

August 2021

# Saint Raphael



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## The Story of the Humility of Mary Sisters at St. Raphael

*by Joy Horvath*

On January 26, 1948, Father Zwilling wrote to Bishop Hoban: "We have broken ground for the first unit of our building program and are in hopes of having a school, as well as a residence for the Sisters for the Fall term of 1948. Any suggestions you might have in mind of a Community of Sisters to take charge would be greatly appreciated. Our preference would be the Sisters of the Community of the Holy Humility of Mary." Thus began the successful 40-year relationship between the Humility of Mary (HM) Sisters and St. Raphael School and Church.

The story of the Sisters in America began in France in 1854 with Marie-Antoinette Potier and Father John Joseph Begel. After the French Revolution, the rural population was left to poverty and neglect, especially in education and health care. As Fr. Begel looked for a way to serve his congregation in the French countryside, he encouraged parishioner Marie-Antoinette to open her home as an orphanage and school for boys and girls. Soon joined by like-minded women, the group decided to petition the bishop, and were given permission to form a new religious association, Sisters of the Holy Humility of Mary. (After Vatican II, the title was simplified by omitting the word "Holy.")



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## Giuseppe Moscati: Saint, Scientist, Physician

by *Dianne Borowski*

While browsing the internet one evening I came upon an interesting fact. One of the men involved with the development of insulin as a treatment for diabetes is a saint. Born in Benevento, Italy, in 1880, Giuseppe Moscati was destined for greatness. His family were devout Catholics. Even as an adult his father was an altar server at Mass every Sunday. When Giuseppe was four years old the family moved to Naples. Giuseppe never left Naples. It was his home.

Influenced throughout his early years by St. Caterina Volpicelli, Giuseppe's faith was nurtured and grew through his friendship with this pious Catholic woman. In 1903 Giuseppe graduated with a degree in medicine and surgery from the University of Naples. He was then hired by the Hospital for the Incurables in Naples. He later became a professor at the hospital's medical school and an administrator while continuing his work as a physician. He was a brilliant scientist and conducted research in biochemistry and physiology. He was a gifted diagnostician who was said to be responsible for several "impossible" cures.

Giuseppe had at one time wanted to become a Jesuit but was convinced by the Jesuits he should use his many unique talents to serve the secular community. He then became a member of the Lay Third Order of Franciscans, making vows of chastity and poverty. He practiced charity in his daily work and refused to take payment for treatment of the poor. When Mount Vesuvius erupted on April 8, 1906, he risked his life evacuating those caught in the eruption. During World War 1 he was appointed director of military hospitals, caring for hundreds of injured soldiers.

Two incidents in Giuseppe's life motivated him to turn to medicine and scientific research. First, one of his brothers was involved in an accident and suffered irreversible brain damage as a result. And then, in 1914, his mother died from complications of diabetes. Her death challenged him to dedicate his life to researching the properties of insulin as a treatment for diabetes. These incidents tested Giuseppe's faith and ultimately helped him grow stronger in his love for God. His spiritual director, Father Giovanni Aromatizi S. J., is quoted as saying that "devotion to the Eucharist was the center of Giuseppe's whole life." Dr. Moscati attended Mass daily and always carried a rosary in his pocket.

Dr. Moscati practiced a new form of medicine. He believed the physician must treat the entire person, body and soul. This was a revolutionary theory at that time which Dr. Moscati followed faithfully. He actually spent time conversing with his patients, listening to them and even praying with them. Dr. Moscati died on April 12, 1927, sitting in his favorite chair after working the entire day at the hospital. He was canonized October 25, 1987, by Pope St. John Paul II. He is the first modern day doctor to be canonized.

I will leave you with a quote from this holy man. I was happy I came upon his name on the internet, allowing me to learn about and get to know this brilliant, caring, compassionate man who has become a role model for me.

"Happy are we as doctors who so often are unable to alleviate sickness, happy if we remember that, as well as the body, we have before us the immortal soul. The sick represent Christ to us."



*Giuseppe Moscati*

# Going to Church is Good for You

by Ashley Herzog

After a year of social distancing—which often meant “virtual mass” for many Catholics—the world is starting to pick up the pieces, including dealing with the long-term mental health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now more than ever, most experts agree that Zoom and FaceTime can never replace the mental health benefits of in-person interaction. We all made the best of virtual social support during the Coronavirus crisis, but it’s no substitute for the real thing. And one of the best places to find solace and support, especially during times of uncertainty, is church.

In March, Gallup released a poll finding that church membership fell below 50 percent in 2020, the lowest number ever recorded. (In the late 1990s, around 70 percent of American adults said they belonged to a church.) Some media outlets were downright gleeful over the news. In their view, Americans are finally throwing off the shackles of religion and moving toward a more rational future, free of their old hang-ups and superstitions.

But less church hasn’t made Americans happier or healthier—and it didn’t make coping with the pandemic easier. In fact, when it comes to mental health, Americans are worse off than they’ve ever been.

“During the pandemic, about 4 in 10 adults in the U.S. have reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder,” the Kaiser Family Foundation reported. “Many adults are reporting specific negative impacts on their mental health and well-being, such as difficulty sleeping (36%) or eating (32%), increases in alcohol consumption or substance use (12%), and worsening chronic conditions (12%), due to worry and stress.”

While Americans’ mental health worsened during the pandemic, we weren’t doing so great before Coronavirus, either. Between 2008 and 2018, the share of young adults—who tend to be less religious than older Americans—who had a “severe mental health disorder”

jumped from 3.8 percent to 7.7 percent. The number of young people attempting suicide doubled.

“The biggest percentage increase in serious mental health disorders was with 18 to 25 year olds, increasing over 200% since 2008,” the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) reported in 2018. “Serious mental illness disorders have increased to 11.3 million for adults in 2018, up from 8.3 million in 2008...Significant increases in suicidality were observed in 18 to 25-year olds.”



Harold G. Koenig, M.D., a professor of psychiatry at Duke University, said in late 2019 that when it comes to improving both mental and physical health, “There are not a lot of things that do what religion does.” People who believe in God and belong to a house of worship have lower stress levels, better immune function, and healthier cardiovascular systems. They are less likely to have heart attacks and strokes. In 2016, a study published in the medical journal *JAMA Internal Medicine* found that women who attended religious services at least once a week were 33 percent less likely to die from any cause than their non-religious peers.

Religious beliefs can offer hope to people who feel hopeless—such as those who lost a loved one to COVID-19, or who endured long lockdowns by themselves. On the other hand,

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# Still Burning Through the Ages

## The 2000s

This decade brought a new vision to the Parish. Fr. Timothy W. Gareau was assigned as Parochial Vicar in June 2000. When Fr. Callahan retired in 2002, Fr. Tim was appointed Administrator and then named the Parish's fourth Pastor on September 6, 2002. Fr. Tim continued the zeal of his predecessors and accepted the challenge to usher the parishioners into the new century.

In 2003, Bishop Pilla announced a new initiative for the Diocese: *Vibrant Parish Life*. This comprehensive plan asked each Pastor to address the strengths and needs of all Roman Catholic parishes within their geographical area. Fr. Tim knew the importance of working with the lay community and listening to their needs and concerns. Focus groups studied the data and developed future goals. In 2007, Bishop Lennon announced *Vibrant Parish Life II*. Fr. Tim began the implementation of this plan, formed a committee to review several areas of parish life, and worked with two other parishes, St. Joseph and Holy Spirit to form a cluster. The Cluster Planning and Coordination Team met over 18 months to address the five initiatives; Evangelization, Education, Outreach, Sanctification, and Community Building.



Fr. Tim worked with several parishioners to help develop a Strategic Plan as a response to the parish's needs. In 2005, this plan was unveiled. Seven initiatives were set forth to direct the Parish: Spirituality, Hospitality, Evangelization, Social Concerns, Youth and Young Adults, Adults and Family Enrichment, and Education. Each of these initiatives was to be guided by a commitment to: develop effective communications, work with people and groups in the parish, collaborate with other parishes and communities, act with fiscal responsibility, and provide solutions for facility requirements. Fr. Tim quickly began planning for the future. He set up commissions for each initiative and all of the ministries were assigned to a commission. A parish staff member led each commission to provide support and guidance, this continues to this day.



**Aug. 20, 2002**

**Sept. 6, 2002**

**Nov. 15, 2003**

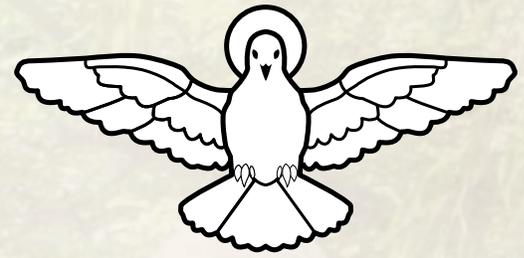
**May 7, 2005**

Fr. Nelson J. Callahan  
retires

Fr. Timothy W. Gareau  
named fourth Pastor

Diocesan initiative:  
*Vibrant Parish Life*  
announced

Parishioner Larry Gregg is  
ordained a permanent deacon  
and assigned to the Parish



It quickly became apparent that the facilities needed to be updated and expanded to meet the needs of the future parish. Work on a Master Plan to address the facilities began. Could the current church be expanded or would it be necessary to build a new worship space? Aware that there were fewer vocations to the priesthood, the building had to be able to accommodate more parishioners at fewer Masses. The existing church held 600 parishioners; it would have to double in size. As much as Fr. Tim would have liked to address the new worship space first, there was no other place on campus to hold Mass during construction. The new worship space would become part of Phase II.

In 2006, Phase I was introduced. This phase included construction of the Parish Activity Center, expansion of the parking lot, new parish offices, and a new rectory. A capital campaign, *Changing the Face of Saint Raphael Parish from Generation to Generation*, launched in November. A goal of \$6.5 million was set and as in the past, the parishioners pledged their support and the goal was achieved. Construction began in Spring 2007 and was completed in Fall 2008. Bishop Richard G. Lennon dedicated the Parish Activity Center. The PAC would meet the needs of the expanding parish and serve as our place of worship when the new church would be under construction.



Fr. Tim continued to look for events to bring the parish together. Finally with enough room, the PAC became the Friday night place to be – the weekly Lenten fish fry began in 2009.

With the construction of the PAC completed, the former gym was converted to a lunchroom. Students no longer had to eat lunch in their classrooms. The need to provide before and after school care increased with so many parents working. The Raiders Club was launched in 2004 to meet this need.



Parishioner Larry Gregg was ordained and named the first permanent deacon assigned to the parish in 2005. At the end of this decade, the parish had grown to 3,300 households with 10,800 parishioners. There were 750 students in the day school with the majority of students coming from Bay Village, Westlake and Avon Lake. Tuition for one child was \$2,500. The Parish School of Religion enrolled another 750 students.

**May 15, 2005**

**2007**

**May 15, 2007**

**Sept. 28, 2008**

**Feb. 26, 2009**

St. Raphael unveils its Strategic Plan

Phase I construction begins for PAC, rectory, expansion of parking lot, and new Parish Office

Bishop Lennon announces Vibrant Parish Life II - Clustering of parishes

Dedication of PAC by Bishop Lennon

Weekly Lenten fish fry begins

# The Story of the Humility of Mary Sisters at St. Raphael

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The Sisters progressed in their work with education and nursing in spite of the anticlerical policies of Napoleon III toward the Church. In 1864, the timely return from Ohio of a French missionary gave the Sisters an exciting opportunity. Four of the Sisters were asked to come to Louisville, Ohio (east of Canton) to minister to the French settlers and to teach both girls and boys. After prayerful consideration, the entire community—Fr. Begel, nine Sisters, two novices, and four orphans—left France for America, with only a welcoming letter from Cleveland Bishop Amadeus Rappe in hand. “You would be most welcome in our Diocese...what we lack just now would be an Institute which would devote itself to the instruction of youth... The Institute that I would desire would take charge of schools for both sexes...We also feel the great necessity of establishing a refuge for our sick.”



*The sisters used the loom to weave their habits made in the style of the ordinary French peasants.*

Four Sisters lived in Louisville, while the rest lived on a swampy, overgrown 250-acre farm that they purchased in New Bedford, Pennsylvania, just across the state line. With contributions from Bishop Rappe and orders for needlework, they were able to support themselves while turning the swampland into productive fields, building an infirmary for injured and sick railroad workers, and opening a school for orphan boys. Today, we know this property as the beautiful Villa Maria.

Within eight years, HM Sisters were serving in the dioceses of Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Erie, and St. Joseph,

Missouri. As their numbers increased, the Sisters founded St. Elizabeth Hospital (Youngstown, 1911), and staffed the Rosemary Home (Cleveland, 1922), St. Joseph Riverside Hospital (Warren, 1924), and St. Joseph Hospital (Lorain, 1927). Their health care services have included schools of nursing, health education, and public health nursing.

The HM Sisters' mission of education also continued in their new home in Ohio. With the influx of immigrant workers to Northern Ohio in the early 1900s, the Catholic school system grew dramatically. So too did the HM Sisters' involvement. They established Lourdes Academy (Cleveland, 1892), Mount Marie Academy (Canton, 1905), Villa Maria Academy (Wickliffe, 1922), and Magnificat High School (Rocky River, 1955). They staffed 69 diocesan elementary schools, several diocesan institutions, and a Native American mission in South Dakota. They sent teaching and nursing missionaries to Chile, El Salvador, Haiti, Bangladesh, Ghana, Mexico, and Vietnam.

Vatican II called for the renewal of religious congregations, and the HM Sisters responded with generosity and deeper dedication to their calling, citing their founders' goal, “in all the works of charity possible, rendering themselves competent and disposed to do all kinds of good works.” Even in retirement, the HM Sisters are active in various parishes, social services, retreats, and spiritual direction.

The earliest habit for the Humility of Mary Sisters was a ruffled bonnet and blue dress, in imitation of their peasant neighbors. In the U.S. in 1895, they changed to a more traditional long, deep blue habit with a white bib and a striking, heavily starched winged veil. This was the habit our first nuns wore at St. Raphael. In the 1950s the Vatican urged the nuns to abandon the elaborate headdress. In 1956, the HM Sisters switched to a more streamlined white coif and blue veil. In 1962, the bibs were changed to blue. After Vatican II, the Sisters decided that habits were not necessary for their mission, so they chose to wear modest contemporary suits, always in shades of blue. The transformation suited the modern Sisters, who were living and working in community settings, taking public transportation or driving. In 1984, the suit and color expectations were dropped, as the Sisters, who often shopped at thrift stores, frequently didn't have options. To mark their commitment and vows, all HM Sisters wear a medal pin or necklace, and also a ring.



*Sister Mary Ronald with her 3rd Grade Class (1960)*

Another Vatican II change was that Sisters could reclaim their baptismal names, because one's religious life begins at baptism, not at the time of final vows in the HM community. Most of the Sisters reverted to their family names, but a few older nuns opted not to change.

Back to Fr. Zwilling's request. He had most likely been impressed by the HM Sisters at work at St. Christopher School in Rocky River, which they had staffed since 1926. Between early 1948 and July, 1949, correspondence passed between Fr. Zwilling, Bishop Hoban, and Mother Mary Ignatia, negotiating the employment of "only four teachers ...in the beginning." Four Sisters were approved and sent for the 1949-1950 academic year. By January, 1950, Fr. Zwilling appealed for another teacher to accommodate the growing enrollment; that request was regrettably declined, and a lay teacher was employed along with the four Sisters. In January 1951, Fr. Zwilling requested two more teachers. In his letter to Mother M. Lorita, he described building the gym as a temporary church, and converting the chapel into two classrooms and a lunch room. "The main reason for the



*Sister Violet Ann with her 6th Grade Class (1971)*

success of the movement of people to St. Raphael's is our very excellent school...the success of our educational program is due to none other than the "blue nuns" who are in charge." Since those years, more than 70 HM Sisters have served at St. Raphael School and Parish.

The first HM Sisters to come to Bay Village in 1949 were Sr. Regis (grades 7-8), Sr. Alicia (grades 5-6), Sr. Antoine (grades 3-4), and Sr. Laurentine (grades 1-2). The last HM Sister involved with St. Raphael Parish was Sr. Ardath Blake (1977-1984, 1988-2003).



*Sister Ardath*

I caught up with Sr. Ardath during a break in her busy schedule, and she told me about her time since her tenure here. She was Principal from 1977-1984, then moved to St. Ambrose School for 4 years. In 1988, there was some talk about how the priest shortage would impact our parish—specifically that we would not have another Parish Vicar in the future. Fr. Callahan, realizing the need for a pastoral associate, asked Sr. Ardath to return. She stayed for 15 years, until 2003. Since then, she took a one-year sabbatical to study Adult Ministry, is on the staff of Villa Maria, and directs retreats. She is also a spiritual director for adults. As for her St. Raphael memories, she was touched by the faith and dedication of the congregation, and especially the Knickerbocker residents. And she notes a fond memory of Fr. Callahan's dog, Honey. She had belonged to his mother, and he constantly reminded guests not to feed her table food at the same time that he was passing her treats.

One other Sister with St. Raphael ties, Sister René Parman, Principal from 1971-1973, is a centenarian who resides in retirement at Villa Maria. In good weather, Sr. René still enjoys a round of golf with friends!



*Sister Rene Parman*

Our parish was certainly blessed by the presence of such dedicated women, who set our school on the path of excellence we still boast of today. Our parish is indeed thankful for the Sisters of the Humility of Mary.

*I am grateful for the assistance of Sister Joanne Gardner, HM, archivist at Villa Maria, and Sister Ardath Blake.*

# St. Raphael

## CHURCH

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## Going to Church is Good for You

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America's decreasing religiosity has coincided with a very troubling increase in suicides.

"Low levels of religiosity as a potential risk factor for suicide appeared in the literature as early as 1968," the American Journal of Epidemiology reported in 2002. "Although a number of risk factors for suicide have been suggested, a low level of religious commitment or religiosity is a

potential risk factor that merits further study."

Over the last year, we've heard a lot about "trusting the science." While church attendance isn't a cure-all for human despair, the science shows that it has a protective effect. Now that the dispensation from Sunday Mass has been lifted, more of us can reap the benefits of worshipping together as a community.

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### *Liturgy Schedule*

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

**Weekday Mass:** Monday - Friday 9:15 a.m. | **Confessions:** Saturdays 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

**Eucharistic Adoration:** Resuming July 9, 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.