

St. Raphael the Archangel

NEWSLETTER FOR PARISHES NAMED FOR ST. RAPHAEL THE ARCHANGEL TO
EXCHANGE IDEAS ON ENCOURAGING UNDERSTANDING AND DEVOTION

The Newsletter

By Frederick A. Hodes

This is the twelfth issue of the *St. Raphael Newsletter*, whose purpose is to share information about devotion to our patron, St. Raphael the Archangel. Immediately after Vatican II, devotional practices to saints fell out of fashion. In recent years, devotion to and prayers requesting the intercession of the saints and angels have become more prevalent. This newsletter hopes to encourage ideas about devotion to the Archangel Raphael.

Thanks to everyone who has sent Sunday bulletins, newsletters, and parish newspapers in the past. Several parishes have sent us their anniversary books. Many items of interest have come our way, including pictures of various St. Raphael churches and newspaper clippings. Prayers and devotional items along with religious art of all forms remain our main focus, although we do enjoy receiving articles about national and international St. Raphael locations.

We need your input. Please share with us any devotional items such as pictures of statues, stained glass windows, and other forms of artwork. We especially hope for original compositions of prayers or hymns. The *Newsletter* also invites parishes to send copies of their Sunday bulletins so we can learn about the various St. Raphael parishes around the United States.

St. Raphael

Our historical society member, Dolores Stadler, went on a fact-finding mission to our local Catholic goods stores looking for St. Raphael statues for home use. It is really surprising how many such statues are now available. In the decades immediately following Vatican II, I doubt that one could have found any such items. Her report proves very interesting.

The St. Raphael Church in Heuvelton, New York, has a new outside statue of St. Raphael. See the back page for details and pictures. The sculptor indicates that additional copies can be produced should another St. Raphael parish desire one.

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St. Raphael Cathedral at Madison, Wisconsin

In June, Bishop Robert Morlino announced that the Madison Diocese has decided to rebuild the destroyed St. Raphael Cathedral. The new structure will be built on the current parking lot. The recently refurbished steeple that survived the fire will be retained and become part of the new building. Preliminary plans call for the new structure to change direction and face the side street, Fairchild, and not Main Street.

No estimate of the cost of the new structure can be given, nor any timetable. The planned structure will seat 1,000. Plans to raise funds for the multi-million dollar cathedral have begun. The insurance settlement for the ruined cathedral amounted to \$6,125,000. When the building is complete, two smaller churches in the downtown area will close and be consolidated with the new parish.

Additional information on the planned construction will be announced in the coming months as the plans become finalized.

We want to hear from you!

Do you have a parish celebration for the feast of St. Raphael? Send us your bulletin announcement describing the event.

St. Raphael in New Orleans

There are still no plans to reopen the St. Raphael parish church in New Orleans. The church and the area around it were devastated by Hurricane Katrina. The low-lying nature of the neighborhood and the fear of another break in the levee have slowed reconstruction in the area.

The St. Raphael Hospital In Baghdad

The St. Raphael Hospital in Baghdad has escaped news headlines, which is probably a good sign. Located across the Tigres River from the Green Zone, the hospital has been the recipient of casualties from the fighting in the city. Fortunately, the facility itself has not been a target. One recent news reference stated that many injured Iraqis transfer from emergency room treatment to private hospitals such as St. Raphael if they can afford private care. Also, many Iraqis go there to give birth, as many as 500 births a month.

Please send St. Raphael prayers, devotions, pictures, sketches of artwork – traditional or modern – so we can share these with other St. Raphael parishes.

Please send to:

St. Raphael the Archangel
6047 Bishops Place
St. Louis, MO 63109
(Attention: Historical Society)

St. Raphael the Archangel

by Dolores Stadler

Looking around our houses, we see statues of the Sacred Heart, the Blessed Virgin and our own personal favorites. Is St. Raphael the Archangel one of them?

How many statues do we see of St. Raphael outside of the Church?

Have you ever thought of placing St. Raphael in your own home?

St. Raphael is regarded as the angel of joy, and is invoked as the angel of healing, the patron of travelers, the bearer of the Good News, and the patron saint of men and women seeking a good spouse.

Checking around, I looked for him at Pauline Books and Media on Watson, but found only a small plastic statue about 5 inches tall. The statue is in color, but not the best quality and sells for \$10.95. It is not always in stock so a phone call might be best (314-965-3512).

I did find a small booklet "St. Raphael Novena and Prayers" by Mary Mark Wickenhiser, FSP, published by Pauline Books, for \$1.50. It has a write up about St. Raphael, novena prayers and various prayers including those for drivers, commuters, travelers, for healing, for choice of spouse and for newlyweds.

I journeyed on to Catholic Supply at Jamieson and Watson where I had better luck, and found a small plastic statue (about 4 inches), in color, but not the best quality for about \$10.00. They also had a larger statue, about 8 or 9 inches tall, in color, which was really lovely. The workmanship and colors were much better, and it sells for \$25.00.

I guess I was also surprised to find medals. The store has two in sterling silver with a stainless steel chain. The smallest about the size of a dime is \$26.95; the larger medal (nickel size) is \$29.95. I did not feel the quality was that good.

The clerk also assured me there is a catalog. If the statue or medal is not in the store, it may be in the catalog and can be ordered.

Wherever you might find a statue, and whether it is in black and white or color and whatever the quality, I am sure it will be something you would appreciate having in your home, and perhaps your prayers for Raphael's intercession will be answered.

There is no reason for St. Raphael's statue to be only in Church.

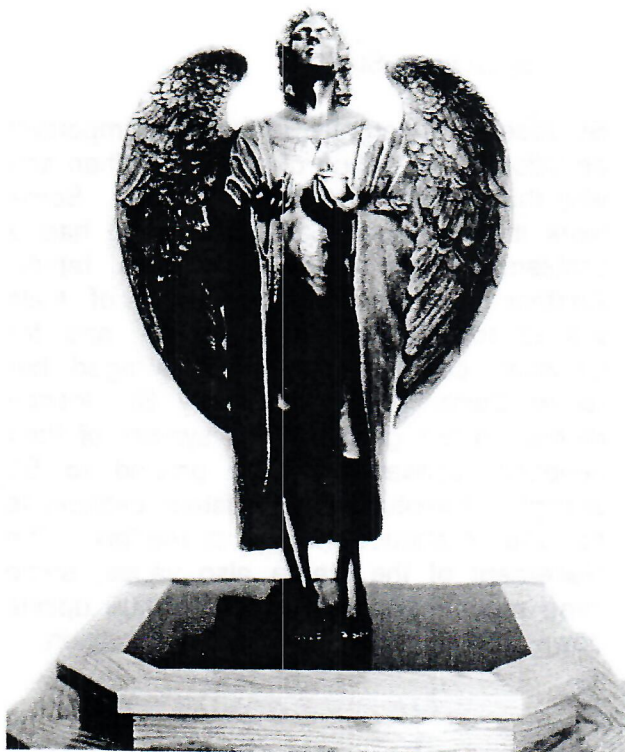
St. Joseph, Seller of Homes

by Dolores Stadler

St. Joseph, apparently, is the most important equation in the selling of houses. When and why this custom started is unknown. Some think it is because St. Joseph also had a problem finding a place for his family. Another story is that St. Teresa of Avila prayed to St. Joseph for more land for Christian converts. She encouraged her fellow Carmelite nuns to bury St. Joseph medals in the ground as a symbol of their devotion, consecrating the ground to St. Joseph. Eventually this custom evolved to the use of statues instead of medals. The placement of the statue also varies; some even recommend burying the statue upside down, although that smacks of superstition.

New St. Raphael Statue

The St. Raphael Church in Heuvelton, New York, commissioned Stephen Chambers to create a new statue of St. Raphael for its 125th anniversary last year. The piece is in bronze and stands thirty inches tall. As a decoration at the top of the tunic, the sculptor placed the names Azariah (Raphael's human name) and Raphael, in Hebrew, with lettering provided by a local rabbi. Raphael holds a jar containing three stones that represent the Trinity, stones taken from under the church.



The sculptor has indicated that he would be willing to reproduce the statue for other St. Raphael churches.

For more information contact:

Stephen Chambers
23 Commerce Street,
Ogdensburg, NY 13669
315-393-6479.

Need Your Input

We need your input for prayers, devotions, and liturgical art connected with St. Raphael the Archangel.

If you do not have these items to contribute, please send us a copy of your parish bulletin so we can use it in next year's edition.