

April 2024

Saint Raphael



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Shared

by Terri Telepak

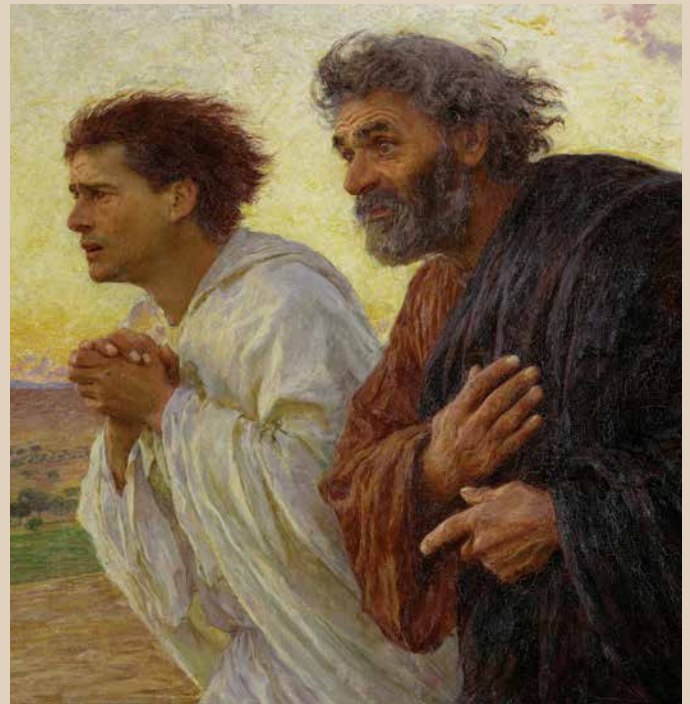
"On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb.

So, she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, and told them, 'They have taken the Lord from the tomb and we don't know where they put him.'"

– From the Easter Sunday Gospel of John 20:1-3

Imagine Mary of Magdala's Easter morning excitement, worry, and feelings of wonderment in finding the empty tomb when she came to anoint Jesus. Could someone have taken Him? Did He really rise from the dead and return as promised? After she told Peter, he and John ran back to the tomb with her. When they found the empty tomb and believed Jesus had risen, the apostles went back home. But Mary stayed. First angels appeared to her, and then, Jesus! He told her, "Go to my brothers and tell them I am going to My Father, to my God and your God." Mary of Magdala went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord" and shared all that He had told her. Jesus chose this humble woman to be the first person to proclaim the Good News of His Resurrection!

Hopefully all of us have been bursting at one time or another with good news: winning an award, achieving an "A" in class, making the team or being chosen for a part in a play, winning a championship game, being



The Disciples Peter and John Running to the Sepulchre on the Morning of the Resurrection. Eugène Burnand, 1898

accepted into the high school or college of your choice, finding the perfect job, getting engaged, planning a wedding, buying a home, expecting a baby, and sharing in the joy of family members and friends. It is a rare thing to keep wonderful news to yourself. You can't wait to tell others, and that's what our faith is all about.

Like Mary of Magdala on Easter morning, we are called by our Baptism to be missionary disciples. Not to keep our faith to ourselves, but to tell our

Continued on Page 2

This Issue:

- 1 Shared
- 3 Hold Fast to God,
the One True Good
- 4 The Making of a Saint
- 5 Faith Formation Calendar
- 6 Especially on Sundays!
- 7 The Eucharistic Miracle of
Fiecht, Austria, 1310



Shared (Continued)

Continued from Page 1

family, our neighbors, co-workers and friends, about all that God is doing in our lives! And, that can happen in many different ways, at our own comfort level, and even amidst our busy lives, because where two or three of us are gathered, Jesus is there.

Being part of the Pastoral Staff at Saint Raphael gives me the blessing of seeing how MANY people share their faith here on our church campus, and beyond. This past Lent, countless Fish Fry volunteers set-up, cooked, served and cleaned up after taking care of hundreds of people each Friday. Other parish groups led Stations of the Cross, worked at Sunday morning Donut Sales, and participated in building children's beds for "Sleep in Heavenly Peace". Guys of all ages gather to share at 6 a.m. on Tuesday mornings in the Men's Huddle, and over 60 women met new "sister-friends" at the Women's Retreat. Volunteer catechists in our Parish School of Religion connect our preschoolers through 8th graders to the Catholic faith, while our Confirmation A-Team helps to prepare our young adolescent disciples for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. High School Ministry accompanies our teens, apprenticing them in our Catholic faith from the Upper Room of the Parish Office all the way to the National Catholic Youth Conference.

Parishioners who participate in our liturgical ministries proclaim the Scriptures as a lector, distribute Communion as Eucharistic ministers, set-up the vessels for Masses as a sacristan, raise their voices as part of the choir, usher to offer a welcoming presence, and



clean and decorate the church as a Martha. Did you know that you can also participate in ministry at home, by helping with the "holy" laundry from our Masses, praying for weekly intentions that come in, or even joining with other parishioners who recite the rosary Mon – Sat at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom?

Saint Raphael parishioners are visible on Dover Center Road at 6 p.m. each Wednesday evening as they gather to pray in front of the Blessed Virgin Mary statue. And many are the face of our parish throughout the Cleveland area, helping at the West Side Catholic Center, Saint Augustine's, Saint Malachi's, and Huntington Woods Care and Rehabilitation Center as they bring Jesus in Communion, lead craft activities, sort clothing or serve a meal.

Left: The Resurrection of Christ. Maerten de Vos, circa 1564

Remember in this Easter season, that wherever you go, you are a reflection of Jesus each time you enter your home, your job, a store and even a sports field. After the Ascension of Jesus into heaven, the apostles and disciples first met in homes and became Church. They did what Jesus taught them to do: **Gather, bless** each other and the bread, **break** the bread and **share**. All of that happens each time we attend Mass, but we don't stay at Mass. We go back home, to school, to our workplace, to friends, out to our community and on vacation.

Be bread for each other. Tell stories of what God is doing in your life. Teach your children and grandchildren to pray and participate in the life of our church family. We need more Eucharistic ministers, altar servers, choir members, religion teachers, teen and adult volunteers for Vacation Bible School, and men and women of all ages who want to be part of a family bigger than their own.

Save the date of **Sunday, June 2nd for the Noon Mass** followed by our outdoor Corpus Christi procession with the Blessed Sacrament around the block. We are the parish of Saint Raphael, united in One Spirit, a family of believers, disciples of the Lord: *gathered, blessed, broken and shared!* The Good News of the Real Presence of Jesus is too wonderful to keep to ourselves!



Left: St. Raphael Eucharistic Procession. 2023

Hold Fast to God, the One True Good

courtesy Fred Bangeman

From the treatise on *Flight from the World* by Saint Ambrose, Bishop:

Where a man's heart is, there is his treasure also. God is not accustomed to refusing a good gift to those who ask for one. Since he is good, and especially to those who are faithful to him, let us hold fast to him with all our soul, our heart, our strength, and so enjoy his light and see his glory and possess the grace of supernatural joy. Let us reach out with our hearts to possess that good, let us exist in it and live in it, let us hold fast to it, that good which is beyond all we can know or see and is marked by perpetual peace and tranquility, a peace which is beyond all we can know or understand.

This is the good that permeates creation. In it we all live, on it we all depend. It has nothing above it; it is divine. No one is good but God alone. What is good is therefore divine, what is divine is therefore good. Scripture says: When you open your hand all things will be filled with goodness. It is through God's goodness that all that is truly good is given us, and in it there is no admixture of evil.

These good things are promised by Scripture to those who are faithful: The good things of the land will be your food.

We have died with Christ. We carry about in our bodies the sign of his death, so that the living Christ may also be revealed in us. The life we live is not now our ordinary life but the life of Christ: a life of sinlessness, of chastity, of simplicity and every other virtue. We have risen with Christ. Let us live in Christ,

Continued on Page 8



St. Ambrose. Matthias Stom, circa 1633-39

The Making of a Saint

by Joy Horvath



Way of Salvation. Andrea di Bonaiuto, 1365

My husband always tells me that his father was a saint. He was a wonderful faith-filled husband, father, and grandfather, as was my father. I'm sure you know virtuous people you'd consider saints. We Christians are all called to be saints-in-progress here on Earth in union with the "Communion of Saints" already in Heaven.

Through canonization, the Catholic Church acknowledges *particular* saints--persons who lived "heroically virtuous lives, offered their life for others, or were martyred for the faith, and who are worthy of imitation." (*United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/USCCB*) In fact, there are over 10,000 recognized Saints, with more added each year. Most are named, but some names are known but to God. On 13 May 2013, Pope Benedict XVI added 800 new saints when he canonized the residents of Otranto, Italy, killed for refusing to convert to Islam during the Ottoman siege of the town in 1480.

The steps in the canonization process have been developed and refined over the two millennia of Church history in response to growth and expansion. In early Christian communities, there was no formal canonization procedure, but rather sainthood was conferred by public acclaim: *Vox populi, Vox Dei* (Voice of the people, Voice of God). Hundreds of saints were venerated in

local churches, but later investigations by 17th and 18th Century Catholic scholars found scant historical evidence for their stories. St. George, St. Valentine, St. Christopher were perhaps real people, but their stories were exaggerated legends. (Parishes and people under their patronage can still venerate these saints, but their names no longer appear on the calendar and no new parishes or institutions will bear their names.) In rural France, St. Guinefort was revered as a saint for saving his master's baby from a snakebite. St. Guinefort was a dog! And a local church in Sweden canonized an intoxicated monk who had been killed in a brawl--hardly someone to emulate!

Folk heroes and dogs! In an attempt to gain some control over the process, in the 6th Century a rule was devised that local communities could petition the local bishop for a saint's recognition, and he would make the determination. In the 10th Century, Pope John XV required that all decisions flow through him. In 1234, Pope Gregory IX laid out the formal procedure for investigating a candidate. And in 1588 Pope Sixtus V designated the "Congregation for the Causes of the Saints" (now "Congregation for Sacred Rites") as overseers of the canonization process, which has remained mostly unchanged since then. There are many theologians and investigators involved in this activity, so the following is a simplification of the course of action.

The first step in the process is the identification of someone who might be a candidate for sainthood. Usually, he or she has been deceased for at least five years to allow for greater objectivity and balance, but the Pope can waive that requirement, as in the case of St. Mother Theresa of Calcutta. A petition usually originates at the local level requesting the diocesan bishop begin an investigation that could ultimately lead to sainthood. The bishop conducts a deep dive into the candidate's life and writings to determine if he or she has led a heroically virtuous life or was a martyr for the faith. An extensive biography, eyewitness accounts, and the person's written works are forwarded to the Vatican for consideration. At this

point, the candidate is recognized as a Servant of God.

A Google search of candidates for sainthood yielded a list of hundreds of names, including two from the Cleveland area: Bishop Rappe, bishop of the Cleveland Diocese from 1847-1870, and Sister Dorothy Kazel, an Ursuline nun martyred in El Salvador in 1980. Please note that they’ve NOT been declared saints at this time.

Once the petition arrives at the Vatican, theologians and cardinals review the evidence and decide if the candidate lived a virtuous life or suffered religious martyrdom. If the majority votes favorably, the cause is presented to the Congregation for Sacred Rites for a vote. If their vote in turn supports the candidate, the information is presented to the Pope, who authorizes the Congregation to declare the person Venerable. In the case of martyrdom, the candidate is directly Beatified, that is, declared Blessed.



St. Peter's Basilica Cupola, Vatican City.

The next step, Beatification, requires a miracle attributed to that person's intercession which must be proved through canonical investigation. The official definition is "something that has occurred by the grace of God through the intercession of a Venerable, or Blessed which is scientifically inexplicable" (USCCB). Beatification permits limited veneration of the "Blessed" person, usually in that particular diocese, region, or religious community.

The final step, Canonization, requires a second miracle after Beatification. At this point a beatified martyr must also have a miracle attributed to him or her. Once the miracle is canonically verified, the Pope confers the title "Saint," and declares that he or she can be venerated by the Universal Church.

Currently, there are eleven American Saints, four American Blesseds, thirteen American Venerables, and a very long list of Servants of God.

Well, okay. Saints are virtuous people who are worthy of veneration and emulation. How, then, can Archangels Gabriel, Michael, and our own Raphael be saints, since they have never been earth-bound human beings? They've never been formally canonized but have been venerated as saints as early as the Fourth Century. The word "saint" derives from the Latin word "sancta" meaning "holy one." Thus, by definition, all God's holy angels are saints. The angels are God's messengers, doing His bidding, and they are holy because of their service and their closeness to God. Both we and the angels worship and praise Christ as our Lord; we are united with the angels, so that they too are holy ones, and can offer prayers along with the saints on our behalf. The term "saint" is extended, then, to these heavenly beings because of their importance in God's divine plan.



Faith FORMATION

April Calendar

April 16: Trivia Night (7 - 8:30 pm)

April 9, 16, 23, 30: Bible Study (10 - 11:30 am)

April 15: History of Easter (7 - 8:30 pm)

April 22: Revival! Shared (7 - 8:30 pm)

All events in the Community Room

Especially on Sundays!

Why do some television programs feature major violent episodes on Sundays? Whatever happened to the notion of Sunday as a day of rest? Couldn't part of the day be spent feeding the spirit or uplifting the soul?

What's the attraction to America's Funniest Home Videos, a show which evaluates and grades people enduring physical pain while a camera busily records it all? Typical episodes include merciless judging of family members or harassment of the clueless family pet. Both are subjected to hurtful situations. Is this ever appropriate, and especially on a Sunday?

Another show features how amusing (?) it is when an audience member faces their deepest fears. Is it really funny to laugh at someone else's pain? There are too many opportunities these days to joke at someone else's expense.

And this is entertainment?

In the 1950s, a new invention called television intrigued Pope Pius XII. The Pope saw in these wonderful new devices an opportunity to spread our faith far beyond geographic boundaries. The Pope's vision was realized early on by Bishop Fulton Sheen's *Life Is Worth Living* (1952–1957) and *The Fulton Sheen Program* (1961–1968) television shows (Bishop Sheen twice won an Emmy Award for Most Outstanding Television Personality).

On Sunday back in those days, programs included the Ed Sullivan variety show plus a nature show sponsored by Mutual of Omaha. Add in a Disney movie. And we watched them with no violence included, and no violence expected. No one on American television was routinely



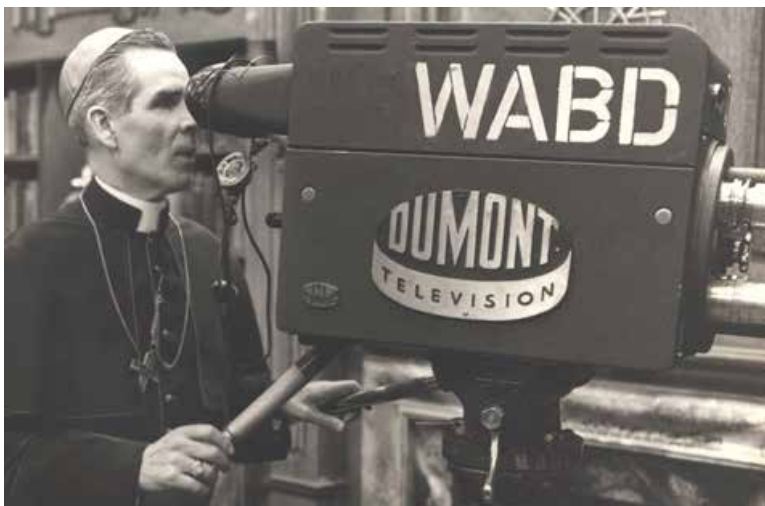
Bottom Left and Above: Bishop Fulton Sheen handling a television camera.

getting hurt or laughing at one another's pain. Nowadays, people are trying to hurt one another for a cash prize awarded for those most miserable. Too much on any day, but especially on Sunday!

Astute as he was, Pope Pius XII saw the educational value of television, while holding deep concern for the presence of evil, saying, "[television] is a wonderful instrument... which can be the source of very great wealth, but also of deep troubles." Perhaps this is why he chose St. Clare of Assisi (1194-1253) to be the patron saint of television (and now also computer screens). St. Clare led a life steeped in humility, poverty, and love of God. Late in her life, she fell too ill to attend church, and one day the images and sounds of the entire Mass appeared in full on the wall of her room. Thank God for St. Clare who spread the Good Word by work and example - especially on Sundays!

Let us pay homage to St. Clare in our own use of television and computer screen time. Our computers and smartphones can be used for education and entertainment, but they can also be misused or become a source of deep troubles. And perhaps through conscious decision from time-to-time, we can set them aside and replace "screen time" with an opportunity to hold our loved ones near and enjoy a day of rest – especially on Sundays!

View from the Pews
Colleen Lanning



The Eucharistic Miracle of Fiecht, Austria, 1310



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

The little village of St. Georgenberg-Fiecht, in the Inn Valley, is very well known, especially for a Eucharistic miracle that took place there in 1310. During the Mass, the priest was seized with temptations regarding the Real Presence of Jesus in the consecrated elements. Right after the consecration, the wine changed into blood and began to boil and overflow the chalice. In 1480, after 170 years, the sacred blood was “still fresh as if it had come out of a wound,” wrote the chronicler of those days. It is preserved intact to this day and is contained in the reliquary in the Monastery of St. Georgenberg.

Near the side altar of the monastery church there is a documentary tablet that says: “In the year of grace 1310, under Abbot Rupert, a priest was celebrating Holy Mass in this church dedicated to the holy martyr George and the Holy Apostle James. After consecrating the wine, he was seized with a doubt as to whether the Blood of Christ was really present under the species of wine. Suddenly the wine changed into red blood that began to boil in the chalice and overflow it. The abbot and his monks, who happened to be in the choir, and the numerous pilgrims who were present at the celebration, approached the altar and realized what had happened. The priest, terrified, was unable to drink all the Holy Blood, and so the abbot placed the remainder in a vessel in the tabernacle of the main altar near the cloth with which the chalice was wiped. As soon as news of this miraculous event began to spread, more and more pilgrims began to arrive to adore the sacred Blood.



Monstrance of Precious Blood, St. Georgenberg Monastery

So great was the number of the devotees of the Holy Blood that in 1472 Bishop Georg von Brixen sent the abbot of Wilten, Joahannes Lösch, and the pastors, Sigmund Thaur and Kaspar of Absam, to better study the phenomenon. As a result of this investigation, the adoration of the Blessed Blood was encouraged, and the miracle was declared authentic. Among the devotees were important Church personalities, like John, Bishop of Trieste ; George, Bishop of Brixen ; Rupert, Archbishop of Cologne and Duke of Bavaria ; Frederick, Bishop of Chiemsee.

A second documentary tablet recounts how the relic of the Holy Blood helped preserve the Catholic faith during the Protestant schism: “When, in 1593, the teachings of Luther were spreading everywhere in Tyrol, the monks of St. Georgenberg were asked to preach the faith everywhere. Abbot Michael Geisser was preaching with great success before a large crowd in the parish church of Schwaz and did not hesitate to recall the Holy Miracle of the Blood as proof of the existence of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. He was disputing in such a convincing way that the adversaries were obliged to leave the scene. This total victory against the false teaching was regarded by the believers as a special grace the Lord was granting his faithful, the adorers of the Precious Blood.”



St. Georgenberg Monastery, Fiecht, Austria

St. Raphael

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Hold Fast to God (Cont'd.)

Continued from Page 3

let us ascend in Christ, so that the serpent may not have the power here below to wound us in the heel.

Let us take refuge from this world. You can do this in spirit, even if you are kept here in the body. You can at the same time be here and present to the Lord. Your soul must hold fast to him, you must follow after him in your thoughts, you must tread his ways by faith, not in outward show. You must take refuge in him. He is your refuge and your strength. David addresses him in these words: I fled to you for refuge, and I was not disappointed.

Since God is our refuge, God who is in heaven and above the heavens, we must take refuge from this world in that place where there is peace, where there is rest from toil, where we can celebrate the great sabbath, as Moses said: The sabbaths of the land will provide you with food. To rest in the Lord and to see his joy is like a banquet, and full of gladness and tranquility.

Let us take refuge like deer beside the fountain of waters. Let our soul thirst, as David thirsted, for the fountain. What is that fountain? Listen to David: With you is the fountain of life. Let my soul say to this fountain: When shall I come and see you face to face? For the fountain is God himself.

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.