

# Saint Raphael



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## An Invitation to Mercy

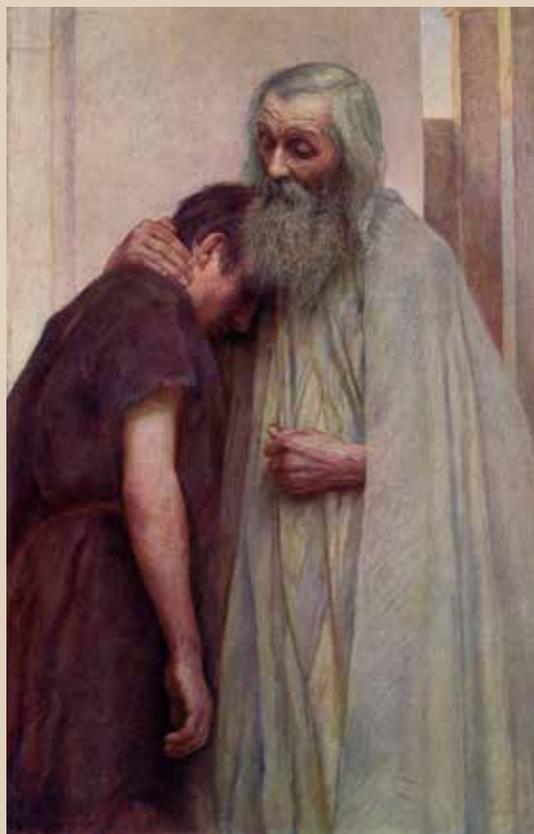
by Maggie Brady

**Y**ou're invited: Wednesday, March 11, from 5 to 8 p.m., is the Diocesan Wide Evening of Confession. All over the eight county Diocese of Cleveland, and of course here at St. Raphael, priests will be available to give us this healing sacrament.

Haven't been in a while? Maybe not since your first confession? You're not alone. Perhaps you're hesitant to show up. You might be thinking...

### 1. I'm not a good enough Catholic to go to confession.

There are so many of us who feel this way. Have you ever thought that you need to "get it together" and fix your life before you can go to confession? Do you feel like confession is just for the devout, churchy people, and that's not you and never will be? Imagine saying, "I'll go to the doctor,



*"Heimgefunden" - Eugène Burnand, 1900*

but first I have to get rid of this cough," or "My arm may be broken, but I'm sure it will get better on its own. I'm not one of those health nuts."

The Church is a field hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints. It is not just a nice place for nice people to do nice things. That describes a country club, not the Church! Even if your life resembles a dumpster fire, or if your relationship with God is hanging by a thread, congratulations – you qualify to go to confession.

### 2. I'm too embarrassed.

Did you know that priests have to go to confession too? Even Pope Francis does. They know what you're going through when you reach the front of the

line. The good news: We don't go to confession to be judged by Superman. We're there to encounter the Lord Jesus, who not only knows what we've done, but who also understands what it's like to be lonely,

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## An Invitation to Mercy

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afraid, tempted, or exhausted. He says, "There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance." (Luke 15:17).

Can we ever truly fathom what that means? If you're weighed down by serious sin, or if it's been a very long time since you last confessed, you can give a better gift to Jesus than a so-called perfect person ever could. There's no need to feel embarrassed when you're making God so happy.

### 3. I don't need to go to confession.

I suppose I'm mostly a good person. I don't steal, I volunteer, and I almost always remember my reusable grocery bags. Most days I try my best. Should I still go to confession? Yes!

Our culture combines constant distractions with low standards to create a cloudy haze: it's hard to see myself clearly. One traditional way Christians cut through the fog is by performing an examination of conscience. This is a simple method for comparing my behavior with God's standards. It's not a tool for whipping up Catholic guilt, it's an essential aid for living a mindful life. Whether it's a serious issue we'd just rather not confront, like using pornography, or "sins of omission," like passing up the chance to help an annoying neighbor, even "good people" can find room to improve after a thorough examination of conscience. The next step? Ask God for His help in confession.

### 4. I'll just stay home and talk to God.

Of course, we can tell God we're sorry with a personal prayer. But confession is biblical. After the Resurrection, the Lord Jesus appeared to His disciples and told them, "'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'" And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.'" (John 21-23). Surviving documents from the very first centuries show the early Christians confessing their sins, receiving forgiveness from God through their priest and doing penance.<sup>1</sup>

What's more, sin is always communal. Even our most private failings wound other people, because we are part of the same body. In the early Church, confession was often public. Today, we're able to privately confess to a priest as a representative of the community. Phew.



## 5. I'm afraid.

Perhaps it's been a while since your last confession because you were hurt by a bad experience. Priests are human too; they get hungry, tired, or have bad days like anyone else. But you don't have to be afraid of our priests at St. Raphael! Fr. Tim and Fr. Eric will be able to show you that confession is about healing, not punishment.

You might be afraid of forgetting what to say. There's an app for that – Laudate, available for both Android and iPhone, helps you generate a list of your sins and gives you a suggested act of contrition. You can also leave your smart phone at home and just tell your confessor that you're not

sure you remember what to do. He will help you.

Finally, you may be afraid of letting light shine on the dark parts of your heart. Our culture encourages us to engage in "impression management" and not let anyone see our weaknesses. It takes courage to let God love you in this sacrament, because true love requires vulnerability and honesty. It's a risk worth taking.

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1 <https://www.churchfathers.org/confession>

## Resources for Making a Good Confession

**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (Examination of Conscience)**

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/penance/>

**Diocese of Cleveland**

[www.welcomecatholics.com](http://www.welcomecatholics.com), #EveningofConfession

*Could God Ever Love Someone Like Me? The Sacrament of Reconciliation* by Fr. Michael Schmitz

Available free for St. Raphael parishioners on Formed.org. Check out their new Roku app.

# Lenten Reflections

by Dianne Borowski

As I watched the snow drift lazily to the ground that Sunday morning I glanced across the street and noticed the top of the telephone pole standing there was the shape of a cross. I shivered momentarily. Why had I never seen it as a cross before, I wondered? Perhaps, with the arrival of Lent so close, my mind was able to see a cross in that telephone pole. Even as a child I have always taken my worries and concerns to the foot of the cross. Jesus, crucified, is always there to listen to my fears and accept my tears.

Now that I am in the twilight of my life I realize what a wonderful gift I have been given. I was able to take the love and hope I found at my small parish elementary school so long ago and hold that love and hope continuously close to my heart. Even during adolescence, when my life seemed to fall apart and Jesus on the cross seemed so very far away, that flicker of childhood faith stayed firm.

Every Lent is special to me. It reminds me that our crucified Lord and Savior gave me ultimate gift of redemption from my sins as a result of his death on the cross. While reflecting upon Jesus' journey to Calvary, especially during Lent, I take a few moments several times a day to



*"What the Lord Saw from the Cross"*  
James Tissot, 1886-1894

thank him for all the blessings I have received during my life and ask for the ability to rise above life's heartaches and pains as I continue on my own personal spiritual journey. Wishing all a fruitful, holy Lent, and soon, the dawn of a blessed Resurrection morning.

# Drama Club Pres



What would persuade elementary students to leave video games, television, or homework every Sunday evening from September until March? They're lured by the opportunity to sing and dance, act and imagine, or hammer and paint, to present the musical performance of Disney's Frozen Jr. for their classmates, parents, and the community of St. Raphael. For two hours on Sundays, and countless hours at home, 116 fifth through eighth grade students are honing their theatrical skills, in preparation for their appearance on the Parish Activity Center stage. Sponsors of the play are the St. Raphael Drama Club and Home & School.

Katie Gerba, Drama Club moderator, Raiders Club Director, Frozen Jr. Producer (official "gofer"), and busy stage mom, spoke to me about the upcoming musical event. In September, auditions were held, the cast was set, and the scripts were distributed. Then the work began. Under the direction of David Glowe (Director and Creative Genius), members have learned stage presence, acting terminology, and artistic movement. In addition, David has led improvisation sessions to help students relax into their roles. A professional choreographer, David's talented wife Jen Glowe manages to wrangle the troupe into a toe-tapping, twirling dance company. Kevin Turner, along with St.

Raphael teacher Ellen Skonce, gifted vocalists, are teaching the cast how to sing for the stage, and are getting wonderful performances from the group. Gina Green and a group of volunteer seamstresses are creating the visual magic of costumes. St. Raphael parent Mike Clark is supervising the stage crew, busy building Elsa and Anna's castle—hammering, sawing, painting. The student stage crew is also learning to use the light and sound board, which they will operate for the run of the play. Two high school Drama Club alumni, Claire Hoban and Anna Maria Durbin, are indispensable Student Directors. Finally, parents and parishioners lend a helping hand. All these volunteers would not be successful without the support of Mr. Mitskavich and Fr. Tim.



# sents: Frozen Jr.!

by Joy Horvath

One hundred sixteen young people are involved in this production: 96 actors and 20 stage crew—that's 37% of fifth through eighth grade students! Many of these students also participate in other school activities, especially sports, and Katie is proud that Drama Club allows them to discover and showcase their other talents. All children who auditioned for the play were given a role and will appear on stage in costume.

Through her sons and daughter, Katie Gerba has had extensive involvement with children's theater; she had an exclusive connection to obtain the very recently released Disney's Frozen Jr. based on the popular animated movie and Broadway Musical. St. Raphael Drama Club is among the first in the country, and the first in our area, to produce this play! As you can imagine, however, the cost of materials, scripts, technical skills, and equipment is not small. Students pay a small fee for the script and a tee shirt, and the Drama Club receives some funding from Home & School, but major funding is still necessary. Ticket sales, advertising sales, in-kind donations, and monetary contributions are all crucial to supporting this endeavor.

Drama Club is part of the school, so we should expect some educational benefits, and there are many. Students learn theater stage terms, grow in self-confidence, take ownership of a production, and work as a team, not to mention pick up some song-and-dance skills. Some actors have also gone on to appear in high school plays. To enhance all

productions on our Parish Activity Center stage, aka the Performing Arts Center, certain technical equipment has been upgraded, stage lighting has been added, and additional wireless microphones have been purchased. Such upgrades have benefited all groups who use the PAC for one purpose or another.



Directors always hope for perfection, but prepare for disaster. Two years ago, during the production of Shrek, Fiona's (Claire Khoury) microphone failed right before her big solo. She was on the castle tower which, at that time, luckily, was darkly lit. Katie crawled up behind the actress, adjusted her mic, then tucked herself down and stayed hidden on stage for the rest of the scene. She hopes she won't have to do something like that this year!

Tickets are on sale now for this delightful play. Be sure to get yours beforehand, to assure yourself and your family of seats. It will be a great show!

Feel free to contact Drama Club at:  
[srshomeandschooldramaclub@gmail.com](mailto:srshomeandschooldramaclub@gmail.com).



## FROZEN JR.

Saturday, 21 March 7 p.m.

Sunday, 22 March 3 p.m.

Saturday, 28 March 7 p.m.

Sunday, 29 March 3 p.m.

### Tickets:

\$5.00 General admission

\$10 Reserved seats

Children second grade or younger **FREE**

# St. Patrick's Day: The Real Story

by Ashley Herzog

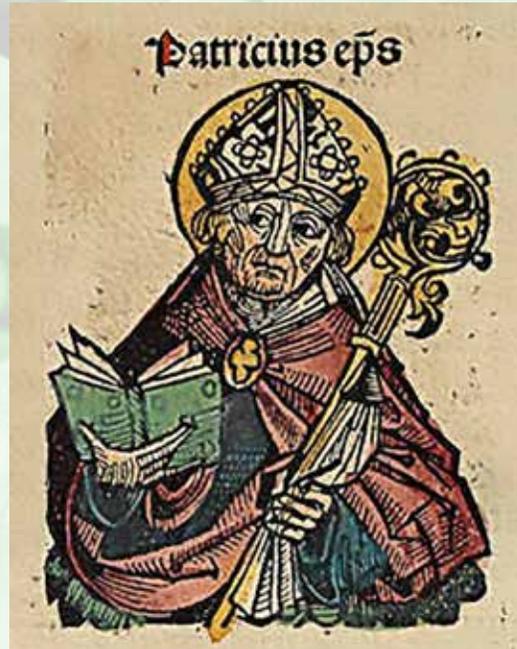
Many people associate March 17th, the Feast Day of St. Patrick, with the nation of Ireland. In truth, St. Patrick's Day as we know it is one of America's few homegrown holidays. From its first celebration in Boston in 1737, St. Patrick's Day has been a time for Irish Catholics to celebrate their unique place in American history.

Given its long and complicated history, St. Patrick's Day is rife with myths long held in the public imagination. For starters, who was the real Saint Patrick? Historians believe he was born into an Italian family living in Roman-controlled Great Britain in the fourth century. His birth name was Maewyn Succat. At age 16, Maewyn was captured by Celtic raiders and sold into slavery in Ireland. He escaped to a monastery in Gaul (now known as France) and was baptized into the Christian faith. He then returned to Ireland as a missionary. Legend has it that Patrick relied on shamrocks, a three-leaf plant, to teach his followers the concept of the Holy Trinity. By the time of Patrick's death in the early fifth century, the Celtic pagans of Ireland had given themselves over to Christ. In 1631, during the reign of Pope Urban VIII, the Catholic Church established the feast of St. Patrick, selecting March 17th, the traditional date on which Patrick died. The feast day was a relatively minor one in the church's calendar and the Irish marked it by attending Mass and closing all the pubs.

Ireland declared the Feast of Saint Patrick a national holiday in the late seventeenth century. However, historical accounts suggest Catholics in North America observed Patrick's feast day even earlier. Historian Michael Francis uncovered evidence that Catholics in St. Augustine, Florida, a city founded by Spanish explorers, hosted a St. Patrick's Day procession through the city in 1600. An Irish priest living among the Spanish settlers is credited with leading the parade.

In the 1800s, as Irish immigrants fleeing famine and British oppression flooded American cities, St. Patrick's Day celebrations grew more prominent—and more controversial. In places like New York and Boston, it was common for nativist mobs to observe St. Patrick's Day by "paddy-making." This bigoted tradition involved anti-Catholic mobs creating effigies of Irishmen wearing potato necklaces and holding whiskey bottles, their mouths smeared with molasses. The effigies were often burned to intimidate the newcomers. However, the Irish immigrants forged on, and solemn St. Patrick's Day processions in New York and Boston turned into huge, merry parades.

Today, many St. Patrick's Day traditions we still observe are a testament to the Catholic immigrants' resourcefulness and determination to survive in America. Why do we eat corned beef on March 17th? Irish immigrant women in New York invented the dish by approaching sea captains returning from spice trade routes and purchasing the crew's leftover salted beef. The women boiled the leftover meat three times to remove some of the brine, the final time with cabbage. Thanks to the scrappiness and quick thinking of Irish women, many St. Patrick's Day revelers still enjoy eating corned beef and cabbage.



American attitudes toward Irish Catholic immigrants started to shift after the Civil War. Despite being new arrivals to America, tens of thousands of Irish immigrants volunteered to serve in the Union Army, many losing their lives in the process. "They went out as second-class citizens but came back as heroes," Irish-American historian Mike McCormack said. It was during the Reconstruction era that people of all ethnicities, not just the Irish, began joining in St. Patrick's Day celebrations across the country.

No matter how you choose to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, this uniquely American holiday is a celebration of the Irish Catholic immigrants' triumph and survival.

# St. Raphael Parish Pastoral Council

by Mike Manco

Did you know that St. Raphael has a Pastoral Council? Well, we do. A Pastoral Council is a consultative body in most dioceses and parishes of the Roman Catholic Church that serves to advise the parish priest or bishop about pastoral issues. The Council's main purpose is to investigate, reflect and reach conclusions about pastoral matters and to make recommendations to the parish priest or bishop as appropriate.

A 2003 survey by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops found half of U.S. dioceses and three-quarters of U.S. parishes had Councils .

Here at St. Raphael, Father Tim attends the parochial Councils. The current chairperson of the Council is Kelly Sommers and Vice Chair is Dan Durbin. The faithful have the right, and indeed sometimes even the obligation, to make their thoughts known on matters concerning the good of the Church. When a parish member has a suggestion or concern, they should seek out a member of the Parish Pastoral Council and initiate a heartfelt discussion with the pastor.

In the United States, parish councils arose after the Second Vatican Council made lay participation in parish life more prominent. Several decrees and instructions address the concept of a parish council, including the *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* (1965), *The Priest, Pastor and Leader of the Parish Community* (2002) and the *Code of Canon Law* (1983). Councils do not make decisions independently of the Pastor and have a consultative role only.

Each year the St. Raphael Parish Pastoral Council, consisting partly of twelve elected representatives from the parish, known as Parish Representatives, is looking for six candidates to serve a two-year term. The Council meets five times a year. As our parish website puts it: "It is meant to be an energizing, coordinating, and unifying representation of parish life which enables the individual members of the parish to have access to the processes which guide, direct, and support the various aspects of parish life... the Parish Pastoral Council prayerfully reflects on the needs of the parish and the larger community in which it exists. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Council recommends policies for the mission and faith growth of the parish community and monitors and evaluates the processes and programs which implement these policies.

## Current Parish Pastoral Council Members

Chair: Kelly Sommers	Jennifer Meyer
Vice-Chair: Dan Durbin	Eileen M. Mikkelsen
Secretary: Mike Partridge	Brigid Perkins
Parish Representatives	Laura Rankin
Alison Barberic	Wayne Reese
Daniel Brady	Beth Sweeney
Peter Comodeca	Sara Seybold
Rich Croll	Jon Sminchak
Mike Manco	David L. Tadych

## Holy Week 2020

### CONFESSIONS

Wednesday, April 8 5:00-7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, April 11 2:00-4:00 p.m.

### PASSION SUNDAY, April 5

Saturday Vigil Masses April 4  
4:30 p.m.

### Sunday Masses April 5

8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m.

### MONDAY, April 6

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

### TUESDAY, April 7

Masses at 7:45 and 9:15 a.m.  
Chrism Mass at 7:00 p.m. at the  
Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist

### WEDNESDAY, April 8

Mass at 7:45 a.m.  
Confessions 5:00-7:00 p.m.  
Tenebrae at 8:30 p.m.

### HOLY THURSDAY, April 9

(No Morning Masses)  
Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7:30 p.m.  
Eucharistic Adoration in the Community  
Rooms until 11:00 p.m.

### GOOD FRIDAY, April 10

(No Masses)  
Stations of the Cross at 12:00 p.m.  
**Celebration of Our Lord's Passion at 3:00 p.m.**  
Liturgy of the Word  
Veneration of the Cross  
Holy Communion

### HOLY SATURDAY, April 11

(No Morning Masses)  
Blessing of Food at 1:00 p.m.  
Confessions 2:00-4:00 p.m.  
Easter Vigil Mass at 8:30 p.m.

### EASTER SUNDAY, April 12

**Resurrection of Our Lord**  
Masses at 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m.,  
10:30 a.m., 12:00 p.m.

# St. Raphael

## CHURCH

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Bay Village, OH 44140

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*Would you like to stay connected to the Parish using E-Mail? Then please share it with us. Just go to our Parish Website, [www.saintraphaelparish.com](http://www.saintraphaelparish.com), and enter the information under "Staying Connected Thru E-Mail". Information will not be shared and you can remove it at any time. Contact Mark Cunningham in the Parish office with questions at (440) 871-1100.*

## Pro-Life Ministry Presents: Breakfast with a Speaker

The Pro-Life Ministry of St. Raphael Parish is sponsoring their annual Breakfast with a Speaker on Saturday, April 4, at 9:30 a.m. in the Community Room. The speaker will be Martin Dybicz, President of the Board of Directors of LifeWorks Ohio. He will be speaking on, "The Evangelization and Defense of the Pro-Life Position." The talk and the breakfast are free. Come to Saturday morning Mass at 8:30 a.m. and stay for the breakfast.

Please call Judy (440-892-0270) for more information.



**Martin Dybicz**

*President of the Board of Directors of  
LifeWorks Ohio*

### *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.