

November 2023

# Saint Raphael



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## Hypocrite

by Deacon Mark Cunningham

When I was maturing from boy to man, my father passed on to me an heirloom booklet of Polonius' advice to his son from Shakespeare's play, Hamlet. These words from that booklet have stayed with me through all the years of my life: "To thine own self be true." Be true to yourself. In our present day, this notion has been co-opted by our increasingly nihilistic culture. Today, being true to yourself means don't worry about pleasing other people or living by someone else's standards or rules. You have the power to live your life any way you want and to be faithful to the truth about you. You come to know yourself only by living life. Finding what works for you. What defines you and makes you whole. You're the game changer, you're in charge, you're the boss of you, and you set the ground rules and boundaries – no one else. This fashionable interpretation of being true to yourself is the antithesis of Shakespeare's meaning. Polonius may have been a hypocrite in not living up to the advice he gave to his son, but at least he admitted to the existence of morality, a standard of goodness against which to judge one's actions. Our aid in living up to that standard is what the Church calls "conscience".

I once saw a cartoon in which a little girl was explaining to her younger brother, "Conscience is when God sends a text message to your head." The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* elaborates: "Deep

within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to live and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment. For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God. Moral conscience, present at the heart of the person, enjoins him at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil."

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Harold Copping, *Hamlet and Polonius*, 1897

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## Hypocrite (Continued)

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Amidst the cacophony of our culture, examples of errors in moral judgment abound. It's possible for our conscience, at some level, to become confused and unable to distinguish right from wrong. This can happen when, as the catechism suggests, there is "ignorance of Christ and his Gospel, bad example given by others, enslavement to one's passions, rejection of the Church's authority and her teachings, or lack of charity." And yet it continues, when man "takes little trouble to find out what is true and

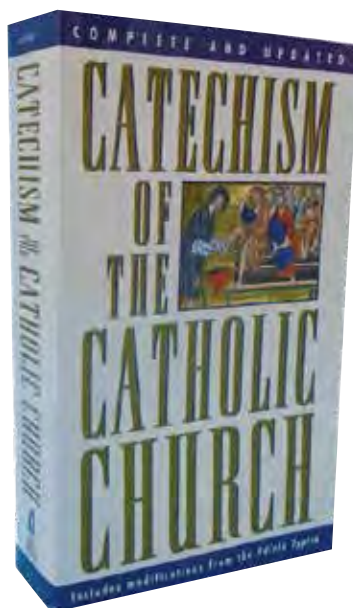


François-Nicolas Chiffart,  
*The Conscience*, 1877

good, or when conscience is by degrees almost blinded through the habit of committing sin", there is a personal responsibility to address this ignorance. We each have the responsibility to properly form our conscience. This is the gauntlet thrown at our feet today. When good is called evil and evil is called good, when truth is called relative, when the meaning of words is co-opted, when the very existence of God is denied – this is the time to be true to yourself. Our dignity as a child of God compels us to properly form our conscience and then obliges us to follow faithfully what we know to be just and right.

The *Catechism* – which has an extensive index and is an excellent reference to find Church teaching on numerous topics – emphasizes the importance for "every person to be sufficiently present to himself

in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience. This requirement of interiority is all the more necessary as life often distracts us from any reflection, self-examination or introspection." "His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths." To thine own self be true. Spend time with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and learn to hear his voice. Receive him in the Holy Eucharist and find the courage to live and to do what is good.



## A Final Word as Our Pastor from Father Tim Gareau



*My dear friends in Christ,*

As most of you know, I will be moving to St. Colette Parish in Brunswick. My last day here at St. Raphael was November 3 and I begin my new assignment on November 20th.

I look back in awe and with a grateful heart. It was such an incredible grace to serve as your pastor for twenty-one years. You have taught me so incredibly much—almost too numerous to put into words! Your faith, hope, and love have been a constant over all these years. You have taught me how to lead and how to love in Christ.

I take much with me in your friendship and your love and pray that you will extend the same to your new pastor. If you embrace him as you have embraced me, he will soar to great heights; and you will continue to be the light of Christ in this area of our Diocese.

In this time of transition, please pray for me as I pray for you!

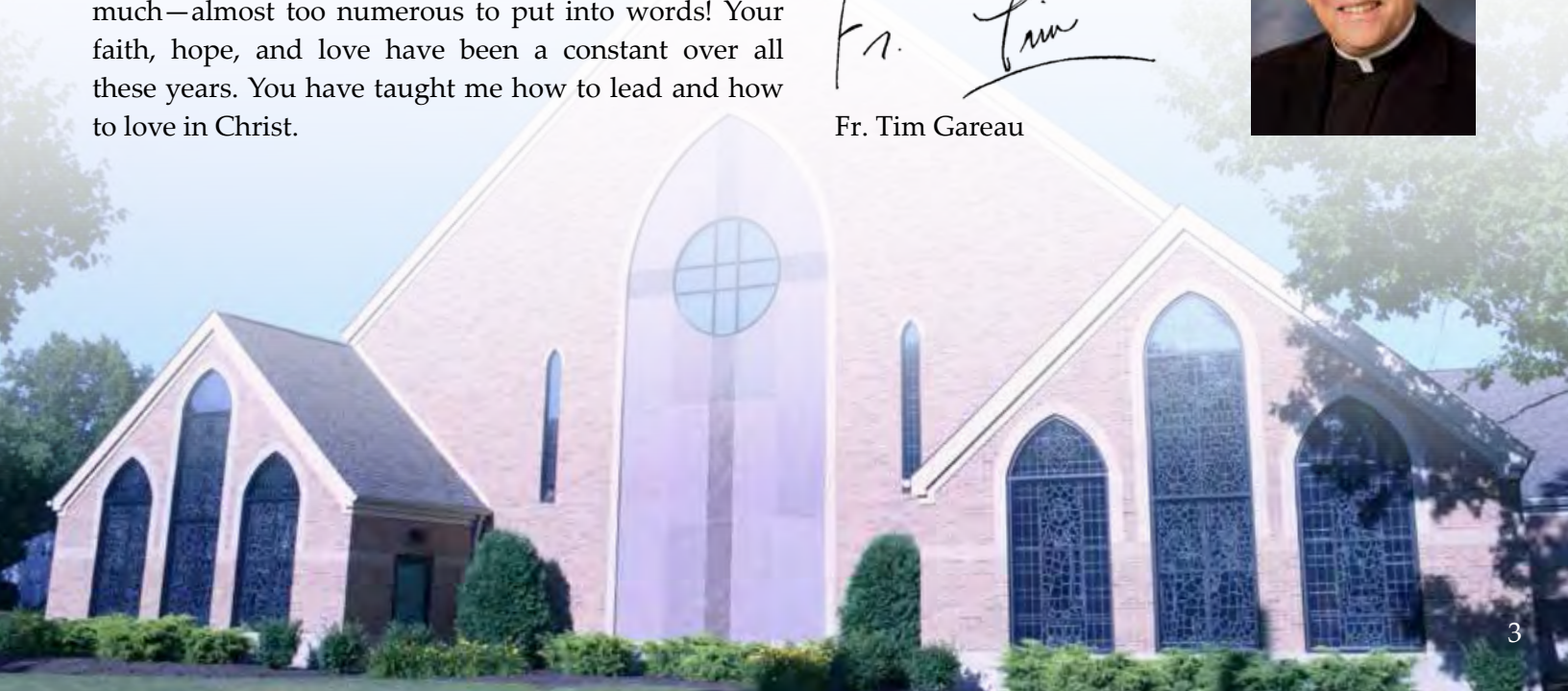
Please know as I enter a new faith community, I want to offer my full attention to them as I have to you. I also want the new pastor, Fr. Dan Schlegel, to enjoy the same experience. Weddings, funerals, and baptisms will be given over to Fr. Dan and Fr. Jim and their leadership. I know you understand and will honor this moving forward.

In closing, I want to use the words of St. Paul: "I thank God every time I think of you. In my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this, that He who began the good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1: 3-5)

God bless and keep you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Tim".

Fr. Tim Gareau



# Forming Our Liturgical Lives: The Meaning



The diocese has produced a three-part video series featuring Bishop Michael Woost talking about the Eucharistic Liturgy. Each video helps us to reflect on joining our lives to the sacrifice of Jesus and on the transformative power of the Eucharist. Part 1 was shown on September 5th. **Part 2** will be shown on **November 21**, and Part 3 on Feb 6. Each showing will be in our Community Room at 7:00 pm and will be accompanied by discussion led by Fr. Jim. They are open to the public and no reservations are necessary.

In the **Part 2** video (see it **November 21**), Bishop Woost teaches us that the Eucharistic prayer during Mass is our prayer:

“The Eucharistic prayer is the high point of the celebration of the Mass, and it isn’t just the prayer of the priest, because we’re told, ‘lift up your hearts.’ Bring your life to this prayer. Bring who you are to this prayer and the people respond by saying, ‘we lift them up to the Lord.’ Yes, we’re here to offer ourselves. We’re here to offer the whole of ourselves.

“One of the things I always try to remind people is that the Eucharistic prayer is not intermission between the homily and the reception of Communion. That’s not the time when we are called to kind of zone out. This is the prayer of the Church. It is our prayer. The church has the priest-celebrant praying that prayer on our behalf. He is our voice at that point in the Mass. But if you listen to the prayer of the church and pay close attention, it becomes apparent that this is our prayer because of the very language of the prayer. Eucharistic Prayer I, the Roman Canon, says, ‘To you, therefore, most merciful Father, we make humble prayer and petition through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, that

you accept and bless these gifts, these offerings, these holy and unblemished sacrifices, which we offer you firstly for your holy catholic Church.’ So, who is it that is offering this sacrifice? We are, and that’s what the Eucharistic prayer is saying. When the priest says ‘we’, he’s talking about all of us. He is voicing our prayer.

“*The General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, which guides and governs how we celebrate Mass, tells us that the liturgical assembly is supposed to be attentive and listening and entering into the prayer as it’s being voiced by the priest. That’s so that we can, in fact, join in the acclamation at the end of the Eucharistic prayer, after the doxology – ‘through him, and with him, and in him’ - we can enter into the great Amen. That Amen is essentially saying yes to everything that has been prayed. I believe that this is what I’m offering, this is who I am. I’m part of this.



“It’s important for us to recognize that this is in fact our prayer. Again, taking from Eucharistic Prayer I, ‘Remember, Lord, your servants.’ This is the commemoration of the living. So, for whom are we offering this celebration of the Eucharist? ‘Remember, Lord, your servants and all gathered here, whose faith and devotion are known to you. For them, we offer you this sacrifice of praise or they offer it for themselves and all who are dear to them.’ So, everybody who is here is offering in some way. The priest does it in a unique way by virtue of the sacrament of holy orders in which he shares and the fact that he stands in the person of Christ and represents Christ to the community. But he is also voicing the prayer of the church on behalf of the whole community.

# ing of Living Out the Eucharist – Part 2

“Are all of us worthy? No, we’re not. None of us are worthy. None of us is perfect. None of us is holy as God is holy. We are in process, and we are on this journey of faith because the presence and the power of the Spirit is at work in our lives, because Christ has joined us to his paschal mystery. We are celebrating that saving mystery right here and now. This is not a re-enactment of the Last Supper. No, this is a participation in the saving mystery of Christ that’s being made manifest in our midst right now. Our remembering of what Jesus did on the night before he died is an invitation to enter into what he’s actually doing for us in the here and now; in this transformation of the bread and wine into his Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, and in his transformation of us as we encounter him in his paschal mystery. We’re called to enter into that. Just as bread is taken and blessed and broken and given, so too, he takes us and blesses us and invites our lives to be broken open, so that we can be given also for the life of the world. And none of us is worthy, right? And yet Christ says to us in the gospels, be perfect as my heavenly Father is perfect. That’s impossible for us left on our own. It is Christ who is in the process of perfecting us. And so, we come together in the celebration of the Eucharist and ask him to touch our lives and to continue to help us to grow in holiness.

“The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says that in baptism we are given a deifying grace. It is a grace that helps us to grow in the very life of God. The great saints and mystics and teachers of prayer in our Church community and our Catholic tradition tell us that

we become God by participation. Christ enables us, through his paschal mystery, to share in the life of God by grace and to become a sharer in the divine nature. St. Peter says that in his letter in the New Testament, that we become sharers in the divine nature of God. This is the action of Christ. It’s not us making ourselves Holy. It is Christ, and so we open ourselves to that deifying grace. So, deification, that is, growing in the life of God is our call. It’s our destiny. It’s the goal of this journey of faith.

“In her writings, St. Catherine of Siena talks of a revelation she had from God about the Eucharist. Christ said to her, when you receive communion, the host in its physical form may end up being digested, but my presence continues to abide in you. He says, when we receive Eucharist, it’s like taking a seal and impressing it upon wax. Think about using wax to seal a letter, you put the seal into the wax. Jesus says to St. Catherine of Siena, when I come into you through the gift of the Eucharist, those physical signs, those sacramental signs may end up being digested and disappear, but the presence of Christ is impressed upon us, and He continues to abide. And so, we need to respond to that presence. That’s where the presence of God begins to transform us from within and to help us to grow in holiness.”

Please plan to attend the next installment in this interesting series and join together with Fr. Jim for a lively discussion!



# Are You Considering a Charitable Gift Before Year End?

This time of year is when many begin to contemplate certain financial planning decisions, including those of charitable gifts. Perhaps you are one of those persons, and are prayerfully considering a charitable gift to St Raphael Parish given its importance to you, your family and the community.

There are several opportunities for you to choose where you would like your gift to be allocated.

## *Parish Offertory*

Weekly offertory contributions, along with our Christmas and Easter collections, are the principal sources of our parish operating income.

## *Parish Reserve Funds*

Funds have been established to provide savings for future expenditures not generally covered with a normal year's expenses. The **Endowment Fund** is our savings account and we hope to grow this fund so that income earned may offset future operating costs. The **Scholarship Fund** can assist families with financial difficulties. The **Replacement Reserve Fund** allows us to cover future capital replacements or unexpected repairs.

## *Pray, Gather, Play*

Construction has commenced on Phase I which includes installing the storm retention system, constructing the new storage building, and demolishing the existing garage. Currently about 40% of the total project costs has been pledged. Help us renovate our backyard with new spaces that the entire parish can enjoy. Consider making a pledge and paying it over three years. More information can be found on the parish website.

*There are a few ways to give a charitable gift, each with different advantages and features.*

## *Gifts of Cash*

You can simply write a check payable to St Raphael Parish and send it to the Parish before December 31, 2023. Alternatively, you can visit the parish website at [www.saintraphaelparish.com](http://www.saintraphaelparish.com) and select "Online Giving."

## *Gifts of Appreciated Securities*

Charitable gifts of long-term appreciated securities (i.e. securities you have held for longer than a year) can also be advantages. You simply transfer your long-term appreciated security from your brokerage or custody account directly to the Parish. You may receive an immediate charitable income tax deduction of the full fair market value of your contribution, and most significantly, any capital gains tax will have been eliminated. Please consult with your tax advisor to determine if this type of charitable gift is right for you.

## *Individual Retirement Account (IRA) Distributions*

If you have an IRA and are over 70 ½, you may make a tax-free charitable donation directly from your IRA to a qualified charity (Qualified Charitable Distribution or QCD). Please direct your IRA custodian to make your distribution directly to Saint Raphael Parish. You can exclude up to \$100,000 of QCDs from your gross income. Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) are amounts that must be withdrawn from you IRA once you are eligible. As of 01/01/2023 the age to start taking a RMD increased to age 73. QCDs can be used to meet the RMD requirement. Rules regarding IRA distributions and gifts are complicated. Please consult your tax advisor to determine if you qualify and for specific advice regarding your tax situation.

*Thank you for your continuing gifts to the Parish.*

# The Eucharistic Miracle of Legnica, Poland, 2013



*As related by Blessed Carlo Acutis in the following extract from his website of Eucharistic Miracles, [miracolieucaristici.org](http://miracolieucaristici.org)*



*St. Hyacinth Church in Legnica, Poland*

In St. Hyacinth's church in Legnica, during Holy Mass, on December 25, 2013, a Host accidentally fell on the ground, during the distribution of Communion. It was immediately placed in a container with water and closed in the tabernacle. St. Hyacinth's priest, Father Andrzej Ziombra, said that on January 4th, along with other priests, he went to see if the consecrated Host had dissolved in the water after nearly two weeks: "Immediately we noticed that the Host had not dissolved, and that a red spot covering a fifth of its surface appeared. We decided to inform the Bishop, who established a special theological scientific commission to analyze the event. We noticed that over time the stain on the Host changed color from deep red to red brown."

The sample was taken directly by the scientists on 26 January 2014. For the priests the miracle was evident. The commission checked if it was some fungus, mold or another external agent (...). The Wrocław Forensic Medicine Institute immediately excluded the presence of bacteria or fungi as a cause for the Host turning red. A second histopathological analysis pointed out that some fragments seemed to belong to myocardial tissue. An additional opinion was sought using the same samples at the Institute of Forensic Medicine in Szczecin without specifying where the samples came from. The Institute used a different analysis method. After the analysis, The Pomeranian Medical University's Department



*Monstrance exhibiting the Flesh and Blood at Legnica*

of Histopathology in Szczecin announced that "tissue fragments containing fragmented parts of cross-striated muscle" was found in the histopathological image. This is similar to "human heart muscle with alterations that often appear during the agony. We have not tested the blood found on the Host, we only know that human DNA was found."

The results of the analysis were presented to the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which recognized the supernatural nature of the event. It is striking that the examination results were similar to those of the Lanciano Eucharistic Miracle of 700 A.D. and other Miracles that occurred recently such as Sokolka in 2008, in Poland, Tixtla in 2006 in Mexico, and Buenos Aires, in Argentina in 1996. On April 17, 2016, following the instructions received by the Holy See, Monsignor Zbigniew Kiernikowski, the new Bishop of Legnica, announced during Mass that the parish priest, Fr Andrzej Ziombra, should "prepare a suitable place for the exhibition of the precious relic, so that the faithful can express their adoration properly".



*Close-Up of Legnica Host*

# St. Raphael

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## Faith FORMATION

## November Calendar

November 6: Revival! Blessed (7- 8:30 pm)

November 7, 14, 28: Bible Study (10-11:30 am)

November 13: Heaven, Hell, and Uranus (7-9 pm)

November 20: Trivia Night (7-8:30 pm)

November 27: History of Advent (7-8:30 pm)

*All events in the Community Room*

### *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.

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