

March 2024

Saint Raphael



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Walking Through Holy Week

A Journey Into The Story Of Easter Parish Mission, 18-20 March 2024

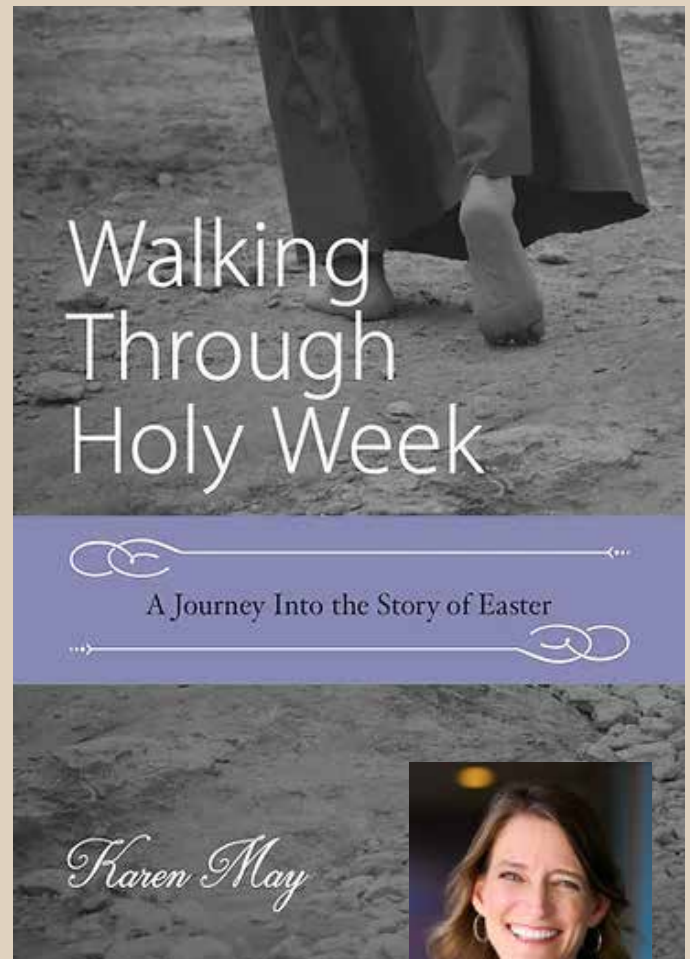
by Joy Horvath

This year's Lenten Mission in March is one that you won't want to miss. Mark 18-20 March on your calendar, then prepare to welcome Karen May, nationally acclaimed author, spiritual director, and dynamic speaker from Texas. She'll be in Bay Village for three days (and evenings) to walk with us through the events of Holy Week. Three evening sessions have been scheduled, along with special meetings with the middle-school aged students at St. Raphael and in PSR.

With her guidance and commentary, we will immerse ourselves in the profound events of Palm Sunday and Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. Using the Bible and the liturgy, Karen will invite us to experience with Jesus the week's intense drama and His glorious victory over death. She will describe the "Why?" of various parts of the liturgy. Karen uses her own very personal experiences to bring the message of Holy Week to vivid life. What sacrifices do families make out of love for each other? How do we react when our expectations of others are not met? Can we find any meaning in suffering?

Karen May is a "cradle Catholic" who married her high school sweetheart, who happened to be atheist. After ten years of marriage, he was converted by prayer and example. His faith journey compelled Karen to

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Karen May will be joining
St. Raphael March 18 - 20, 2024

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Catholics Coming Home 2024: A Ministry of Reconciliation

Catholics Coming Home is a joint program of St. Raphael and Holy Trinity/St. Mary Parishes designed to invite non-active Catholics “home” to the Catholic Church and active practice of their faith. We meet for 1 ½ hours weekly for six weeks. Our sessions provide the opportunity to ask questions and learn about our faith in a non-threatening, support-group format.

The Evangelization Committee of St. Raphael began the program in 2006 and has received very positive feedback from those who have attended. Several former participants are now members of our Catholics Coming Home team. No question or concern is off limits for our discussions. In addition to our team, we will have guest speakers to help guide us on this journey of faith.

The joint sessions will be held at St. Raphael Church, 525 Dover Center Rd., Bay Village, 44140, on six consecutive Sundays, April 7 to May 12, 2024 from 5:00-6:30 p.m. in the Zwilling Room. For more information or to register, contact one of the coordinators: Mrs. Annette DeGidio at 440-864-6810, Mrs. Dean Brennan at 440-725-3159, or Deacon Larry Gregg at 440-871-1100 x7738.

You can also email Deacon Larry at lgregg@lear-group.com. Registration is very much appreciated, but not mandatory.

2024 Schedule

- | | |
|----------|-------------------------------|
| April 7 | Welcome |
| April 14 | Sacrament Overview |
| April 21 | The Mass |
| April 28 | The Creed |
| May 5 | Reconciliation |
| May 12 | “Next Steps” for participants |



Choose the Better Part

by Zakary Jester

We're all familiar with the story of Martha and Mary – Jesus arrives and Martha works her hardest to provide food and hospitality, while Mary sits at the feet of Jesus listening to him. Martha implores the Lord to chastise Mary, and in response, Jesus tells her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.”

The Lord's exhortation to Martha is not one of condemnation, but invitation. He was inviting Martha into the same posture that Mary was in – a posture of discipleship. If we are anxious and worried about many things, if we get too focused on the details or what comes next, or we're furtively checking the time so we're not late for kick-off, or if we treat the Liturgy as a box to be checked rather than as a mystery to be contemplated, we miss the one thing that is most important to focus on.

Where do the priests and ministers stand during the celebration of Mass? If you say the altar, perhaps you are right, colloquially, although the big stone table is really the altar. If you say the sanctuary, you are certainly more precise, although you are being very

literal. In the Church, we love “both/ands” and symbols that have layers and layers of meaning. Where we stand in the sanctuary, what we see and witness at every Mass, is heaven.

That altar is not just any old table. It is at one moment the family table of this community, where we come together despite all our differences and share a meal together. Where we stand together moving, singing, responding with one voice and as One Body. We are not a “congregation” who just all showed up together, but an “assembly” – a building constructed with intention, where each of us plays a unique but indispensable part.

That altar is also the table of the Last Supper, where we see and are invited into that same meal Christ shared with His disciples in the Upper Room 2,000 years ago.

That altar is the manger, the creche. It is the place where we celebrate the Word Becoming Flesh and God becoming Man. I love how on the ambo and altar at St. Bernadette it says “In the beginning was the word, and the word was Made Flesh” drawing our attention to the connection between what we hear, what we see, and what we receive. Because it

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Holy Week 2024

Confessions

Saturday, March 23

3:00-4:00 pm

Wednesday, March 27

5:00-7:00 pm

Good Friday, March 29

12:30-2:00 pm

No confessions on Holy Saturday

Passion (Palm) Sunday, March 24

Saturday Vigil Mass, March 23

4:30 pm

Sunday Masses, March 24

8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm

Monday, March 25

Mass

7:45 am, 9:15 am

Tuesday, March 26

Mass

7:45 am, 9:15 am

Chrism Mass at the Cathedral of

St. John the Evangelist

7:00 pm

Wednesday, March 27

Mass

7:45 am

Confessions

5:00 - 7:00 pm

Tenebrae

8:30 pm

Holy Thursday, March 28

(No Morning Mass)

Mass of the Lord's Supper

7:30 pm

Eucharistic Adoration in the

Community Rooms until 11:30 pm

GOOD FRIDAY, March 29

(No Masses or Eucharistic Adoration)

Stations of the Cross

12:00 pm

Confessions

12:30-2:00 pm

Celebration of Our Lord's Passion

3:00 pm

HOLY SATURDAY, March 30

(No Confessions)

Blessing of Food

1:00 pm

Easter Vigil Mass

8:30 pm

EASTER SUNDAY, March 31

Resurrection of Our Lord

Mass

7:30 am, 9:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:00 pm

Choose the Better Part (Cont'd.)

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is in our reception of Holy Communion that Christ “dwells among us.”

That altar is the Cross, where Christ gave Himself up for our salvation. It is the place where heaven meets earth, where the divine and the human touch.

That altar is where bread and wine are transformed into the very Body and Blood of Jesus, and with it we are transformed as well. St. Athanasius wrote “for the Son of God became man so that we might become God.”

That altar is Christ Himself standing amid His Church, standing to receive His Bride, the Church. That is why during Mass we bow to the Altar, to reverence the presence of Christ who is the one who makes us a community here together.

I could spend hours going through each place that Christ is present to us in the Liturgy, because there are thousands of ways that He makes Himself known to us. I want to focus on just a couple to help us as we pray the Mass. The first is, who is it that reads the readings at Mass? You might say the priest or the deacon, or a lector. And you would be incorrect.

God reads the readings. *The General Instruction for the Roman Missal* (#29) says that it is God Himself who speaks to us in the readings, and it is Christ who speaks to us in the Gospel. This makes perfect sense if you think about it – we call Jesus the “Word of God.”

Now, another question, who distributes communion? Jesus does! In the hymn for Holy Thursday, the *Pange Lingua*, we even sing that “Christ gives Himself with His own hand.” So, when you receive Holy Communion, it is not Joanne or Bill or even Fr. Dan who are handing you Jesus, it is Jesus who is giving Himself.

Last question for you, and we’ll make it easy for you and make it true or false. If you are not acting as a liturgical minister – sacristan, lector, altar server, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion – then you are not participating in the Mass. False! Every one of us in the assembly is called to full, conscious, and active participation.

We are not passive participants, “strangers or silent spectators” as *Sacrosanctum Concilium* would put it. We are the Body of Christ, led by the priest who is the head of the body. We have a duty and a right to participate with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength.



Sanctuary

What the priest offers on our behalf – bread, wine, and our prayers – we should be offering as well. That is the sense behind “may my sacrifice and yours be pleasing to God, the almighty Father.” By virtue of our Baptism, we have a dignity and a mission to share in Christ’s sacrifice, to offer prayer to the Father.

Let me say it another way. Why is it that we cry at the end of the movie *Field of Dreams*? We cry because we get to see the love of a Father and a Son being played out. We get to see Ray Kinsella finally playing catch with his dad. And, vicariously, we remember or long for that relationship ourselves.

The Mass is getting front row seats to Jesus and the Father playing catch. We get to be part of Jesus

and the Father having deep, late-night conversation. We get to witness and participate in the love of Father and Son exchanged. We participate sacramentally, saying “amen... and with your spirit... we lift them up to the Lord.” And yet, this isn’t a historical re-enactment that we are seeing, but God’s love made present to us here and now in a way we can see, touch, smell, taste, and feel.

That is the deep truth, the reality that is veiled in the Mass: we really get to see God face-to-face and call upon Him as our Dad, to ask Him to watch us and delight in us, to tell Him that we love Him and hear Him say He loves us.

That is the one thing we are being invited to by Jesus – to sit at His feet and learn from Him. To receive His love and His grace through the Word of God and through the Eucharist. We need not be pious saints or learned doctors or melodious singers. There is need of only one thing... let us choose the better part.



Ambo

Dominicana

Five Lessons from the Desert

Nearly two thousand years ago, a young man wandered off into the Egyptian desert. Some thought he was crazy. But many others would soon follow in his stead. His name was Anthony, and those who likewise ventured off into the desert became known as the Desert Fathers. In the desert, these hermits and monks dedicated themselves to asceticism and prayer.

One of the fruits of their endeavor is The Sayings of the Desert Fathers, a piecemeal collection of their delightful and profound anecdotes. We have thousands of these proverbs and parables—from over a hundred Desert Fathers (and Mothers). In this article, I will give a small sampler. Here are five sayings of the Desert Fathers:

#1, from Abba Poeman

Abba Poemen said: “Teach your mouth to say that which you have in your heart” (Poemen 63).

In only a few words, Abba Poeman tells us what it

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Faith FORMATION

March Calendar

March 4: Trivia Night (7 - 8:30 pm)

March 4, 11, 18: Lent with St. Benedict (10 - 11:30 am)

March 5, 12, 19: Bible Study (10 - 11:30 am)

March 11: History of Lent (7 - 8:30 pm)

All events in the Community Room

Five Lessons from the Desert (Cont'd.)

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means to be honest. It's not just about satisfying the eighth commandment—rather, speaking from the heart is a necessary condition for friendship. Unless our words are spoken from the truth held in the silence of our hearts, we can't make friends with one another, nor can we make friends with God.

#2, from Abba Agathon:

It was said concerning Abba Agathon that some monks came to find him having heard tell of his great discernment. Wanting to see if he would lose his temper they said to him, 'Aren't you that Agathon who is said to be a fornicator and a proud man?' 'Yes, it is very true,' he answered. They resumed, 'Aren't you that Agathon who is always talking nonsense?' 'I am.' Again they said, 'Aren't you Agathon the heretic?' But at that, he replied 'I am not a heretic.' So they asked him, 'Tell us why you accepted everything we cast you, but repudiated this last insult.' He replied, 'The first accusations I take to myself, for that is good for my soul. But heresy is separation from God. Now I have no wish to be separated from God.' At this saying they were astonished at his discernment and returned, edified (Agathon 5).

Agathon reveals what it means to imitate Christ's humility. They cast at him dramatic insults— which he casually embraces. But he denies the charge of heresy, noting that something bigger is at stake: heresy entails separation from God. For the heretic clings obstinately to a falsehood about God, but we can't be united to God if we don't know him truly. So, while Agathon is willing to be written off as a sinner, he will not accept a charge that sets him apart from communion with God.

#3, from Abba Pambo:

Abba Pambo said: "If you have a heart, you can be saved" (Pambo 10).

We often think that God's will for us is unpleasant, or even repugnant to the longing of our own heart. But Pambo reminds us that God works with our desires, not against them. He intends to purify our hearts, not remove them; to enkindle our hearts, not freeze them.



*Vendimian of Bythnia (from the Menologion of Basil II)
Anonymous.*

#4, from Abba Mius:

A soldier asked Abba Mius if God accepted repentance. After the old man had taught him many things he said, "Tell me, my dear, if your cloak is torn, do you throw it away?" He replied, "No, I mend it and use it again." The old man said to him, "If you are so careful about your cloak, will not God be equally careful about his creature?" (Mius 3).

God cares more about our well-being than we do. This might come as a surprise, but every joy and every sorrow that God sends our way is given to us out of love. The circumstances of our life are tailor-made for our salvation.

#5, from Abba Poeman:

Abba Isaac said: "I was sitting with Abba Poeman one day, and I saw him in ecstasy. And, as I was on terms of great freedom of speech with him, I prostrated myself before him and begged him saying: 'Tell me where you were.' He was forced to answer and said: 'My thought was with Saint Mary, the Mother of God, as she wept by the cross of the Savior. I wish I could always weep like that'" (Poeman 144).

Where do we learn sincerity, truthfulness, humility, and hope, but at the foot of the Cross? There it is our privilege to adore Christ next to the blessed Mary. She will teach us all.

Reprinted with permission from the Dominicana Daily Blog, February 6, 2024.

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The Eucharistic Miracle of Daroca, Spain, 1239



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

In 1239, the Christian cities of Daroca, Teruel and Calatayud (in Aragon) allied themselves to reconquer the walls of the castle of Chio Luchente. The chaplain, Don Mateo Martínez, of Daroca, celebrated the Holy Mass before the first battle, during which having consecrated six Hosts designated for Communion for the six captains that led the troops: Don Jiménez Pérez, Don Fernando Sánchez, Don Pedro, Don Raimundo, Don Guillermo and Don Simone Carroz. An improvised attack of the enemy obliged the chaplain to immediately suspend the Mass, and coil the six consecrated Hosts in the corporal and to hide them under a rock.

The enemy troops had been forced back and the commanders begged the priest to be able to receive Communion in thanksgiving for the obtained victory. Don Mateo brought them to the place where he had hidden the corporal and they found the Hosts drenched in Blood. The commanders interpreted this event as a great sign of predilection on the part of God and of good auspices. They received Communion and tied the blood-stained corporal to a spear to make a banner. Like this, they brought the banner in battle against the walls and with this banner they reconquered the Castle of Chio obtaining a miraculous victory.



Reliquary of the blood-stained corporal.



*City Wall and Castle of Daroca (Zaragoza, Aragon, Spain)
December 1987. Wikimedia Commons.*

This triumph was attributed to the Eucharistic miracle. The six commanders went to all the different regions of Spain and each of them began to maintain that the corporal must go into each city. This began an open discussion. Three times, the city of Daroca was chosen to be the custodial place of the miracle. They arrived at a compromise. They decided to place the corporal on the back of a mule to be left to wander freely: the city where the mule would stop would be the place chosen by the Divine Will to be custodian of the corporal. The mule traveled for 12 days, walking about 200 miles, until, exhausted. It collapsed in front of the Church of Saint Mark in Daroca. Following this, a church dedicated to Our Lady was constructed along with a precious reliquary where, even today, it is possible to venerate the blood-stained corporal.

St. Raphael

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Walking Through Holy Week (Cont'd.)

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crystallize her own beliefs to answer the questions and complaints he raised. She now wants to share God's real presence in her life, and to help others find God-moments in their lives.

This is not Karen's first trip to northern Ohio, as she presented the same Lenten Mission at St. Julie Billiart Church in North Ridgeville last year. The attendees had such a favorable response to her that Fr. Tim "booked" her for this Lent long before he left. Some reactions: "joyful, contagious joy, uplifting." One parishioner noted that the high school kids "were enamored of her." Another felt she was talking only to him.

I'll admit I was a little skeptical of the praise, but then I viewed the videos posted on her website. She is indeed a dynamic, genuine person with a marvelous message for her audience. She's down-to-earth, vibrant, inviting. You can preview the videos for yourself at AmazingGraces.com.

If you've never been to a Parish Mission, THIS IS THE ONE! If you've come in the past, but are looking for reasons not to come again, try this one! If you're a regular attendee every year, you'll love this one! You MUST make time to come to these three nights in March! You won't regret it! It will be **amazing**!

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.