

March 2018

# Saint Raphael



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## “Disciples Beget Disciples”: Our Parish Mission on Christian Discipleship

One of the more popular mission leaders in the Diocese of Cleveland is Fr. Damian Ference. In fact, Fr. Damian is also widely sought as a mission leader, speaker and preacher throughout the United States. We are privileged to have him as our Mission Leader and Facilitator during Lent on March 11, 12, 13. In addition, he will preach at all Masses on that weekend, March 10-11, as well as serve as the principal celebrant on Saturday and at one of the Sunday Masses.

The theme for the retreat will be Christian Discipleship. The missions will occur in the church from 7 to 8 p.m. each night, March 11, 12 and 13. Specific topics on each evening will be as follows:

- Sunday — God and Creation
- Monday — Sin and Redemption
- Tuesday — Sacraments and Mission

“When I say the mission is one hour in length, that is exactly what it is,” Fr. Damian says. “If people are willing to make a gift of their time, I recognize that value. I think they will leave each evening with a stronger sense of spirituality and purpose. My presentations are appropriate for anyone teenaged and above.”

Fr. Damian J. Ference graduated from Borromeo Seminary/John Carroll University in 1998 and St. Mary Seminary in 2003. Ordained a priest for the



*Fr. Damian Ference in his library.*

Diocese of Cleveland, he served as parochial vicar at St. Mary Parish in Hudson, Ohio from 2003-2007 and earned a licentiate in philosophy at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. in 2009. He writes regularly for Bishop Robert Barron’s *Word on Fire* blog, and his articles have appeared in *America*, *Catholic Universe Bulletin*, *Commonweal*, *Dappled Things*, *Emmanuel*, *FirstThings.com*, *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, *Human Development*, *Pastoral Life*, *Seminary Journal*, *The Priest*, and *U.S. Catholic*. He is also a lifetime member of the Flannery O’Connor Society. Currently, Fr. Damian

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## The Sacrament of Reconciliation: Returning to the Father

Those of us who have children know what it's like when they come to us apologetically after having done something they know is wrong. As parents, it melts our hearts, and we can't help but forgive them freely, and take them into our arms – sometimes squeezing them with tears in our eyes! At times, we may even feel closer to them than we did before the event occurred.

This, we can assume, is how God feels, being our most clement Father. In His magnanimous love,

He sent His only Son Jesus Christ to redeem the world, freeing it from the haunting grips of sin and death. Christ instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation through His Church to offer sinners forgiveness for the offenses they committed against God.

As the Angelic Doctor St. Thomas Aquinas writes so beautifully, "[The Sacrament of Confession is a] sacrament of healing and a sacrament of conversion, returning us to the Father after we have sinned. In the life of the body a man is sometimes

sick, and unless he takes medicine, he will die. Even so in the spiritual life a man is sick on account of sin. For that reason he needs medicine so that he may be restored to health; and this grace is bestowed in the Sacrament of Penance." As far as the details for the reception of this sacrament are concerned, three conditions are necessary – contrition, which is genuine sorrow for sin, together with a purpose of amendment; confession of sins without any omission; and satisfaction by means of good works. A priest is gravely bound to keeping total confidentiality for all confessions they hear.

Church law requires Catholics to confess mortal sins – the most serious kind of sins – to a priest at least once per year, and to confess them before ever receiving Holy Communion, as well. However, this is by far the minimum; Catholics are encouraged to receive the sacrament freely and frequently since it is so extremely beneficial to the health of the mind, soul and spiritual life in general.

To honor the Sacraments is to honor God and the entire Christian community. To receive the Sacraments is to live in God's love and to strengthen our love for each other. Christ, our tenderhearted, Paschal Lamb, awaits us, His beloved children, to come to Him with all of our hearts.



A Letter From Our Pastor

May the Grace of the Risen Christ Be With You

My Dear Friends in Christ,

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.



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

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, which 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, which 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, the culmination of these days of

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!

May God bless and keep you,

Fr. Tim Gareau, Pastor

- Keith Benya
- Colleen Maher
- Fr. Eric Garris
- Tish Bush
- Maureen Mayer
- Deacon Mark Cunningham
- Rosie Galizio
- Ann Miller
- Deacon Larry Gregg
- Ellen Grady
- Candy Reese
- Deacon Tom Senn

- Nick Gresko
- Terri Telepak
- Roger Andrachik
- Kelly Helbig
- Bill Toler
- Susan Andregg
- Andy Kereky
- Kelley Tonegato
- Peggy Barrett
- Ashley Klug

Holy Week 2018

CONFESSIONS

Wednesday, March 28 — 6-8 p.m.  
Saturday, March 31 — 3-5 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, March 28

Mass at 7:45 a.m.  
Confessions, 6-8 p.m.  
Tenebrae at 8:30 p.m.

Liturgy of the Word  
Veneration of the Cross  
Holy Communion

PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY, March 25

Saturday Vigil Masses,  
March 24 — 4:30 p.m.  
Sunday Masses, March 25 — 8 a.m.,  
10 a.m., 12 p.m.

HOLY THURSDAY, March 29

(No morning Masses)  
Mass of the Lord's Supper, at 7:30 p.m.  
Eucharistic Adoration in the Zwilling  
Room until 11 p.m.

HOLY SATURDAY, March 31

(No Morning Masses)  
Blessing of Food at 1:30 p.m.  
Confessions, 3-5 p.m.  
Easter Vigil Mass at 7:30 p.m.

MONDAY, March 26

Masses at 7:45 and 9:15 a.m.

GOOD FRIDAY, March 30

(No Masses)  
Stations of the Cross at noon  
Celebration of Our Lord's Passion at 3 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY, April 1

Resurrection of Our Lord  
Masses at 7:30 a.m., 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m.,  
12 p.m. \*Note adjusted Mass times.

TUESDAY, March 27

Masses at 7:45 and 9:15 a.m.  
Chrism Mass at 7 p.m.,  
at St. John Cathedral

# The Catholics Coming Home Program PROVIDES IMPORTANT ANSWERS

The Catholic Church is the largest Christian denomination in the United States, accounting for about 25 percent of the country's population.

The Church continues to grow, and many people have chosen to convert to Catholicism. The Church is a vibrant, active community of believers that continues to have a positive influence on the lives of many people. However, there are people who, for one reason or another, have stopped actively participating in the Church and attending Mass. We live in a busy culture and society. There are many demands that are placed on us. Yet, people are searching for a deeper

sense of meaning, for a closer relationship with God, and for a more authentic spiritual identity.

This year, for the 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, St. Raphael will be offering the Catholics Coming Home Program.

"Catholics Coming Home is a program at St. Raphael Parish designed to invite non-active Catholics 'home' to the Catholic Church and active practice of their faith," says team member Annette DeGidio. "We meet for 1 ½ hours weekly for seven weeks. Our sessions provide the opportunity to ask questions and learn about our faith in a non-threatening, support-group format. St. Raphael's Evangelization

Committee began the program in 2006 and has received very positive feedback from those who have attended. No question or concern is off limit for our discussions. In addition to our team we will have guest speakers to help guide us on this journey of faith."

The sessions will be held at St. Raphael Church on seven consecutive Wednesdays, April 11 to May 23, from 7-8:30 p.m. in the Community Room.

"Our Pastor, Fr. Tim, has always supported and encouraged our ministry," Annette says. "Deacon Larry is the coordinator and liaison for our ministry. He encourages



# ing Home Program D WONDERFUL WELCOME

us each year by telling us that our program has met its goal if one individual participates and feels welcomed back to the Church. Often, participants get involved in ministries and programs offered at the parish. Our team consists of seven to eight members, and several have previously participated in the program. They now are involved with welcoming others."

When asked about her own involvement, Annette notes that she

has been involved since the beginning.

"I joined an evangelization committee and this program was one of the efforts of that committee," she says. "My faith and beliefs have been very important in my life. I guess the desire to share my commitment and the impact in my life were motivating factors. It seemed like a way I could contribute and be involved in a St. Raphael Parish ministry. My involvement has brought me

many blessings. I have gained more than I have given. It has been a joy to get to know team members and participants. The program is a welcome back to the Church. It is basic Catholic education. We discuss Reconciliation and the sacraments, parts of the Mass, rituals, Catholics traditions, the Creed, ministries of the Church and ways to get involved. The meetings allow time for discussion and questions."

*For more information or to register, please call one of the coordinators — Mrs. Annette DeGidio at 440-250-9028, Mrs. Dean Brennan at 440-725-3159, or Deacon Larry Gregg at 440-871-1100, ext. 134. Registration is very much appreciated, but not mandatory.*

## Our Parish Mission on Christian Discipleship

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is part of the formation faculty at Borromeo Seminary, where he is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy. He is also the founder and director of {TOLLE LEGE} Summer Institute.

We speak often about the importance of discipleship, and this mission is an opportunity to deepen and increase that understanding. There is a connection between discipline and discipleship. Even looking at the two words, "discipline" and "discipleship," we can see that they are deeply connected. Following and learning Jesus' way surely calls us to adopt a certain discipline about our lives. How do we draw people to the discipline of discipleship?

"An important principle to keep in mind is that disciples beget disciples," Fr. Damian says. "In other words, if we are really serious about fostering better marriages, holier priests, more devoted religious, and generally a more faithful and dedicated Church, then

those of us who are already married, ordained and consecrated, and who identify ourselves as Catholics must take a good, hard look at our own lives and evaluate how our discipleship measures up."

"The root of many of our Church challenges is a lack of discipleship," he continues. "Of course, a disciple is one who encounters Jesus, repents, experiences conversion and then follows Jesus. All too often, those of us in positions of Church leadership presume that all the folks in the pews on Sundays, all the children in our grade schools, high schools and PSR programs, all the kids in our youth groups, all the men in our Men's Clubs and all the women in our Women's Guilds, and all the members of our RCIA team are already disciples. Many are not. (The same can be said of staffs and faculties of Catholic institutions.) Our people may be very active in the programs of our parishes, schools and institutions, but unfortunately, such participation does not qualify for discipleship."

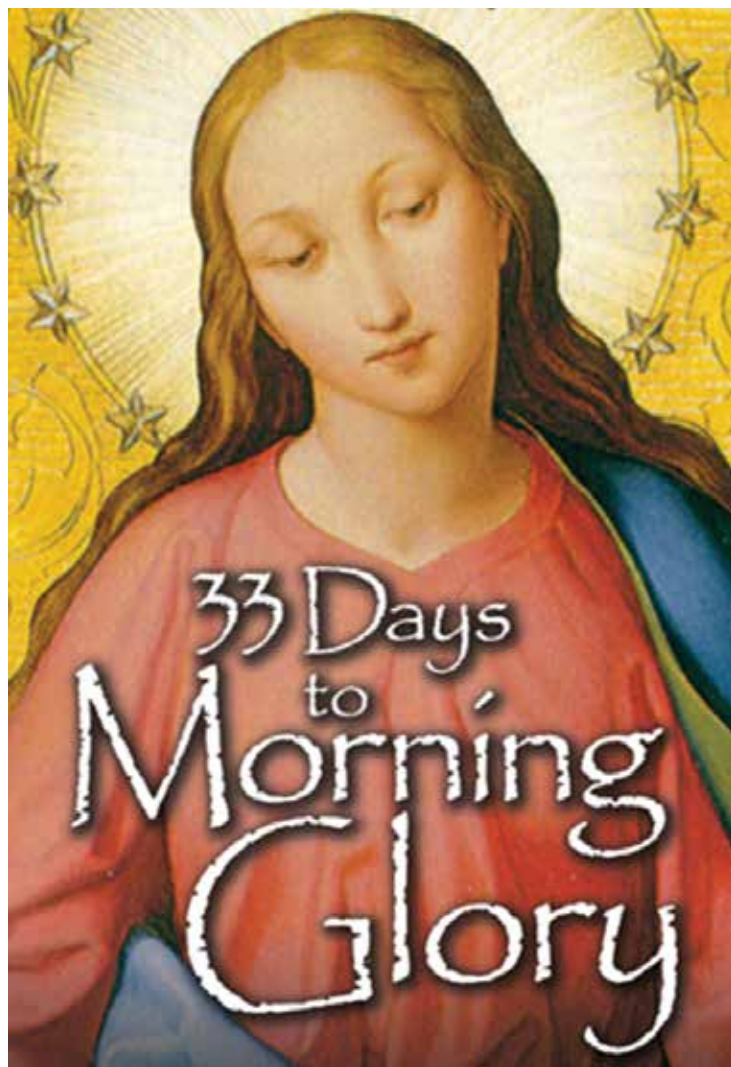
# “Hearts are ON FIRE”: *The 33 Days to Morning Glory Program*

Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC is leading our women’s retreat here at St. Raphael. He is internationally known for his book and guide, titled *33 Days to Morning Glory*. Fr. Gaitley is a member of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, and lives and works at the Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Mass. *33 Days to Morning Glory* and *Consoling the Heart of Jesus* are the first two in a series of retreats that will be available to the parish. Participants will learn of the others as they participate in the Hearts Afire Parish-Based Programs — or HAPP — Ministry.

“Hearts are ON FIRE in the St. Raphael community, as we get ready to present these retreats on a year-round basis,” says parishioner Kathy Presley, a member of the Hearts Afire Parish-Based Programs team here at St. Raphael. “Most of our retreat team members have gone through all the Hearts Afire Parish-Based Programs, and we built a collaborative group/team of facilitators to spread the messages of Mary and Divine Mercy through small group or self-study retreats. Our priests have completed and strongly endorse these powerful retreats and our Director of Spiritual Development, Dr. Andy Kereky, is also an integral part of the HAPP team.”

The *33 Days to Morning Glory* is a six-week retreat with emphasis on entrustment to Jesus through Mary. During the retreat four Marian giants — St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa), and St. John Paul II — will teach participants in 33 days how to draw closer to the Heart of Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It involves daily readings, on your own, of about five minutes per day. You are asked to keep a workbook and answer three or four questions each day. The group will meet once a week for 90 minutes to discuss the material read, watch a DVD, and share your own perceptions with your small group and its facilitator. We follow this format for 33 days and at the end, we will have a small consecration ceremony on a Mary Feast Day.

The second retreat is similar in format, but it is 10 weeks in length.



“We are truly blessed and humbled to be instruments in Mary’s immaculate hands to help spread the message of God’s merciful love,” Kathy says. “We encourage you, with heartfelt gratitude, to become fully engaged in this new and evangelical movement at our parish in whatever format works for you — small group or self-study retreat.”

Together, through Mary, we will be brought to the source of merciful love — the Divine Mercy poised to transform the world.

*Please email [heartsafire@saintraphaelparish.com](mailto:heartsafire@saintraphaelparish.com) or call the St. Raphael Parish office at 440-871-1100, ext. 106 if you have any questions.*

## The Problem (and Challenge) of Leaving Mass Early

There seems to be an epidemic among Catholics in some parishes. They receive Communion, and they rush out the door, sometimes even before others have received. Some may remain, but often they, too, may depart before the final blessing, even before the celebrant priest processes out. This is an unfortunate circumstance — it is not that there is never a reason for an early departure, such as some sort of family emergency, a medical issue, or an unruly family member. However, assuring that you are the first out of the parking lot, being first in line at the local restaurant, seeing the kickoff of the football game or getting to the golf course seem a bit trivial in relation to the beauty and the glory and the significance of the Mass and the Eucharist.

Rather than focus on the motivation for leaving before Mass is completed, we need to initially consider why we are even in attendance at Mass. The high point of the Mass is, or should be, the reception of the Eucharist. Jesus instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. He held up the bread and said, “This is my body,” and then He held up the cup and said, “This is my blood.” The Catholic Mass is an awesome event for us as Catholics. Jesus Christ becomes truly present in the Eucharist. We gather at Mass to receive this gift, but we also gather in community to offer praise and worship to Him, to be spiritually fed as well.

The *Code of Canon Law* makes it clear that we are to attend Mass. It

says, “On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Mass” (1247). It does not say “in part” or “in parts of the Mass.” It would seem that the expectation is that each of us as Catholics will attend a complete Mass. That, it would seem, is a sticking point with some. How often have we heard or participated in a conversation, the gist of which is “What constitutes a complete Mass?”

We are all familiar with the various answers, no doubt. However, nothing officially states that Mass is completed once we receive the Holy Body and Blood of Christ. Some maintain that Mass is completed upon the closing blessing and the dismissal by the celebrant. Others say it is not complete until the celebrant has processed out. Still, others say, “Not until the recessional hymn has been completed.” The point nonetheless is that Mass is not finished upon receiving Communion.

There are so many considerations and perspectives about this issue. We might consider some of the counter-arguments. For example, only one person left the Last Supper early — Judas Iscariot. Jesus has invited us to a banquet. Would we go to a meal with someone else, and suddenly get up and leave after we had eaten? That would seem to be a bit rude. Are we truly there to be part of our faith community? If so, should we not as a community begin and end together?

The official *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* pertaining to the Mass says that at the end of Mass

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# St. Raphael

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## Leaving Mass Early *continued from page 7*

"we each may go back to do good works, praising and blessing God." (90). Our task as Catholics does not end with Mass. Christ has called us to mission, a mission of proclaiming God's Word and serving others. There are 168 hours in a week. Even if we consider our Sunday Mass to be a two-hour commitment, that is a mere 1.2 percent of our total week.

We cannot give God that much time and that much commitment? After the Last Supper, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. He took with Him the Apostles Peter, James and John. However, when He returned to where He had left them, He found them

asleep. His exact words to Peter were, "Can you not watch with me for one hour?" That is a question and a challenge evidently for some of us, as well. Are we not at Mass because we love the Lord and we care for those in our community? Or are we there for some personal and selfish reason? We reiterate that there may well be legitimate reasons for leaving a Mass before it is completed. God understands that. Nevertheless, we need to make sure that our reasoning is indeed sound, and not something petty or minor. After we receive the Lord at Mass, we are, in effect, a walking tabernacle. We need to act that way.

### *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.