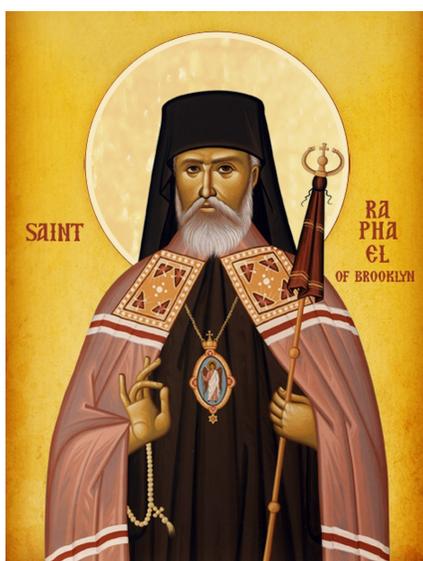


*"I can do all things through
Christ who strengthens me."
Philippians 4:13*

Visit our Website [here](#)

St. Raphael School Journal

Newsletter
May 2020



Kontakion of St. Raphael the Bishop of Brooklyn

You were a guardian and a defender of the Church's teaching; you protected your flock from false doctrines and confirmed them in the true faith. O holy father Raphael, son of Syria and glory of North America, always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved.

A New Chapter

To the St. Raphael School Community:

I have big shoes to fill! As Elyse Hawkins graduates this year and moves on to college (Congratulations, Elyse!), I shall be following in her footsteps as Managing Editor for the SRS Newsletter. I am very excited to take on this position and would like to offer a huge thank you to Elyse and Presbytera Maria for giving me such a wonderful opportunity. As well, thank you to the Newsletter Team for your undying patience as I have muddled my way through learning the workings of the Newsletter! Your forbearance was exceedingly kind and much-needed. Thank you.

Though some of you may already know me, let me take this moment to introduce myself. Hello! My name is Andrea Woolman and I am a current resident of Iowa, the state best known for its corn and, well, more corn. I have a passion for all things regarding literature, art, and hedgehogs. Yes, hedgehogs. Though some people find this prickly creature to be a strange choice for a pet, I find them to be the perfect candidate for a trusty sidekick...especially when one can name them Watson and pretend to be one's own version of Sherlock Holmes!

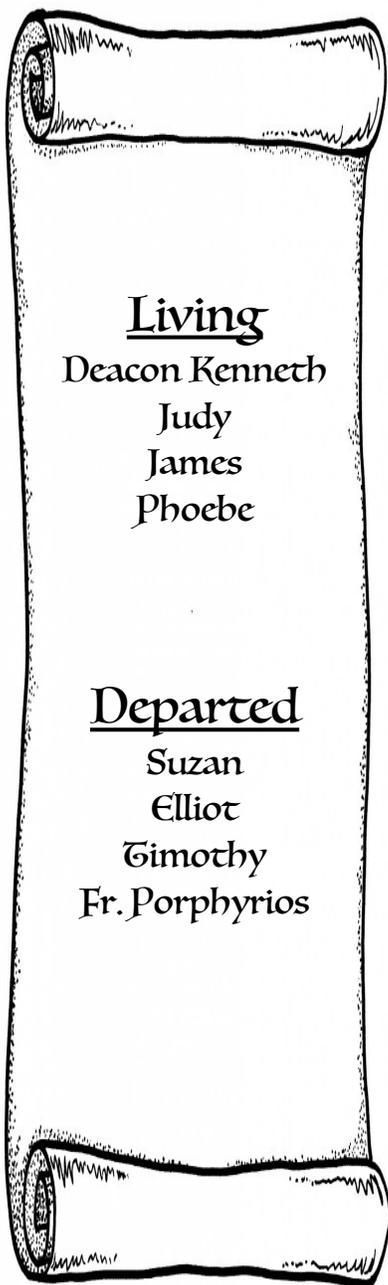
Though intimidated by the size of shoes I have to fill, I am very excited to take on this responsibility. Over the past year, the Newsletter has truly become a passion and I greatly look forward to maintaining its excellence with the help of the team!

Sincerely,

Andrea Woolman

St. Raphael School Journal

Prayer List



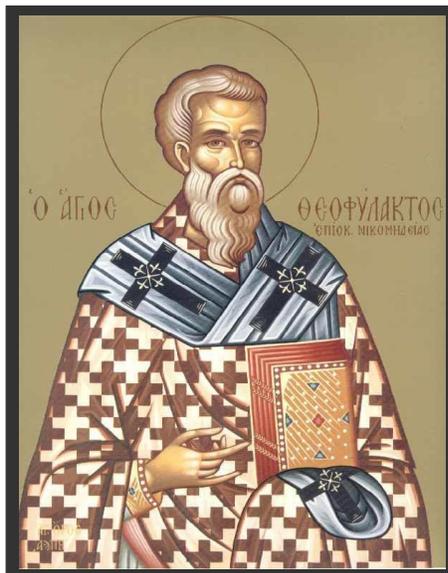
Living

Deacon Kenneth
Judy
James
Phoebe

Departed

Suzan
Elliot
Timothy
Fr. Porphyrios

St. Michael the Confessor



From your youth you dedicated your life to God,
and you were proclaimed shepherd and hierarch of Christ, holy Michael. You endured afflictions and exile because you honored the icon of Christ; now you pour forth healings for us all.

- Troparion, Tone 4

“Every genuine confession humbles the soul. When it takes the form of thanksgiving, it teaches the soul that it has been delivered by the grace of God.” - St. Maximos the Confessor

Feasts of the Month

New Calendar

May 1

Holy Prophet Jeremiah

May 7

Commemoration of the Apparition of the Sign of the Precious Cross over Jerusalem

Month 8

Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian

May 10

Apostle Simon Zelotes

May 23

St Michael the Confessor

Note From the Editor

Dear St. Raphael Journal readers, thank you for checking out our newsletter! It wouldn't be possible without all the amazing support from SRS teachers and staff. If you would like to see more student submissions, please explore the St. Raphael School Journal Website. To submit names for the prayer list or a student submission, feel free to [email me](#).

Andrea Woolman
Managing Editor & Website Coordinator

Essay Featured This Month

A Very Fond Reflection

By Samantha Woolman – Column Writer

The end of the spring semester is drawing to a close, and I find myself in a melancholy state of mind - in a mixture of sadness and excitement. As this was my last year of high school, I shan't be returning to take SRS classes in the fall. In addition, I won't be collecting newsletter submissions or writing pieces for the column. This saddens me, but I also have all the wonderfully fond memories of being part of the newsletter team.

I would like to thank all the dear readers who have made this experience so very enjoyable. Thank you for allowing me to write down my thoughts and my contemplations, thus furthering the journey towards truth, beauty, and goodness. I am honored.

Of course, a farewell note would not be complete without a voluminous and heart-felt thanking of the rest of the newsletter team. They have all worked with diligence and have produced lovely work. Thank you for all your effort, and thank you for allowing me to be part of this beautiful project. Again, I am greatly honored.

I have immensely enjoyed my time at the newsletter, and wish good fortune to all who participate in the future. God bless!

Student Submissions

Antiphons By Katherine Frederick

To listen to the audio of Antiphons, please click [here](#).

Original Soliloquy for Laertes from Hamlet

By Zoe Frederick - Level 5

Woe is me! My poor deceased father. 'Twas Him who was slaughtered by the hand of Hamlet so unjustly. Woe to Ophelia, the most sweetest sister. One into the cold, forgotten ground the other into the deep and dark waters. I am alone, in this world now. Shall I avenge my fathers unjust death? Shall I avenge poor, sweet Ophelia's madness that drove her to her watery grave? Where have they gone? Shall I follow? Or should I let the murderer follow to their cold grave? Shall I hunt down Hamlet? Or would it be better for me to follow my father and sister to the grave instead. Alas, woe is me. Betwixt two paths, which is the better? Which is the lesser of evils? To live with pride and avenge the unjustness of my family's deaths? Or to go to my grave? And with this, I bid you adue.

Student Submission

Personal "Meditations"

Students in Ancient Literature were challenged to imitate Marcus Aurelius' "Meditations" by writing their own personal meditations. They did so by writing meditations in each of the six categories that Marcus Aurelius focused on: gratitude, reminders, commands, definitions, quotes, and reflections upon the logos.

Reminders – Written by Owen Bender

In order for something to exist, its exact opposite must also exist. For the future; the past. For the mind; the body. For good; evil.

Ego and stubbornness are like electricity and magnetism. The one creates the other and vice versa, creating self-sustainment. One must eliminate both to eliminate either.

Choosing instant over delayed gratification is just procrastination under another name.

The chemical addictions everyone is warned about aren't the only addictions, and the others are just as bad.

Skill is not virtue. Ever.

Commands – Written by Owen Bender

Stop reacting strongly; Irritation accomplishes nothing. Approach matters you feel strongly about with the same characteristic calmness and precision as ones you don't have emotions about. There is no reason it won't solve them the same way.

Act to solve your flaws. They are not handicaps given to you, they are choices you make. Stop neglecting to choose; it is like choosing to take your hands off the steering wheel rather than steer. As a result, you follow the path of least resistance rather than the one whose destination you wish for.

You cannot use ignorance as an excuse when you chose it, which is more often than you think

To view the remainder of this submission click [here](#).

Student Submission

Corona de Oro

By Jerome Dorham - Level 5

The sun rose high an azure sky
The clouds go sailing on,
The grass is green and growing fast
And soon I'll to mow the lawn

Everything was normal, the public transportation system, retail, food service, education, commerce, all at status quo (perhaps someone, somewhere knew). Then a rumor on the news, and suddenly, without a whole lot of warning. The sun rose and was warm, the birds hopped around and sang, the grass was green and grew longer. Now the schools stand empty, the play yards quiet, the bell unrung (Well, the bells ring anyway because they're electric and on a timer). Panicked shoppers crowd the stores and empty their shelves and paychecks, all restaurants, delis and other food service places are clearly distinguishable by the large bright pink signs that hang above their doors reading in big white letters: "CARRY OUT & CURBSIDE!" or "GRAB & GO!" Suddenly, parishioners have their ears assaulted by the bells of censors coming over bad sound systems and glitchy screens. When walking anywhere people hold aloof, as if you are the secretive host to a much feared sickness. How fickle is mankind!? One instant, you don't exist and the next you're practically a lord for whom every being must make way.

When running at a park with my older brother, having just completed the ceremonial last couple hundred-yard sprint to the end of the trail, my brother coughed once or twice, being, as I was, slightly winded. Instantly, a middle-aged woman who was fast approaching (practicing the ancient art of speed walking), checked, her countenance became overshadowed by an expression of caution and nervous apprehension. "I hear coughing!" she proclaimed from afar, there was an air of hesitation in her voice.

To view the remainder of this essay, click [here](#).

Reflection of the Month

A Distant 2020 Pascha

By John Dye – Column Writer

Christ is risen! Lent has come to a close, and the climax of Holy Week has arrived. Pascha! Bells ring, lights are brightened, flowers fill our Churches, but for most of us, it's only through a computer screen. This may be disheartening; can Pascha really be celebrated even if we aren't at Church?

Consider the story of St. Seraphim of Sarov. He was blessed all of his life, and from an early age, he loved to attend divine services. Even when he grew to be a man, and left his family for a monastery, it was great joy for him to attend, and eventually lead Liturgies, Vespers, and so on. After some years at the monastery, he was blessed to live in isolation. Even then, however, he travelled back to the monastery every weekend to attend the services. Even though he was blessed with all kinds of visions and revelations, his life was far from easy. Once, he was beaten by three robbers, right outside his home. He lived, made his way back inside his dwelling, and struggled to get to the monastery the next day. Soon, he was healed by the Theotokos, and after a five-month stay at the monastery, he went off to live by himself once again. He lived alone, in silence, for three years. Besides a monk who came to see him once a week, he spoke to no one.

Now think of this. St. Seraphim loved to go to Church. This was the case all of his life. However, in those three years that he isolated himself, he did not attend a single service that he could not do by himself. This is, in some ways, like our current predicament. On the inverse, though, we can watch them from our homes, and attend the best we can. St Seraphim did not even have this, and he was alone for three years! So while we may be upset that we cannot go to receive the Eucharist, or venerate the icons, Remember the story of St. Seraphim of Sarov, and let us try to reflect his patience and virtue, even in this trying time.



School News

Month Highlights

Collected and Edited by Erika Kjendal

Level 3.5 Literature

In April, Level 3.5 (along with level 4) finished Keeper of the Light which is a biographical novel written by Bev Cooke about St. Macrina. The class also started The Story of King Arthur and His Knights which is an Arthurian legend written by Howard Pyle. For nature studies the class is learning about birds.

Contributed by Nicholas Kjendal.

Level 4 Literature

This month Level 4 students have started reading King Arthur and His Knights. Soon they will start on their culminating activities for it. In poetry they are writing haikus about saints. In nature studies they finished their bird unit and had fun learning about flightless birds.

Contributed by Genevieve Bell.

Level 5 Literature

Students in Level 5 Literature have spent all of their time in April up to Holy Week reading Hamlet. They took their time reading through it so they could really understand and appreciate Shakespeare's work. The class discussions were focused mainly around the soliloquies and the complexities of the characters. As the culminating activity for this book, students chose to either perform one of the soliloquies or to write their own. After Pascha will be the home stretch and the class will read the final book: A Tale of Two Cities. They will also complete their final project of the year drawing on everything they have learned in this class.

Contributed by Erika Kjendal.

Level 6 Literature

At the beginning of April, the Level 6 Literature class finished Meditations by Marcus Aurelius. After discussing relevant themes and ideas portrayed throughout the work, the students went on to create their own person meditations. Upon completion, the students began to read Early Christian Writings and to practice their outlining skills. Class discussions have centered around sections of the book found interesting or confusing by the students.

Contributed by Andrea Woolman.

Cont. on the Next Page

Month Highlights Cont.

Collected and Edited by Erika Kjendal

Level 4 Catechism

In Catechism Level 4, students have been focused on getting their midterm essays done as well as their normal amount of note-taking and homework. Students have continued to look deeply into the holy sacraments, and they have also been learning about vices. In addition, they have continued memorizing their timeline dates as well as words for the day. Students are preparing for their next oral exam which will help the teacher perceive how well students are learning.

Contributed by Samuel Jenkins.

Level 5 Catechism

Catechism 5 students are getting ready for summer break. They recently completed their spring biography having the choice to write about King David, Solomon, Isaiah, Daniel, or Job. Then the students read the entire book of Esther and certain sections of the Gospel related to John the Baptist. They had fun discussing the significance of John the Baptist's clothing and food.

Contributed by Aislinn Hawkins.

Level 6 Catechism

It is evident that Catechism Level 6 is on the downhill slope toward summer, because students have begun the last essay they will be writing this year. It is similar to the one written pre-Nativity break, covering everything learned this year and pushing students' creativity. Another assignment foretelling the year's end is the service project; however, most planned service projects are no longer viable due to quarantine, so students are having to improvise.

Contributed by Owen Bender.

Level 7 Catechism

Catechism 7 is continuing to read through Book 4 of The Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith. They are currently finishing up their essay for the month of April. They are also working on their end-of-year research papers, which they shall present at the last class. Some of the topics to be written about include the Theotokos, Christ's Natures, etc. They are to write these papers as if they were explaining the subject to someone who had never heard the idea before, using what St. John has written about in The Exact Exposition as the main source.

Contributed by Elyse Hawkins

Cont. on the Next Page

Month Highlights Cont.

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Contributed by Elyse Hawkins

Russian 1

In Russian 1, the students are continuing to learn the Trisagion Prayers in Russian. On top of this, they memorize case endings as well as conjugations. Their most recent addition to their repertoire of Russian phrases is being able to say what time it is. For example: "I eat breakfast at 8 o'clock" or "I usually walk to the university at 12 o'clock" etc.

Contributed by Thea Frederick

Greek 1

Students in Greek 1 have had a lot of fun this last month. They had a native Greek speaker join them for a class and spent their time asking her questions. As they have no class during Holy Week, they spent the previous class talking about Pascha and learning how Greeks celebrate it. They have been memorizing Matthew 22:37 (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind). The students have now memorized all of the maculine, feminine, and neuter noun endings and are working on the nominative and genitive endings for adjectives. Over Holy Week they have been working on several hymns related to Pascha (Christ is Risen, Come Receive Ye the Light!) They are all excited for summer break, but will be sad for class to end.

Contributed by Aislinn Hawkins.

Cont. on the Next Page

Month Highlights Cont.

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Contributed by Aislinn Hawkins.

Greek 2

The Greek 2 student is four lessons away from finishing her lesson book and has been working on dependent verbs of late. For her hymn of the month, she has been looking at the hymn for Lazarus Saturday.

Contributed by Thea Fredericks

Cont. on the Next Page

Month Highlights Cont.

Collected and Edited by Erika Kjendal

Byzantine Chant 2

In Byzantine Chant 2, the students have continued their study and singing exercises of mode 2 and the soft chromatic scale and have been looking at the structure and unique aspects of Holy Week. Students were last assigned the dogmatic theotokion in 2nd mode and recorded themselves singing it for the teacher to grade. Soon we will be studying the plagal 2nd mode and the hard chromatic scale.

Contributed by Katherine Frederick.

Introduction to Iconography

The students in Introduction to Iconography had their last class on April 9. They finished up the face details and clothing with style. Then they moved on to the gold highlights and buildings, which, instead of using gold leaf, they used their gold pigment (to keep the cost manageable). For the border of the icon they had the choice to either do a very dark blueish-black (which is a quite rare border color) or a medium red. The Sinai Christ was a difficult icon to paint because of the asymmetrical face, but the students completed this class with flying colors. Mrs Sider-Rose will be doing a summer class and then start an Iconography Apprentice program for serious students in the fall.

Contributed by Aislinn Hawkins.

Meet the Newsletter Team!

Samantha Woolman

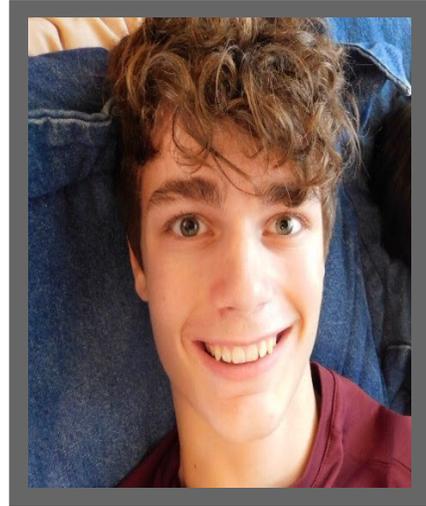


Column Writer

"And so let us be glad and bear with patience everything the world throws at us, secure in the knowledge that it is then that we are most in the mind of God."

- St. Basil the Great

John Dye



Column Writer

"Behold, I have commanded you. Be strong and courageous. Do not be cowardly or fearful, for the Lord your God is with you in all things, wherever you go."

- Joshua 1:9

Erika Kjendal



Column Writer

"Any soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will never miss it. Those who seek find. To those who knock it is opened."

- C.S. Lewis

Andrea Woolman

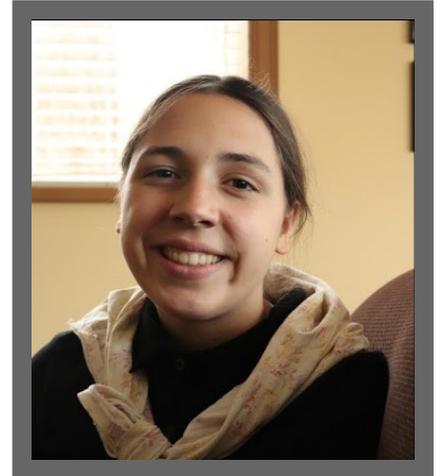


Managing Editor
Website Coordinator

"...and music is before all other arts the awakening of the heart."

- Baroness Marenholz-Bulow

Thea Frederick



Column Writer

"If you have the strength to be thankful in troubles then that is when the Holy Spirit shines through you."

- Elder Arsenie