

Saint Raphael Pastoral Council
Meeting Notes from January 13, 2020

Lou Servideo called the meeting to order at 6:58 pm in the Saint Gabriel Ministry Center. All members were in attendance except Paula Demirjiam and Al May. Lou opened the meeting with a prayer.

Mission Statement: Ann Eden circulated a Proposed Mission Statement and asked that Council members give it their full consideration and come to our next meeting prepared to discuss and possibly adopt the statement.

Standing Committee Reports:

Prayer and Worship: Ann: **1)** Positive feedback re: 12/22 caroling. Will combine this year w/tree lighting at Saint Gabriel; to include neighborhood caroling, refreshments in the Parish Hall Target date: December 15, 5 pm. **2) Plans for Lent:** a) Stations of the Cross Friday evenings at 7; themes, locations to alternate. b) Committee hopes to have a Lenten speaker, possibly on a Wednesday evening or Sunday afternoon. c) Hope to work w/Parish Life on Lenten supper, perhaps in conjunction w/speaker or Stations. d) Choir planning Evening of Reflection; tentative date 3/25. e) "Lenten Prayer Opportunities" calendar planned for weekly bulletin – activities available at other local parishes. f) Possible Communal Penance Service w/other Milford parishes. Father John has received one affirmative response; waiting to hear from other pastor. **3)** Pursuing plans for June 14 Corpus Christi celebration; next step: meeting w/Milford Police Dept Traffic Division re: their requirements/restrictions/cost. **4)** Working on plans for a Blue Mass Friday evening, September 11th to honor police, firefighters, EMS responders. **5)** International Rosary set for Tuesday, October 6th at Saint Gabriel Church. **6)** Committee members should be aware in advance of any parish events that fall under P&W; Ann asked Council members to pass such information along to the committee.

Parish Life:

Welcome Packet: Pat Pavlucik: The blue folder the committee has selected for its packet will contain: a history of the parish; ministry list; Faith Formation information; a current bulletin and newsletter; a social gathering form; information re: library, gift shop, food pantry; a magnet. In answer to Father John's question: yes, there will also be a registration form. Once Father has reviewed and approved the packet the committee will work w/Monica re: distribution.

Website Review: Cathy Coda: "Pretty much done." Commendation to Nancy Vai for overseeing the "big cleanup" and for her "due diligence" in following up on assignments. No luck so far in finding information re: Saint G's stained glass windows. Father John stressed the need for a website to be current and encouraged those involved to keep going. He is still working on having web inquiries about Saint Gabriel's direct seekers to the Saint Raphael website.

Social Gathering Team: Lou Servideo: **1)** December's Advent Meal was a great success. Lou thanked Cathy Coda, Rose Marie Marmolejo, Ann Servideo, Trish Black, Kathleen Buchanan and Pat Pavlucik for their hard work. Donated mittens, hats and scarves went to Boys and Girls Village and the Saint Mary's Mitten Tree; recipients were very grateful. **2)** Group working on plans for a Lenten meal and a parish summer picnic. **3)** Members looking into day trips to Long Wharf, Sight and Sound and Goodspeed. **4)** Jim Lambert will speak on Estate Planning (and answer questions re: health care) 2/20, 7 pm at Saint Gabriel School. **5)** Looking into wifi for entire parish center.

Faith Formation: Maria Tomasetti circulated a complete GIFT/Faith Formation Update that included number of participants and dates for upcoming events.

Ministry Review: Trish Black: work continues, nothing to report. Fr. John will send Trish the list of those participating in ministry; definitely needs updating. Lou thanked Trish for her diligence and hard work.

Social Justice (Human Concerns): Al May unable to attend. Lou encouraged members to read Al's report, sent in advance of the meeting. Highlights: **1)** Guest speaker Lynn Campbell, executive director of the Archdiocesan Office of Social Justice Ministry, will brief attendees on Archdiocesan and parish Social Justice programs at the subcommittees January 20th meeting, 7 pm in the Saint Ann Parish Library. **2)** Group hoping for a guest speaker in the spring who will talk about the Church's Social Justice teaching, with its two-fold emphasis on the importance of both acts of charity and efforts to address the root causes of poverty, inequality, discrimination, etc. **3)** On Saturday, 1/18 some committee members will attend an ecumenical half-day program in Bridgeport on the subject of human trafficking.

Open Forum: **1)** Lou shared some parishioners' concerns about use of the Children's Chapel during Mass. Maria will create signage to clarify. **2)** Lou remarked on the "excellent comments" heard re: the choir's 12/29 concert. **3)** Council delighted with grand piano now at Saint Gabriel church, a donation from Darien's Wee Burn Country Club. Father will send a letter of thanks. **4)** Rich Wheeling mentioned the need for additional EMHCs at both churches; distributing under both species required "six across the front": 2 ministers of the cup in addition to 4 who distribute the host. Father considering sending a "minister scheduling form" to current EMHCs to get a better idea about their willingness to serve at either church. Tom Jagodzinski said that he is available at either campus. **5)** Following up on her earlier recommendation for the use of a common calendar for meetings and events, Cathy reported that Nancy Vai is willing to update the calendar currently on the website. Send your information to nancyvai@yahoo.com for a quick update. We should include information about facilities usage - food pantry, WBA meetings, etc. - to avoid scrambling for meeting space as we did tonight!

Father John's Comments: **1)** The Saint Gabriel website officially down as of 1/3/20. Many Saint G online givers have moved to the Saint Raphael site. **2)** There should be a more concerted effort to support our last Sunday of the month food collection for the Saint Gabriel food pantry, which is supported by the Archbishop's Annual Appeal. (Maria spoke briefly about the food collection for Beth-El, a long-standing tradition at Saint Ann Church.) **3)** The Hartford Bishops Foundation's *Forward in Faith*, a major capital campaign, "will be coming soon to a parish near you." HBF (whose name derives from a traditional term for leaders in the city of Hartford) is a 501c3 corporation established by Archbishop Blair and "dedicated to engaging individual donors and government, business and other community leaders to gather and distribute financial resources to support the mission of the Archdiocese of Hartford. The Foundation serves the Archdiocese, but has its own lay leadership and articles of incorporation." [Information in quotation marks taken from the HBF website.] Proceeds from parish donations to the *Forward in Faith* campaign have to stay within the parish and will be used to fund efforts like the proposed renovations to the Saint Gabriel Hall and the Saint Ann kitchen. Parishioners will be asked to work on the campaign. **4)** Father asked Council members to attend a "very important meeting about a significant parish issue" on Monday evening, February 10. Members of the Finance Council and certain members of the parish have also been invited. A formal notice will go out soon. **5)** Father John will leave on Sunday, January 19th for a 2½ week visit to Viet Nam (his first visit in 6 years), primarily in the Thanh Hóa Province where most of the young men live whom he has been mentoring. His luggage will include special request items ranging from walnuts to Triaminic to Advil to a motorcycle suit for a priest who has a daily pre-dawn commute via motorbike to a distant post in his parish. We wished Father safe travels; he thanked us and asked for prayers for the pilot as well.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm. We will meet again on Monday, 2/24, 7 pm, Saint Ann Parish Library.

Ann Eden
January 14, 2020