

# **St. Rafka Maronite Catholic Church**

2301 Wadsworth Boulevard,  
Lakewood, CO 80214

Website: [www.strafkadenver.org](http://www.strafkadenver.org)

Email: [StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com](mailto:StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com)



## **September 24, 2023 Second Sunday after Holy Cross**

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### **Schedule of Masses & Services**

**Sunday Mass** 11:00 AM

**Tuesday-Thursday Mass** 5:00 PM

**Friday Mass** 6:30 PM

**Saturday Mass** 11:30 AM

**Holy Days on Weekdays** 6:30 PM

**Confession:** Tuesday-Thursday 4:00 – 4:45 PM

**Please call the office to alert us to any  
Pastoral Care needs**

(Hospital, Homebound, Etc.)

### **Office Hours**

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

[StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com](mailto: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*  
[lhalpinraven@gmail.com](mailto:lhalpinraven@gmail.com)

Contact the office to register in the Parish

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## **Spiritual Message from Father El-Badaoui Habib**

### **Second Sunday of the Holy Cross (Matthew 24:1-14)**

We are celebrating the second Sunday of the season of the Holy Cross, the season of the final judgement, the second and glorious coming of our Lord Jesus. Throughout this passage of the gospel, Jesus prophesied in front of his disciples about the destruction of the temple and the end of the world. He gave them some signs that will precede his second coming, such as wars, famines, diseases, tidal waves, and earthquakes – pointing to God's ultimate judgment. But Jesus admonished them to not seek signs but rather to seek God's kingdom because whoever endures to the end will be saved.

Jesus' prophecy is a two-edged sword because it points not only to God's judgment, but also to his saving action and mercy. Jesus foretells the destruction of Jerusalem and the dire consequences for all who would reject him and his saving message. His death on the cross, however, brought about victory and salvation, not only for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but for all – both Jew and gentile - who would accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior

## DAILY READINGS & MASS INTENTIONS

**Sunday, September 24**

***2nd Sunday after Holy Cross***

*Book of Offering Page 606*

Joel 2:1,10-16a

1 Cor 15:19-34

Mt 24:1-14

**Monday, September 25**

***St. Paphnutius the Confessor***

*Book of Offering Page 617*

Rev 3:1-6

Mt 10:16-22

**Tuesday, September 26**

***St. John the Evangelist***

*Book of Offering Page 627*

Rev 3:7-13

Mt 11:20-24

**Wednesday, September 27**

***St. Vincent de Paul***

*Book of Offering Page 637*

Rev 3:14-22

Mt 12:29-32

**Thursday, September 28**

***St. Chariton***

*Book of Offering Page 647*

Rev 4:1-11

Mt 12:33-37

**Friday, September 29**

***St. Romanos (Cyriacus)***

*Book of Offering Page 658*

Rev 5:1-10

Mt 12:38-42

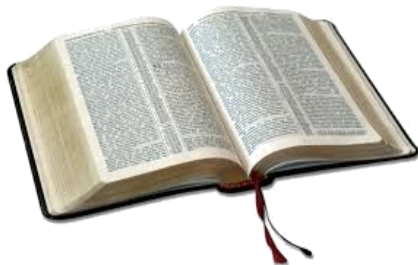
**Saturday, September 30**

***St. Gregory the Illuminator***

*Book of Offering Page 668*

Rev 6:9-17

Mt 12:43-45



## Today's Gospel

### The Destruction of the Temple Foretold (Mt. 24: 1-14)

**24** As Jesus came out of the temple and was going away, his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. <sup>2</sup> Then he asked them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly I tell you, not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down."

<sup>3</sup> When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered them, "Beware that no one leads you astray. <sup>5</sup> For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah!' and they will lead many astray. <sup>6</sup> And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet. <sup>7</sup> For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places: <sup>8</sup> all this is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

<sup>9</sup> "Then they will hand you over to be tortured and will put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of my name. <sup>10</sup> Then many will fall away, <sup>11</sup> and they will betray one another and hate one another. <sup>12</sup> And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. <sup>13</sup> And because of the increase of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold. <sup>14</sup> But the one who endures to the end will be saved. <sup>15</sup> And this good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all the nations; and then the end will come.

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### Spiritual Message (continued)

If the gospel message is good news, then why do so many oppose it with hostility and even violence? Jesus warns his followers that they will be confronted with persecution, wickedness, false teaching, and temptation.

The real enemy of the gospel is Satan who uses fear and hatred to provoke hostility in others towards those who follow Christ. And what is Jesus' response to this hostility and opposition? Love and truth. Only love can defeat prejudice, intolerance, and hatred. God's love purifies our hearts and minds of all that would divide and tear people apart. But how many times we were persecuted and became martyrs because of this kind of love that we are asked to give to our fellow men.

# NEWS & EVENTS

*This week at St. Rafka Church*

Sun 24	Mon 25	Tues 26	Wed 27	Thurs 28	Fri 29	Sat 30	Sun 1
<p>2nd Sunday after Holy Cross</p> <p>Mass 11:00am</p>	<p>No Mass</p> <p><i>St. Paphnutius the Confessor</i></p>	<p>Mass 5 pm</p> <p><i>St. John the Evangelist</i></p>	<p>Mass 5 pm</p> <p><i>St. Vincent de Paul</i></p>	<p>Mass 5 pm</p> <p><i>St. Chariton</i></p>	<p>Mass 6:30 pm</p> <p><i>St. Romanos (Cyriacus)</i></p>	<p>Mass 11:30 am</p> <p><i>St. Gregory the Illuminator</i></p>	<p>3rd Sunday after Holy Cross</p> <p>Holy Rosary Sunday</p> <p>Mass 11:00am</p>
<p>The deadline to receive events and articles for the bulletin is Thursday at 12:00 PM Submit them to the Parish Office at <a href="mailto:StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com">StRafkaLkwd@outlook.com</a></p>							

## Preliminary Festival Fund Raising Results

**Gross Income: \$ 58,052**  
**Expenses: 19,040**  
**\$ 39,012**

Thank you again to everyone who helped with the 2023 Festival!

Organizers & Leads  
 Lora Soliman                      Elie Nakouzi  
 Michelle & Tony Mouhanna  
 Eric Imhoff

And the many volunteers & donors whose dedication, time, talent,  
 & treasure made success possible!

***Without you,  
 there would not be a Festival***



## **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)**

St. Augustine of Hippo wrote, "The martyrs were bound, jailed, scourged, racked, burned, rent, butchered – and they multiplied!" Why is this the case? The Christian martyrs witnessed to the truth, joy, and freedom of the gospel, by their life, their testimony, and by the shedding of their own blood.

Today unfortunately we witness many extremists and misguided individuals who will sacrifice their lives, and kill others in the process, out of hatred, revenge, and prejudice. From a Christian point of view, they are not true martyrs because their sacrifice is not motivated by God's merciful love and forgiveness, truth, and righteousness.

Satan seeks to destroy our faith through the fear of death, and he incites others to persecute Christians for their faith in Christ. Martyrs who shed their blood for Jesus Christ win great victory, not only for themselves, but for the whole people of God. The martyrs overcome Satan by enduring death through their faith in Christ who died and rose for us.

What most attracts others to the truth and power of the gospel? When they see Christians loving their enemies, being joyful in suffering, patient in adversity, pardoning injuries, and showing comfort and compassion to the hopeless and the helpless. Jesus tells us that we do not need to fear our adversaries. God will give us sufficient grace, strength, and wisdom to face any trial and to answer any challenge to our faith. Are you eager to bear witness to the joy and freedom of the gospel? "Lord, by your cross you have redeemed the world. Fill me with joy and confidence and make me a bold witness of your saving truth that others may know the joy and freedom of the gospel." Amen.

### **Learning About the Saints**

#### **St. Paphnutius the Confessor**

**September 25**

The most celebrated personage of this name was bishop of a city in the Upper Thebaid in the early fourth century, and one of the most interesting members of the Council of Nicæa (325). He suffered mutilation of the left knee and the loss of his right eye for the Faith under the Emperor Maximinus (308-13), and was subsequently condemned to the mines. At Nicæa he was greatly honored by Constantine the Great, who, according to Socrates (*Church History* I.11), used often to send for the good old confessor and kiss the place whence the eye had been torn out.

**St. Paphnutius—pray for us.**