

St. Rafka Maronite Catholic Church

2301 Wadsworth Boulevard,
Lakewood, CO 80214
Website: www.strafkadenver.org
Email: StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com



April 7, 2024

2nd Sunday of the Resurrection (New Sunday)/ Divine Mercy Sunday

Schedule of Masses & Services

Sunday Mass 11:00 AM
Tuesday-Thursday Mass 6:00 PM
Friday Mass during Lent 5:50 PM followed by
Stations of the Cross
Saturday Mass 11:30 AM
Holy Days on Weekdays 6:30 PM

Confession: Tuesday-Thursday 5:00 – 5:45 PM

**Please call the office to alert us of any
Pastoral Care needs**
(Hospital, Homebound, Etc.)

Office Hours

9:30 am-3:30 pm, Wednesday & Friday
720-833-0354

StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com

Rev. El-Badaoui Habib, Parochial Administrator

Linda Craven, Office & Business Manager

*Philip Kyburz, Grand Knight,
St. Rafka Council of the Knights of Columbus*

Linda Craven, Religious Education
lhalpincraven@gmail.com

Contact the office to register in the Parish

Spiritual Message from Father El-Badaoui Habib

God is Not Distant (Isaiah 52:7-10)

Have you ever felt that God was distant and removed from your life? Have you ever felt God was uninterested and inaccessible? We can go through life feeling like God doesn't care about what happens to us. God is way up there and I am way down here. Maybe God has forgotten about me. He must have more important things to worry about, right? Do you watch the news and scroll through social media, shaking your head, asking, where's God?

We live in a world ruled by sin, ruined by injustice, violence, corruption, self-centeredness. We live in a corrupted world filled with despair, sickness, and death. If you are living in fear of violence or in grinding poverty, it can be hard to feel like God cares for you. If you're living in broken homes and shattered communities, or even locked down all by yourself, it can be hard to think that God is nearby.

The Prophet Isaiah sees a war-torn Jerusalem. The city is crumbling under foreign occupation. It's a shell of what it once was. It was not so easy for them either. The people of Israel might have thought that God was no longer involved with them, that He forgot about them. Why? When they looked out their doors, they saw their city crumbling and in ruins under foreign occupation. But Isaiah the prophet encourages these people to "Sing!"

Today's Gospel

DAILY READINGS

Sunday, April 7

2nd Sunday of the Glorious

Resurrection/ Divine Mercy Sunday

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Is 52:7-12

2 Cor 5:11-21

Jn 20:26-31

Monday, April 8

Announcement to Mary

Book of Offering Page 27

Gal 3:15-22

Lk 1:26-38

Tuesday, April 9

St. Hermas, M

Book of Offering Page 336

1 Pt 1:10-16

Jn 20:11-8

Wednesday, April 10

The Miracle of the Icon of Christ in Beirut

St. Agabus

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1 Pt 1:17-21

Mt 28:11-15

Thursday, April 11

St. Antipas, M

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1 Pt 1:22-25

Mt 28:16-20

Friday, April 12

Sts. Mennas, Hermogenes & Eugraphus, M

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1 Pt 2:1-10

Jn 2:13-25

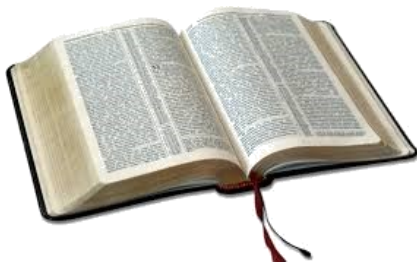
Saturday, April 13

St. Zosimas

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1 Pt 2:11-17

Mt 22:41-46



John 20: 26-31

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

The Purpose of This Book

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Spiritual Message (continued)

Consider why these watchmen cannot stop singing with joy. The messengers come with their good news, and the watchmen take up the message in unison and shout it as loudly as they can to the inhabitants of the ruined city. Not only has a messenger come to announce a victory from the battlefield, but God is himself coming. The Lord has returned! "Joy to the world! The Lord is coming. Let Earth receive her king!" The message is peace, good news, salvation, all because our God reigns.

When you hear, "our God reigns," don't think of a CEO God. Don't reduce it to "God is in control" or "God is in charge." The point here is not a distant, CEO God, but what this God has done for God's people in the face of all our ruin. God has shown His complete commitment to the promises He made. He has rolled up the divine sleeves to do what needs to be done. He took it upon himself to bring those Israelites peace and salvation. The city that is crumbling under foreign occupation can now rejoice: God is returning, the city will be restored, and the community will be made whole. God was not distant; he was returning to reign. He cared for and was personally getting involved.

NEWS & EVENTS

This week at St. Rafka Church

Sun 7	Mon 8	Tues 9	Wed 10	Thurs 11	Fri 12	Sat 13	Sun 14
<p>2nd Sunday of the Resurrection</p> <p>Divine Mercy Sunday 11:00am</p> <p>Religious Education 10-10:50 am</p>	<p><i>No Mass</i></p> <p><i>Second Council of Nicaea</i> <i>St. Barlaam, M</i></p>	<p><i>Mass 6:00 pm</i></p> <p><i>St. Hermas, M</i></p>	<p><i>Mass 6:00 pm</i></p> <p><i>The Miracle of the Icon of Christ in Beirut</i> <i>St. Agabus</i></p>	<p><i>Mass 6:00 pm</i></p> <p><i>St. Antipas, M</i></p>	<p><i>Mass 6:30 pm</i></p> <p><i>Sts. Mennas, Hermongenes & Eugraphus, M</i></p>	<p><i>Mass 11:30 am</i></p> <p><i>St. Zosimas</i></p>	<p>3rd Sunday of the Resurrection</p> <p>11:00am</p> <p>Religious Education 10-10:50 am</p>
<p>The deadline to receive events and articles for the bulletin is Wednesday at 12:00 PM Submit them to the Parish Office at StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com</p>							

With great joy, we welcome his Excellency, Bishop Elias. Our Bishop will be here the entire Divine Mercy weekend to join us for the Hafli, and to celebrate Divine Liturgy on Sunday, April 7, at 11 am. A reception for Bishop Elias and a mercy meal for Claude Srour—sister of Gisele Cherabie, to follow the Liturgy.



ST RAFKA
FEAST DAY
Annual Hafli

BUFFET, CASH BAR, DJ, RAFFLE
Special Guest Bishop Zaidan

SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 2024 | 6PM-11PM

18+ only \$100

QUEEN OF PEACE Catholic Church
 13120 E Kentucky Ave, Aurora, CO 80012
<https://forms.gle/S35jdHkK94eb3SBz6>

Tickets can be purchased via Zelle 724-912-8840

Isaiah 52:7-12

Brothers and Sisters, How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" ⁸ Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes.

⁹ Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰ The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

¹¹ Depart, depart, go out from there! Touch no unclean thing! Come out from it and be pure, you who carry the articles of the LORD's house. ¹² But you will not leave in haste or go in flight; for the LORD will go before you, the God of Israel will be your rear guard.



St. Rafka Parish Mission Statement

Faith, hope, and love, reinforcing our family values, promoted through heritage and prayer for the glory of God, the edification of the Holy Church and the salvation of the world.

Spiritual Message (continued)

This peace and the good news of salvation are not only for the Old Testament people, is not only for the people of Israel and Judah, but also for all the earth. This peace, good news, and salvation are for you. What these messengers were reporting loudly is something that they will see fulfilled when the Lord returns to Zion—when Immanuel is among them, when the King of the Jews is born. The coming of the Son of God in the flesh is our cause for joy.

The child who was born on Christmas morning, and that promise of God coming back to reign, is for all of us who are live among ruins of a fallen world. Just like God got involved and saved Noah from the wickedness of his day, just like God promised to redeem His people from the captivity in Babylon, God has saved humanity by becoming one of us. He cares. He is not distant.

Those Angels on Christmas Eve proclaimed God's peace to all the earth. "Glory be to God on high, and on earth, peace and good will to men." Because the Word was made flesh, that means our God got involved, and there can be peace between God and men. That means our God continues to get involved, and there can be peace in your own soul.

In The infant Jesus born of Mary, we find our God coming down to us, and we are saved from *ourselves*. And this is a salvation that is going on within us, growing day by day. We are saved from *guilt*, from all that evil that is outside us. That helpless child is stronger than our enemies. That little boy will subdue them under his feet. We and all the world have been freed from sin, death, and hell because God became man. That is good news of peace in our day. Jesus came to bring salvation to the ends of the earth.

What we cannot do, God has done. God has come down to us in the Child and died for us on the cross. We cannot ascend to God, either in our thoughts, our prayers, our dreams, or our faith. We cannot reach up to God, but God has rolled up his divine sleeves. Luther once said, "I know no other God than the One who hangs on a cross and nurses at the breast of His mother."

Do not think that God is distant and removed from your life. God is not uninterested, and he is not inaccessible. God has shown His complete commitment to promises He made. He has rolled up the divine sleeves to do what needs to be done. This is the profound mystery of the Incarnation. God became a man and was raised from death to bring you peace and salvation. And God continues to dwell with us. The Word Made Flesh dwells with us in the same humble, creaturely way. He continues to come to you in the preached and written Word. *May the peace of Go, be with you all in Jesus' name. Amen*

