

September 2023

Saint Raphael



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Gathered

by Fr. Tim Gareau



Photo courtesy of Richard Wager

The Eucharistic Revival is **REAL**:
Revive, **E**ncounter, **A**ttend, **L**ive it!

Our parish revival began on the Feast of The Body and Blood of Jesus. We gathered for Mass and journeyed in faith with a Eucharistic Procession, Christ's Eucharistic Presence in the center, blessing us in our treasured faith.

Here at St. Raphael, our revival has four different themes for reflection throughout the year: Gathered, Blessed, Broken, and Shared.

This month we reflect on GATHERED: We gather as a faith community to worship our God in praise and thanksgiving for all that He has done for us. We come from our homes and our neighborhoods. We come from all different backgrounds and walks of life.

Coming together, assembling, is at the heart of our Sunday Worship. The reason behind each of the ritual actions of the first part of Mass can be found in this word: Gathering. The purpose of these rites is to bring us together into one body, ready to listen to the Word of God and to break bread together.

The most excellent truth of the words "This is my Body": this body of Christ is also – or should be – the body of each of us. The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains that in "the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value. Christ's sacrifice present on the altar makes it possible for all generations of Christians to be united with his offering" (CCC, 1368).

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In other words: "this body which is transformed by the Spirit and lifted up to the Father is not only the Body of Jesus in the Sacrament, but it is also the Body of Christ in the Church – you, me, and each of the baptized. 'This is my Body' is both the real body of Jesus that walked the earth and is now seated at the Father's right hand, and the Mystical Body which is the Church, . . . which we are". (Carstens, Christopher, "This Is My Body", Adoremus, May 6, 2023)

And so, my dear friends, we GATHER as the Mystical Body of Christ to encounter and engage in his special presence found in God's Word and Sacrament at Mass. We come from many different homes and neighborhoods to join in one heart and in one voice to praise and honor the God that we worship. "So, we, though many, are One Body in Christ" (Romans 12:5).

Whether you are here with us regularly or mostly on special holidays, we invite you and your family to "gather" with us at St. Raphael. Perhaps you attend Mass occasionally or took a pause from gathering in person during the pandemic. These past few months might have been busy, filled with family, work demands or summer activities. As autumn approaches and life returns to a routine, consider coming home to your spiritual family that gathers around God's table in this very special place.

I would like to close with the final verse and refrain of the song "In This Place", written by Victoria Thomson and composed by Trevor Thomson: "As the bread becomes Body, we are filled with the grace of the power and the Spirit that is here in this place. We are gathered at table as one in the Lord, we are gathered as people who are living the Word. Our hearts and our spirits are nurtured by grace. It is Jesus who fills us. He is here in this place."



Are We God's Sweethearts?

So, we are taught to love the unlovable, to accept all. When my kids were little, they often heard me praise someone I welcomed as a friend, someone accepted, someone kind and good. I would say: "She's such a sweetheart," or, "He's such a sweetheart."

I delivered this sentence often, especially when I was on the phone. After hearing that acclamation many times, one of the kids asked, pointedly, "Is I a Sweetheart?"

"Of course, Sweetheart," I told him honestly and sincerely. This child of mine is, was, and always will be precious to me, and to God - a model Sweetheart!

I am thinking how Jesus wants me to see everyone as "Sweethearts." God loves us all. No ranking in God's eyes, no one is "extra" special, except saints! Sometimes children are rascals, to put it mildly.

And adults can be irritants. There are many people who have obvious faults, who are toxic to others, and those who are thieves, even murderers. And yet, God loves us all.

We are all His Sweethearts!

View from the Pews
Colleen Lanning



REBOOT with Chris Stefanick!



St. Joseph Church, 32929 Lake Rd, Avon Lake, has, in conjunction with St. Raphael and other neighboring parishes, secured a world-class event: **REBOOT! Live!** for Wednesday, October 25, 2023, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm.

Featuring internationally acclaimed speaker and author Chris Stefanick, the evening will center around a practical exploration and understanding of the Catholic faith, and all the ways it's meant to impact our lives, including prayer and spirituality, work and dating, marriage, parenting, health and more.

Over the past decade, Chris has established himself worldwide with millions of people. Chris's live seminars reach more than 85,000 people per year. His videos and radio spots have reached more than 1,000,000 people per month. And his educational initiatives are turning-the-tide in the Church, authoring what is being welcomed as the best Confirmation program in the English language: *Chosen*. And the popular evangelization program, *The Search*.

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The Men's Huddle

by Joy Horvath



Tuesday, 6 A.M.: Men begin filtering in to the St. Raphael Community Room, filling their mugs with steaming coffee, choosing fresh bagels, finding seats, greeting friends old and new. By 6:15, Tom Pussell and Fr. Jim call the group to order and the happy chatter quiets. The thirty to forty men pray a decade of the Rosary together, offer personal prayer intentions, and prepare their hearts and minds for meaningful discussion. For fifteen minutes or so, Tom and Fr. Jim give their thoughts on the "Topic of the Day." The group then spends 45 minutes in shared discussion around their respective tables. Finally, the assembly has a few minutes to share comments. At 7:30, with handshakes and smiles all around, the men go their separate ways, some to work, a few to confession and Mass, others to home.

Since September 2022, Tom, Fr. Jim, and participants have worked chapter-by-chapter through two books which provide discussion topics: *Wild at Heart: Discovering the Secret of a Man's Soul* by John Eldredge and *Show us the Father* by Devin Schadt (kudos to the Winzigs' encouragement!). Both books are about life relationships and growth as Christian men. Reading a chapter or two each week before the meeting is the goal but not a requirement, as Tom provides a written summary at the start of each session. (Both books are usually available on the book racks in the Gathering Area.)

The forty or so participants who roll out of bed early to get to the weekly sessions are intergenerational with an age range from late 30's to late 70's. Most are parents, some are grandparents, and the majority are

Catholic. Tom says the choice of time is "God-awful" but intentional, as early morning doesn't interfere too much with family and work commitments.

Why gather like this? Tom has some objectives and ideas. First, he wants to build community. He cites recent studies showing that, unlike women, many men are "friendless" beyond work and home/family. He hopes participants make faith-based connections with other men. Second, the gathering is a "safe space" for questioning and sharing. Finally, and most important, Tom wants to "make better men" by encouraging men in their faith.

My friend Bill is a participant, and praises the group. He's not usually an early riser, but he has been getting up in the wee hours for this gathering, and has missed only one session. He enjoys the camaraderie and sees merit in the age range of participants, stating that the "seasoned" men can offer comments based on their "been there, done that" life experiences. Conversely, older men get exposed to younger men's thoughts. In addition, he's happy to get to meet men from different social circles, as it opens doors to new ideas. He said the books have been excellent guides for kicking off discussions about family, marriage, and commitment.

Looking into the future, Tom hopes this becomes an ecumenical outreach effort open to guys from all walks of life since the material is not just religious but also practical. The group is taking a few weeks off for the summer, but the regular weekly sessions will resume starting September 5th. Tom is planning to change things up a bit for this next series. There will be no book to read, but a different topic for discussion will be presented each week. There's plenty of room for you in the Community Room, lots of hot coffee and fresh bagels, and new and old friends to share a faith-filled morning. Consider attending, gentlemen.



The Eucharistic Miracle of St. Clare of Assisi, 1240



As related by Blessed Carlo Acutis in the following extract from his website of Eucharistic Miracles, miracolieucaristici.org

The History of Saint Clare, Virgin, tells of various miracles performed by Saint Clare. There are episodes of multiplications of loaves, of bottles of oil that appeared in the convent when there was none before. But Clare performed the most famous of the miracles in 1240, on a Friday in September, in which she turned away an attack by Saracen soldiers who had broken into the convent cloister by showing them the Sacred Host.

This Eucharistic Miracle is cited in *"The History of Saint Clare, Virgin,"* written by Tommaso da Celano, and describes how Saint Clare of Assisi succeeded with the Blessed Sacrament in turning away Saracen troops in the pay of Emperor Frederick II of Sweden.

The history goes like this: "By imperial order, regiments of Saracen soldiers and bowmen were stationed there, massed like bees, ready to devastate the encampments and seize the cities. Once during an enemy attack against Assisi, city beloved of the Lord, and while the army was approaching the gates, the fierce Saracens invaded San Damiano, entered the confines of the monastery and even the very cloister of the virgins. The women swooned in terror, their voices trembling with fear as they cried to their Mother, Saint Clare.



Saint Clare and the Assault on Assisi.
Giuseppe Cesari (1568-1640)



St. Clare is often depicted holding a monstrance.

Saint Clare, with a fearless heart, commanded them to lead her, sick as she was, to the enemy, proceeded by a silver and ivory case in which the Body of the Saint of saints was kept with great devotion. And prostrating herself before the Lord, she spoke tearfully to her Christ: 'Behold, my Lord, is it possible you want to deliver into the hands of pagans your defenseless handmaids, whom I have taught out of love for you? I pray you, Lord, protect these your handmaids whom I cannot now save by myself.' Suddenly a voice like a child's resounded in her ears from the tabernacle: 'I will always protect you!' 'My Lord,' she added, 'if it is your wish protect also this city which is sustained by your love.' Christ replied, 'It will have to undergo trials, but it will be defended by my protection.' Then the virgin, raising a face bathed in tears, comforted the sisters: 'I guarantee you, daughters, that you will suffer no evil; only have faith in Christ.' Upon seeing the audacity of the sisters, the Saracens took fright and fled back over the walls they had scaled, unnerved by the strength of she who prayed. And Clare immediately admonished those who heard the voice I spoke of above, telling them severely: 'Take care not to tell anyone about that voice while I am still alive, dearest daughters.'"

Angel Scholarship Fund – Back in 2023!

The Angel Scholarship Fund (ASF) is a State of Ohio approved Scholarship Granting Organization. Donors to ASF may be eligible for a 100% tax credit on their State of Ohio income tax return for the year the contribution is made. ASF donations are awarded as tuition assistance for K-12 students in the Diocese of Cleveland, and donors may designate a school/schools to receive their donation.



HERE'S HOW IT WORKS*

The maximum credit amount is \$750 per individual; married couples that file a joint return can each claim this credit if both spouses make eligible donations (\$1,500 total). **Please note this is a non-refundable credit, which means that the amount of the credit cannot exceed the amount owed in state taxes.** Just follow these three steps:

STEP 1

Estimate your 2023 Ohio state tax liability

STEP 2

Make your donation to ASF

STEP 3

Claim your scholarship tax credit when you file your 2023 State of Ohio taxes

** This does not constitute income tax advice. Always consult with a tax professional for information on the impact of any charitable donation.*

Contributions can now be made that are eligible for the credit in the 2023 tax year. Please visit www.catholiccommunity.org/angel to make an online contribution or download a mail-in form.

For more information, call, email or scan:
216-902-1312 / asfinfo@dioceseofcleveland.org



ANGEL
SCHOLARSHIP FUND

*Turning taxes into tuition with the
Catholic Community Foundation*



ANGEL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Turning taxes into tuition with the Catholic Community Foundation

St. Raphael School
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Bay Village, OH 44140

Questions, contact
Kris McGivney
440-871-1100

Help Our Children Grow in Faith. DONATE TODAY TO THE ANGEL SCHOLARSHIP FUND



The Angel Scholarship Fund provides Catholic school tuition assistance to families in the Diocese of Cleveland.

RECEIVE A 100% OHIO INCOME TAX CREDIT UP TO \$750
(\$1500 IF MARRIED FILING JOINTLY).



EXAMPLE OF OHIO TAX CREDIT SCENARIO*

INDIVIDUAL

Ohio Income Tax owed	\$1,000
Tax Credit on \$750 Contribution to the Angel Scholarship Fund	- \$750
Ohio Income Tax owed after Tax Credit	\$250

MARRIED, FILING JOINTLY

Ohio Income Tax owed	\$2,000
Tax Credit on \$1,500 Contribution to the Angel Scholarship Fund	- \$1,500
Ohio Income Tax owed after Tax Credit	\$500

The above scenario does not include additional federal tax benefit for those who itemize charitable contributions.

**This tax credit scenario does not constitute income tax advice. Always consult with your tax professional for information on the impact of any charitable donation.*

**TO LEARN MORE, VISIT: WWW.CATHOLICCOMMUNITY.ORG/ANGEL
OR CONTACT FRED ROBERTS: FROBERTS@CATHOLICCOMMUNITY.ORG OR 216-902-1312**

St. Raphael

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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, and enter the information under "Staying Connected: Click Here to Receive Email Updates on Parish Events". Information will not be shared and you can remove it at any time. Contact Dcn. Mark Cunningham in the Parish office with questions at (440) 871-1100.

REBOOT with Chris Stefanick!

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St. Raphael is offering a limited number of tickets for sale at \$20 each (regular price is \$39), while the supply lasts. Tickets can be purchased in-person at the St. Raphael Parish Office, or on-line through the St. Raphael Parish website: (<https://www.saintraphaelparish.com/190>).

Children 11 and under do not need a ticket. The St. Joseph Social Hall will be setup as a "Family Area" with coloring and room for children to move around. There will be a large screen setup with a livestream of Chris. Parents are free to come and go from the Social Hall based upon the child's needs.

You don't want to miss this event - plan now to attend and invite a friend to go with you!



Wednesday, October 25th, 2023
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm



**St. Joseph Church, 32929
Lake Rd, Avon Lake**

Scan the QR Code
to order your
Reboot! Tickets!

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.