

January 2018

Saint Raphael



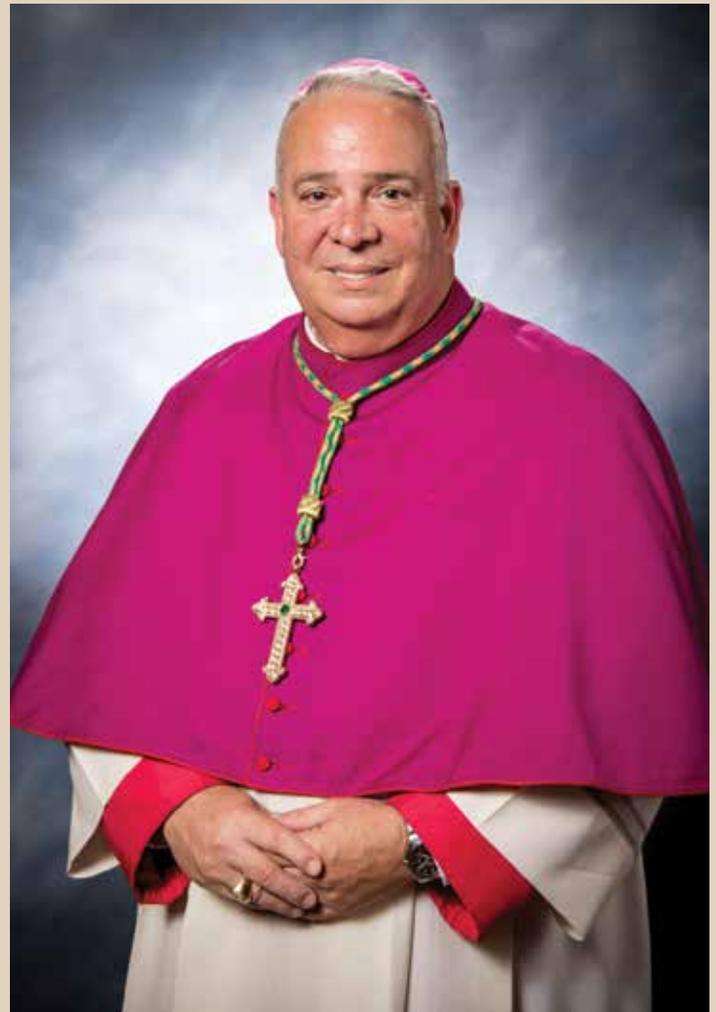
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Welcoming Bishop Perez During His First Visit to St. Raphael

Most Reverend Nelson Perez, Bishop of Cleveland, will preside at the 4:30 p.m. Vigil Mass at St. Raphael on Saturday, Feb. 10. During Mass, the bishop will install third-year Diaconate Candidates to the Ministry of Acolytes. This will be the bishop's first visit to our parish, and everyone is invited to attend. There will be a reception afterwards, with an opportunity to meet the newly installed acolytes and their families, as well as Bishop Perez.

Installation to acolyte is a significant step in the formation of a permanent deacon. These men have already completed a year of study and discernment, called Aspirancy, before being called into Candidacy by the Bishop. Each candidate then typically follows a structured four-year progression of study and ongoing discernment, a process referred to as Diaconate Formation. During the second year of formation, Candidates are installed to the Institution of Lector. A Lector proclaims the readings from Sacred Scripture, except for the Gospel. He may also announce the intentions for the Universal Prayer and, in the absence of a psalmist, recite the Psalm between the readings. For a man in formation, this is an important step forward as a minister in the liturgy of the church.

During the third year of formation, Candidates are installed to the Ministry of Acolyte, another step toward lifelong service in and for the church. An acolyte is instituted for service at the altar and to assist the priest and deacon. It is his place principally to



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Most Rev. Nelson Perez, Bishop of Cleveland

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Stewardship Living in Love

which Christ speaks? How are we to live it out today?

Christ, the God who, as John tells us, "is love" Himself, came to Earth out of pure love for us. So that we might have everlasting life, Christ took the punishment for our sins. He, the Lord of all creation, was mocked, scourged and ultimately murdered on the cross to atone for the sins that we, His creatures, have committed. Now, that's love! And it is the love that we are called to imitate throughout our lives.

Notice the selfless nature of Jesus' act. He gained nothing in return for what He did, and He calls us to love in the same manner. How do we do that here and now? Do we die on our own personal crosses? The answer, in a way, is "yes." We don't necessarily die on the wood of the literal cross as Christ did, but we must die to self for the sake of others. That is the love of Christ, and that is the love He calls us to every day. If we want to truly love God, we must love others. God Himself showed us the reality of this need when he commanded that we love our neighbor just as we love Him. And then Christ explained, "Whatever you do to the least of those, you do to me." If we are called to love God, then we are called to love our

neighbor, for Christ resides in each one of us. It must be a love like Christ has shown us – one of selflessness. We should want for nothing more than the good of our neighbor.

There are many ways that we can show our love to others, particularly through prayer and service. Here at our parish, there are many ministries that offer us the opportunity to serve our neighbors. If we offer a little bit of time, we can help out in the parish office doing seemingly menial yet important tasks, such as stuffing inserts into the bulletins so that fellow parishioners are aware of news and events within the parish. Those of us with an aptitude for teaching may be called to serve others through RCIA or our Religious Education program. There is also always a need for more lectors and Eucharistic Ministers to aid the priest in bringing Christ to other parishioners at Mass.

These are but a few of the countless opportunities we have to serve our parish and local community. However we are called to do so, one thing is for certain: the love of Christ calls us to action. How will we show our love for God this year? Remember, "Whatever you do for the least of those, you do for me."

"God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him" (1 Jn 4:16). As Christ's disciples, we are called to live lives of love. When asked which commandment is the most important, Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might." He immediately followed this command with, "Love your neighbor as yourself. No commandment is greater than these" (Mk 12:29-31).

The life of a Christian is, essentially, all about love! This doesn't mean that Christ preached an abstract Gospel, or that we need to love simply because "it feels good." The reality is quite the opposite. Indeed, Christ's Gospel of love is one of dramatic action, and living in that love calls each of us to action.

What is this love, then, of

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A Letter From Our Pastor

Resolve to Give Back to God in 2018

My Dear Friends in Christ,

Another new year — 2018! There was a time in my life when this date (and others) seemed so far in the future. It is amazing how those dates start to pile up and stream by, isn't it? I have reached a point where measuring one's life by the years and dates is not as significant as many other things.

I recall reading somewhere, "The world around us asks, 'What does a person own?' But God asks, 'How does a person use what he or she has been given?'" This month of January is one filled with reminders of holiness — the official end of the Christmas season; the Epiphany of our Lord; the Baptism of the Lord; and the return to Ordinary Time, which, as we know, is not "ordinary" at all.

At Epiphany we hear, "Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts" (Matthew 2:11), a reference to the Magi and their visit to the Christ Child. The image of the Magi kneeling before the infant Jesus and opening their gifts for Him is one we should all try to follow. Each of us is called to open our gifts before Jesus and offer Him what He needs. I heard a suggestion once that if you have a problem with this thought, you should perhaps keep one of the Magi from your Christmas Nativity set and place it on your desk as a reminder.

During the Baptism of the Lord, God makes it clear when He proclaims from the Heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11). God has given us the greatest gift He could give. He gave His only Son. When we think about the enormity of that gift of Jesus sent to save us, in addition to all the other blessings which God has entrusted to us, it is very humbling. God has given us so much. What do we give in return?

Making resolutions is common at this time of year. We will also hear this month about how Jesus called the first apostles. The Lord calls us as well to follow Him. Let us resolve to try to do that better — all of us. That does not mean we have to leave our work and our families behind, but we do need to put our service to Jesus. That



should be our top resolution.

In *The Theology of the Hammer*, Habitat for Humanity co-founder Millard Fuller wrote, "The only truly safe investment one can make in life is what is given away." First and foremost, God wants us. That should be our real resolution — to give ourselves to the Lord. May we all do a better job of that in 2018. God bless you all.

May God bless and keep you,

Fr. Tim Gareau,
Pastor

L'Arche Communities: M

On the weekend of Jan. 13-14, a representative of L'Arche will speak at all Masses at St. Raphael and make an appeal for financial support. As a parish that embraces stewardship, we recognize the traditional Four Pillars of Stewardship — Prayer, Hospitality, Formation, and Service. An important part of those is the idea of outreach, reaching out to others to offer our assistance and gifts and love.

L'Arche is a worthy recipient of our stewardship gifts from a number of perspectives. L'Arche communities are united by the following Statements of Identity and Mission: We are people, with and without developmental disabilities, sharing life in communities belonging to an International Federation. Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our journey together. We celebrate the unique value of every person and recognize our need of one another.

L'Arche USA is part of an international federation of L'Arche communities that seeks to make known the gifts of people with intellectual disabilities, revealed through mutually transforming relationships. There are more than 145 L'Arche communities in 35 countries, including 18 in the United States. One of those communities is in the Diocese of Cleveland.

The Executive Director and Community Leader for L'Arche here



in Cleveland is April Boone. She will be the one making presentations at each Mass.

"Of course, L'Arche is French and it means 'ark,'" April says. "The name is drawn from the fact that we as people are 'all in this together,' just as those on the Biblical ark were. It was founded by Jean Vanier."

Vanier is now 89 years old and still lives as a member of the original L'Arche Community in Trosly-Breuil, France. He founded L'Arche in 1964 for the purposes outlined above. He was in large part the motivation for April Boone getting involved.

"I was working for Covenant House in Times Square, New York City when I became aware of him and the L'Arche communities," April says. "I and those with whom I worked read Vanier's books and began to synthesize his vision into our work, to attempt to bring about

dignity and human tenderness to the young people on the streets of New York. Time and again, the writings and teachings of Vanier and Henri Nouwen, who was a priest and theologian who spent the final 10 years of his life in a L'Arche Community, wove their way into my own work, which also extended to the homeless and people experiencing illness or death."

In recent years, April was serving as the Bereavement Coordinator of Catholic Charities of Brooklyn, where she trained people on best practices for supporting people in grief and hosting places of warm hospitality.

"I have been privileged to work in many different capacities among groups of marginalized people, all the while responding to the whispering inspiration of Vanier's call to tenderness," she says. "When

If you would like more information, please visit the local L'Arche website, www.larchecleveland.org, or call the L'Arche office at 216-721-2614.

Mutually Transforming Relationships

the opportunity to come here to Cleveland as the Executive Director of the overall L'Arche Community here, I took it and have no regrets whatsoever.

"Our Cleveland community is made up of four L'Arche houses with four or five people in each of them," she continues. "What makes L'Arche unique is that we

have a group of trained staff people who live with and work with what we call the 'core members.' As our name indicates, we are truly 'all in this together.' We make appeals at great parishes like St. Raphael to strengthen awareness of our mission. We are building community where there is no idea of 'us and them.'"

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Welcoming Bishop Perez During His First Visit to St. Raphael *continued from front cover*

prepare the altar and the sacred vessels during Mass. In the absence of a deacon, after the Universal Prayer and while the priest remains at the chair, the acolyte places the corporal, the purificator, the chalice, the pall and the Missal on the altar. Then, if necessary, the acolyte assists the priest in receiving the gifts of the people and, if appropriate, brings the bread and wine to the altar, and hands them to the Priest.

If incense is being used, the acolyte presents the thurible to the priest and assists him while he incenses the offerings, the cross, and the altar. Then the acolyte incenses the priest and the people. If necessary, he helps to distribute the Eucharist to the faithful as an extraordinary minister. In the absence of a deacon, the acolyte administers the chalice to communicants. After the distribution of Communion is complete, an acolyte helps the priest or deacon purify and arrange the sacred vessels. In the absence of a deacon, an acolyte carries the sacred vessels to the credence table and purifies them. Outside of Mass, in extraordinary circumstances, an acolyte may be entrusted with publicly exposing the Blessed Sacrament for adoration by the faithful and afterward replacing it — but not with blessing the people, Benediction.

Instituted in a special way for service at the altar, an acolyte is tasked with learning all matters concerning public divine worship and striving to grasp their inner spiritual meaning. In that way, he will be able to offer himself entirely to God each day, be an example to all by his seriousness and reverence, and develop a sincere love for the people of God, especially the weak and the sick. Following acceptance into aspirancy, being called to candidacy, installation as lector, and installation as acolyte, a man in formation for the permanent diaconate may finally be called by the bishop to Holy Orders. Ordination as a deacon typically occurs after completing the fourth year of formation.

The men to be installed as acolytes on Feb. 10 come from throughout the Diocese of Cleveland. Their families and friends will also be travelling to St. Raphael for this special ceremony. We are proud to host this diocesan event and welcome everyone to our beautiful campus. This is a wonderful opportunity to support and encourage these men. It's also an opportunity to meet them, their families and our new bishop.

*For more information, please contact
Deacon Mark Cunningham at the parish office, 440-871-1100.*

Mass Reverence and Etiquette

For many of us, when we are invited to a wedding, one of our first considerations is “what am I going to wear?” We wouldn’t think of showing up at a formal event in our workout clothes. How many of us search for just the right outfit to wear to our annual office party or on a date? Compare that to how much thought we put into what we wear to Mass on Sunday.

How we dress for an occasion indicates the importance that we place upon that particular celebration. At Mass, we encounter God through the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Dressing appropriately for Mass is one way that we show respect both for God and for our faith family. And this respect is important at all Masses – no matter what time of day or night.

Think about what you are teaching your children when you all wear your “Sunday clothes” to Mass. You are reminding them that Mass is a special celebration. After all, we are going to Jesus’ house.

Some people may quickly point out that Mass shouldn’t be a fashion show – a place to show off your finery – and they are right! We also know that some parishioners come to

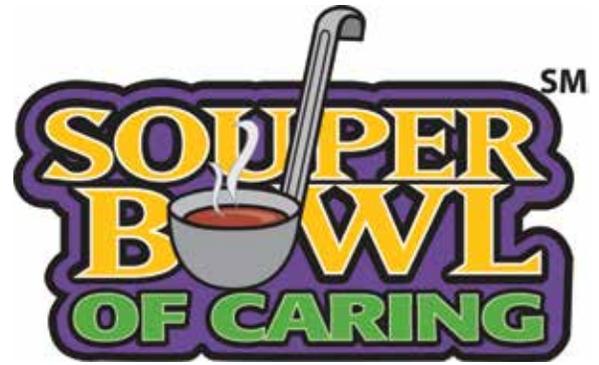
Mass on their way home from work, and they certainly should not feel embarrassed about arriving at Mass in their work clothes. And no one should ever stay away from Mass because of simplicity of clothing.

But one rule should apply in all instances – our attire at Mass should always be modest. Our clothing should never distract others from what we are gathered together to celebrate – the life, death and resurrection of our Lord.

The celebration of Mass is always a holy occasion and thus should be treated in the most holy manner – in body, mind and spirit.



Looking Forward to the Souper Bowl of Caring, Feb. 3-4



The Souper Bowl of Caring utilizes Super Bowl weekend in America to mobilize young people to fight hunger and poverty in their local communities. Its vision is to transform Super Bowl weekend — the weekend of the first Sunday in February — into America's largest youth-led weekend of giving and serving. Young people collect monetary and food donations during the week leading up to Super Bowl Sunday. One hundred percent of the money and food is then given directly to local charities of the group's choice.

Begun by a pastor in South Carolina 28 years ago, this program has been replicated throughout the United States. Last year, almost 15,000 groups participated — including more than 6,000 Catholic churches and organizations — and raised more than 10 million dollars. By the second year, 1991, more than 20 churches in South Carolina were participating. By 1993, there were churches from 36 states involved. Those numbers have increased dramatically since the beginning.

Director of Youth Ministry Nick Gresko is coordinating the young people for the effort here at St. Raphael.

"Over the past 13 years, our St. Raphael Parish has collected almost \$40,000 through the Souper Bowl of Caring Program, which is run by our Youth Ministry group," Nick says. "All donations are used to feed the poor and hungry all around the country. The money collected here stays in this local area. All combined this national program through young people has generated more than \$125,000,000 for soup kitchens, food banks, and other charities nationwide.

"As indicated, all the money collected here has been

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— Nick Gresko, Director of Youth Ministry

distributed to the poor and hungry in our area through our Social Concerns Ministry," he continues. "That has allowed them (and us) to assist St. Malachi Food Distribution Center, the West Side Catholic Center, the St. Augustine Food Center, the Bay Food Bank, the St. Edward High School Community Meal, and to provide food to families in need right here in our own parish."

At each Mass on the weekend of Feb. 3-4, a representative of our Youth Ministry group will speak. Following Mass, our youth will be at the doors of the church holding soup kettles.

"We encourage everyone who can to donate generously to this worthwhile cause," Nick says. "This is a parish community effort, and it is a great way for our young people to witness and experience stewardship in action. If you wish to plan ahead and write a check, please make it out to 'St. Raphael Parish.' With the help of all of you, more will be raised, more lives may be changed, and our young people especially will understand the

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St. Raphael

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Looking Forward to the Souper Bowl of Caring, Feb. 3-4

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joy of serving Christ by serving others. We hope to set a record this year by collecting more than \$4,000."

That first year of the Souper Bowl of Caring, the founding pastor and his congregation offered this simple prayer: "Lord, even, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without even a bowl of soup to eat." That has not changed. Let us at St. Raphael keep that in mind and generously support this worthwhile effort.

For more information, please contact Nick Gresko at the parish office, 440-871-1100, ext. 140.



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.