored by Catholics as being the Mother of God and as the Queen of Heaven. We read in Luke 1:43-44 of Elizabeth's excitement as she cried out to Mary, "And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy." As Catholics we too are joyful because, as the mother of the King of Kings, Mary is the Queen of Heaven and an important intercessor for us before the throne of God. As the month of May draws near, we should note that it has been designated by the Catholic Church as a special time to venerate Mary. Pope Paul VI in his 1965 encyclical, *On Prayers during May for Preservation of Peace (Mense Maio, #1)* wrote:

"For this is the month during which Christians, in their churches and their homes, offer the Virgin Mother more fervent and loving acts of homage and veneration; and it is the month in which a greater abundance of God's merciful gifts comes down to us from our Mother's throne."

Taking time, particularly in May, to show love for Mary is a wonderful way to grow closer to her and enrich one's faith. Some ideas to do this are praying a novena to her for a special intention, praying the Rosary, reading the scriptures, such as the infancy narrative (Lk 1:5-2:52), finding Jesus in the Temple (Lk 2:41-52), or the miracle at Cana (Jn 2:1-11). There are many books to read about Mary right in St. Raphael's church library. A visit to the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Euclid, Ohio, would make a fun adventure with family or friends. Also, a May altar can be crafted with a few flowers and a statue or picture of Our Lady placed on a table or shelf in the home. A parish-



The Coronation of Mary – Cornelis Schut (1597 - 1655)

wide event which honors Mary is the tradition of the May Crowning, which will be held in the St. Raphael church on May 13 at 7:00 p.m.

During May Crowning, beautiful Marian hymns are sung and the service culminates in the crowning of a statue of Mary with a wreath of flowers. The beauty of this occasion makes it an evening not to be missed or soon forgotten. This devotion, which helps us show our love and gratitude to this most holy of women, is a perfect way to create sacred memories with family, friends, and parishioners. It is an opportunity to meditate on Mary's goodness and great love of God. May we follow her example and live our own lives in God's most holy will.

From Page 1 - Divine Mercy Sunday

ization, the Vatican decreed that the Second Sunday of Easter would henceforth be known as Divine Mercy Sunday. The message of Divine Mercy has since spread throughout the world.

The message of Divine Mercy is that God loves each of us completely no matter how sinful we are. He wants us to know that His Mercy is greater than our sins. He wants us to trust Him completely, to call upon Him always with trust, so we may receive his Mercy and let it flow through us to others. An easy way for us to remember the message of Divine Mercy is to use the ABC method:

A - Ask for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him in prayer constantly, repenting of our sins and asking Him to pour His mercy out upon us and upon the whole world.

B - Be merciful. God wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others. He wants us to extend love and forgiveness to others just as He does to us.

C - Completely trust in Jesus. God wants us to know that the graces of His mercy are dependent upon our trust. The more we trust in Jesus, the more we will receive.

We receive His mercy through the sacraments, particularly in Reconciliation and the Eucharist. Through St. Faustina, Jesus also offers new channels for the outpouring of His grace, including the Image of The Divine Mercy, the Feast of Mercy (Divine Mercy Sunday), the Divine Mercy Chaplet, the Novena to The Divine Mercy, and prayer at 3 o'clock each afternoon, the Hour of Great Mercy.

*He wants us to trust Him completely,
to call upon Him always with trust,
so we may receive his Mercy and let it
flow through us to others.*

Our parish has a Divine Mercy group which meets regularly and focuses on personal sanctification and acts of mercy. They invite everyone to participate with them in a Divine Mercy Novena which will be held in the Franciscan Chapel beginning at 2 p.m. on Good Friday (April 19), and thereafter every day at 3 p.m. through Saturday, April 27 (except Easter Sunday, when the Novena will follow directly after the noon Mass). The devotion will conclude with a Holy Hour in the church at 3 p.m. on April 28, Divine Mercy Sunday.



St. Raphael

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doesn't keep attendance records, (of course not!), but notes that he has seen many former participants at various Masses and Parish events.

Several team members are themselves, former participants. Carla is one member who had simply stopped going to Church after her children had grown up. She found Catholics Coming Home some years ago, attended the program, and found her way back to our parish. Her renewed commitment to her faith has led her to enthusiastic involvement in other ministries in the parish, and she now shares her fervor with current participants.

Long-time parishioner Dean adds that the seven-week program provides a review of the

sacramental nature of the Catholic Church, a witness statement from someone who's "come back," and an opportunity for Reconciliation. All questions, anonymous or not, are answered with reference to the Bible and the Catholic catechism. Through involvement in the program, she has received as many benefits as the participants: great friendships, wonderful insights, meaningful experiences.

If you or someone you know is interested in attending Catholics Coming Home, you can pre-register through the Parish Office at 440-871-1100, or simply come to the first session on May 1 at 7 p.m. Any questions? Contact Deacon Larry Gregg at 440-785-6107 or lgregg@lear-group.com.

Liturgy Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 p.m. | **Sunday:** 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., noon

Weekday Mass: M, T, W, F, 7:45 a.m. | M, T, Th, F, 9:15 a.m. | Saturday, 8:30 a.m.

Confessions: Saturdays 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. | **Eucharistic Adoration:** Friday 10:00 a.m. - Saturday 4:00 p.m.