

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

St. Raphael School Journal

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Newsletter
May 2025



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.

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As we wrap up the school year and welcome the warmth of summer, we're excited to bring you this final edition of the Newsletter. This time of year invites us to pause and reflect on how far we've come—celebrating both the challenges we've overcome and the growth we've experienced.

For our final edition, we're doing something a little different—each of our column writers will have their own personal corner to share whatever's on their heart. Along with these unique reflections, you'll also find a special message from the Editor.

With the arrival of summer, we hope you find time to rest, recharge, and enjoy the beauty of the season. Whether you're traveling, spending time with loved ones, or simply enjoying a slower pace, may this summer bring you peace, joy, and renewed energy. We pray you all have a restful and joy-filled summer! God bless!

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St. Raphael School Journal

Praying List

Living

Fr. Peter

Eleousa

Phyllis

Lynn

Joseph

Linda

Andrew

Amalia

Departed

Barbara Joy

Suzan

Elliot

Timothy

Fr. Porphyrios

Fr. Abraham

Anna

Zane

Lilly

Matushka Kristina

"A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love."

-St. Basil The Great

THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST



Kontakion: Tone 6

When You had fulfilled the dispensation for our sake, / and united earth to heaven: / You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, / not being parted from those who love You, / but remaining with them and crying: / "I am with you and no one will be against you!"

Feasts of the Month

May 2

St Athanasius the Great, Patr. of Alexandria

May 7

St Alexis Toth, Confessor and Defender of Orthodoxy in America

May 8

Holy Apostle John the Theologian

May 10

Apostle Simon the Zealot

May 28

Leavetaking of Pascha

May 29

The Ascension of our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ

Note from the Editor

Dear St. Raphael Journal readers, thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter! This wouldn't be possible without the incredible support of the SRS teachers and staff. To see more student submissions, be sure to visit the St. Raphael School Journal Website. *To submit names for the prayer list or a student submission, email the Newsletter team here.*

Theodora Ciuca
Managing Editor & Website Coordinator

Over the Storm

Summer is the few months out of the year that kids eagerly anticipate in the midst of frantic studying and finals. It is the rainbow on the other side of the storm. Summer equals pool time, sun bathing, volleyball on the beach, overpriced ice cream trucks, and endless free time. That's what pops into my mind when I hear the word "summer." But that isn't really what summer is.

Sure, summer is a break from the constant studying, tests, midterms and the fear of late homework. But there is such a thing as summer school. And for homeschooled students like those at SRS, parents can still hand out math worksheets with orders to not forget what they learned in Algebra 2 over the past school year. So summer isn't always a break from school.

Teenagers search for summer jobs to save up for that dream car they want before they graduate. Working for the first time can give that little thrill of excitement that comes with making your own money and buying things that you want with it that parents will say no to. Vacations are another big summer plan. Family vacations kind of come with the summer territory. Whether it's jetting off to Mexico for a sun-filled week, or a road trip to Wyoming to see some buffalo, there is usually something to look forward to. But vacations can get exhausting and stressful, even for the kids. Did I forget my toothbrush? Ugh, my phone died and I left my charger in the car! Maybe next summer I can drive to the beach!

Overall, the theme among these three scenarios is looking ahead. There is always something over the bend of summer. And so while it might be tempting to sit around inside all day and play video games, summer is a great time to look around and make future plans! All I'm saying is that summer is a major opportunity you are given! Whether it's giving your room a DIY makeover or applying for an internship, summer holds a host of things for you to do. So take advantage!




HAVE A

WOND ERFUL

Summer!

**FROM ST. RAPHAEL
SCHOOL JOURNAL**

Want to apply for a
position, ask a question, or
send in submission for
next year? Email us at
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gmail.com](mailto:raphaelschooljournal@gmail.com)



Advertisement

Reflection Of The Paschal Season

By Elizaveta Durka

Christ is risen! Xristos Anesti! Hristos Voskrese!

We are now in the radiant season of Pascha, where the joy of the Resurrection fills every moment and every heart. Great Lent has passed, and now, we walk in the light of Christ's victory over death. This is the time of rejoicing, of celebration beyond all earthly joy—a time where heaven and earth sing together in triumph.

The Paschal night is unlike any other. The rushing to church at midnight, the candles flickering in the hands of the faithful, the priest calling out, "*Come ye, take the Light from the Light*"—all of it ignites a deep and indescribable joy. But the beauty of Pascha is that it doesn't end with that glorious night. It extends far beyond, filling the coming days and weeks with an unshakable sense of triumph all the way to Pentecost.. The Paschal hymns—"The Angel Cried," "Let God Arise," and the resounding proclamation of St. John Chrysostom's Homily—continue to reverberate in our souls. The doors of the church stand open, symbolizing that Christ has shattered the gates of Hades and granted life to all.

Now, in the brightness of the Paschal season, we are called to live in this joy—not as a fleeting feeling but as a deep and abiding reality. Every greeting of "**Christ is risen!**" is a proclamation of our faith, a declaration that death has been defeated and that eternal life is freely given.

It is the Day of Resurrection! Let us shine with the Feast! Let us embrace one another. Let us say, brethren! And because of the Resurrection, let us forgive all things and to those who hate us, let us in this wise, exclaim:

*Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death,
and upon those in the tombs, bestowing life!*

Bubbles Everywhere

Bubbles bubbles everywhere,
On my nose and in my hair,
Floating floating in the air,
And end up on the mare.

Bubbles bubbles overthere,
The little girl chases up the stair,
Jumping jumping in the air,
But the little hands remain bare.

Rainbow rainbow colors crazy,
On the bubble pigment hazy,
Changing changing spinning lazy,
Making summer very maze-y.

Flying flying far away,
Going to bubble land to stay,
Playing playing everyday,
You can come, if you may.

Soaring soaring in the trees,
Going along with the breeze,
Floating floating with much ease,
And look, it's flight will cease!

POP!

Light: Silver and Gold

.....

Light — silver and gold,
Here, at the end of time,
Shining like a promise,
Now the answer to that promise.

Love — and with it, humility;
For as one, they come together,
For truly, one is the other,
And they cannot be separated.

Peace and rest await at the end,
For death is life to those
Who die with peace and happiness —
The end is the beginning.

A journey just begun,
A kingdom yet to be found,
A respite from this heavy world,
A sweetness after the struggle.

A Story Finished

The pages turn, the story shifts,
A chapter closes—time drifts.
Seniors stand with heads held high,
Beneath the golden, morning sky.

Caps take flight, dreams take wing,
Echoes of cheers forever sing.
Memories woven, laughter stays,
Locked within these fleeting days.

Summer calls with open arms,
Warm embrace and endless charms.
Bonfires glow, adventures spark,
Dancing beneath the starlit dark.

But change arrives, the tale demands,
New journeys formed with eager hands.
Seniors step beyond the gate,
Onward now, to meet their fate.

Editor's Corner

Hello, my dear readers,

Since stepping into my new role as Editor, I haven't had the opportunity to write to you as often as I once did—but please know that you've been in my thoughts, and I pray you're all doing well. As we wrap up this chapter, I want to take a moment to publicly express my deep gratitude to the incredible team behind this newsletter.

First, thank you to my Co-Managing Editor and PR Manager, Mary Kjendal. Mary and I have known each other for over five years, and her unwavering support and her kind nature have been a cornerstone of this team's success. A special thank you also to Natasha, who has been part of the newsletter just as long as I have. Her strength and consistent encouragement have meant the world to me. To our amazing column writers—your work this year has been thoughtful, inspiring, and impactful. I am so proud of everything you've created.

A heartfelt thank you to Presb. Maria and Ms. Wolf for their constant guidance and support. You've been the pillars that have helped hold us up, and your wisdom and guidance continues to shape us as we move into the next school year. To the former editors and writers who have since graduated—know that you are missed dearly. I often think of you and pray for your continued success in the next chapters of your lives. And lastly—but most importantly—to you, our beloved readers: thank you, from the bottom of my heart. Everything we do, we do with you in mind. Your continued support is what keeps this newsletter alive. Please keep sending in your submissions, we look forward to them every month!

Congratulations to the high school graduates of the Class of 2024–2025! I pray that God leads you exactly where you are meant to go. And to our younger readers—keep working hard in your studies. We're cheering you on every step of the way. May God bless you all abundantly. Have a joyful, restful summer!

With love and gratitude,
Theodora Ciuca

Meet the Newsletter Team!

Theodora Ciuca



Managing Editor

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

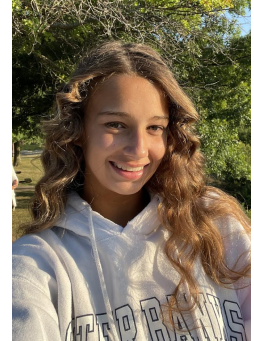
Mary Kjendal



Co-Managing Editor

"A rose does not speak, but its fragrance spreads far in silence."
- St. Theophan the Recluse

Natasha Richart



Column Writer

"All grown-ups were once children...but only few of them remember it."
- The Little Prince

Mary Reese



Column Writer

"Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory."
~ Dr Seuss

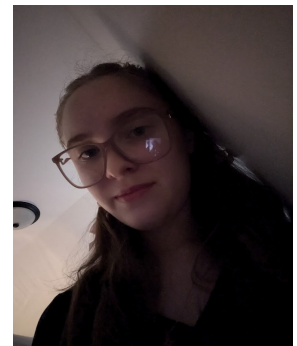
Sevastiane Archer



Column Writer

"Prayer is the place of refuge for every worry, a foundation of cheerfulness, a source of constant happiness, a protection against sadness."
- St. John Chrysostom

Sophia Gheorghe



Column Writer

"It isn't what we say or think that defines us, but what we do."
- Jane Austen

Elizaveta Durka



Column Writer

Death cannot stop true love. All it can do is delay it for a while.
- The Princess Bride