

**Saint Raphael Pastoral Council**  
**Meeting Notes from October 25, 2021**

Lou Servideo called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were not in attendance: Trish Black, Cathy Coda, Ann Eden, Tom Zawislinski and Deacon George. Council members read together the Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory. The September meeting notes were accepted as read.

**Committee Reports:**

**Christian/Lifelong Faith Formation:** Maria gave the Council a GIFT faith formation program update: As of our meeting date, 60 families have registered (or are in the process of registering) for GIFT 2021-2022. Our Sacramental program numbers have also increased a little. Our first GIFT “weekend” was on Friday, October 22; Sunday, October 24; and will continue on Wednesday, October 27. The three date/time choices allow for safe-distancing. We are gathering first in the Church for an opening prayer, opening song, and overview by Deacon George before moving to our Parish Center classrooms for age-appropriate sessions. Families seem happy about meeting in person and want to be there. Our November GIFT weekend begins on Friday, November 19; our Prayer Life topic will be the Mass. Our Sacramental program classes are also in progress.

**Prayer and Worship:** Maria read the report from Ann Eden in her absence.

\* “Celebrate Saint Raphael” on September 29<sup>th</sup> at Saint Ann Church went very well. More parishioners came out to celebrate than we usually see at morning Mass. Breakfast to go was popular—several people made favorable comments. Great work by a terrific committee!

\* The October 5<sup>th</sup> International Rosary was beautiful and very well attended (50 or so people). Special thanks to Rose Cox, who did a masterful job putting the event together, to her “pray-ers,” John Marmolejo, Diana D’Avignon, Emma Scialis, Antonia Gomes, Katharina Weirether and Anna Nguyen and to Cathy Coda who organized the small reception that followed. Very well done.

\* The parish’s annual Mass of Remembrance is scheduled for Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. at Saint Ann Church. At this Mass, we remember and celebrate the members of our parish family who have died during the past year. Invitations to their families will be mailed by October 29.

\* The committee has chosen *Advent with Saint Joseph* as this year’s Advent booklet of prayers and reflection. Booklets will be available at both churches before Advent begins.

\* The “Mass for Healing in These Troubled Times” that the Pastoral Council had requested will be celebrated on Monday, November 29<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. at Saint Ann Church.

\* The Rosary group continues to meet on Tuesdays at noon in the Saint Ann Children’s Chapel. First Saturday Fatima Rosary, which began this month, will continue on First Saturday’s through February in Saint Ann Church at 11:00 a.m.

**Social Justice (Human Concerns):** Al May reported that a group of Churches in town, together with Devon Rotary and Milford Rotary, is trying to get together to support the settling of a refugee family. Father John shared that Father Sullivan’s parish had supported a Vietnamese family after the fall of Saigon. The Archdiocesan Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry held its annual Social Justice meeting on October 19. CONECT—Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut—received the Bishop Joseph Donnelly Organization Award in recognition of all its work for social justice over the past 10 years. Our parish has been involved in the work of this organization.

**Parish Life:** Lou Servideo reported that the St. Raphael Parish Life Committee met on October 11.

\* The Curbside Halloween event is scheduled from 10 to 2 p.m. on Sunday, October 31, St. Ann Campus parking lot. 60 bags of candy are being assembled for children.

\* Donations for Wounded Warrior Project will be accepted at the “coffee and” after all Masses the weekend of November 6/7.

\* The parish will be celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Father John’s ordination on Sunday, November 21 at 4 p.m. in the Parish Center (St. Ann Campus).

\* Rose Marie Marmolejo is coordinating the Advent Luncheon, scheduled for Sunday, December 5 following the 11 a.m. Mass (St. Gabriel Hall). Participants are asked to bring a winter item, e.g., hat, gloves, mittens, socks, which will be donated to community partners, e.g., Boys & Girls Village, Beth-El Center.

\* Our Task Force for odd jobs and small inside/outside work around the parish has been assembled (Al May, Kathleen Buchanan, Mary Jo Downs, Melvin Moral, Manfred Mohring, and Frank DiBlase). The first project will be painting white lines for parking spaces in the St. Ann Campus parking lot behind the Parish House, followed by painting white lines in the St. Gabriel parking lot. Lou and Frank did a test with several parking spaces, which people think look good. The Task Force will meet after the holidays and will put together a survey to collect skills of parishioners who are willing to help. The Task Force has also started to discuss the shrubs around the Church Street parking lot.

#### **Open Forum:**

\* There was a question regarding Mass attendance. Father John stated that Mass attendance has been at around 525 for all four Masses (count taken during the homily when attendance is at maximum).

\* Lou Servideo maintains a binder of meeting records, prayers, etc. as a history of the work of the Pastoral Council.

\* There were several questions regarding the Forward with Faith campaign, which are answered below in Father John’s comments.

\* There was a question regarding the money we received from the sale of Saint Gabriel School. Father John confirmed this money belongs to Saint Raphael Parish.

\* There was a question regarding the pews and kneelers at St. Gabriel Church. Father John stated this would be discussed in the near future.

\* A question was raised regarding repair or replacement of the Rectory front steps. Father John said the insurance company is requiring this.

\* A question was raised regarding plans for the white house on the Saint Ann Campus. Father John stated there are no plans at this time. This needs further discussion between Father John, the Finance Council and the Pastoral Council.

\* There was a question regarding the timeline for repairs to the Saint Gabriel Hall and Kitchen. Father John said we are in the beginning planning stages for this project and expect to start with the ceiling tiles. This project will be done in phases and will include better storage for the food pantry.

\* How are we doing with online donations? Father John said that online donations quadrupled during Covid. The bulletin donation numbers reflect all donations, including online.

## **Father John's Comments:**

***Forward with Faith Update:*** Close to \$250,000 has been pledged so far from families during the Leadership Phase of the project. A mailing to 35 to 40 additional families in the Leadership Phase went out on October 18. A mailing is going out to families in the second half of the Forward with Faith campaign. A family can pledge its Forward with Faith donation for up to five years; the full pledge can be paid in one year, if preferred. 50% of what is donated comes back to the parish. Every six months, we receive 50% of what parishioners have paid so far. There is a separate Forward with Faith account. Example: If families pledge and donate \$550,000 and the parish realizes \$275,000, the \$275,000 must be used as indicated in the published Forward with Faith case statement. The other 50% goes to the Hartford Bishops' Foundation, available for grants to parishes. This is overseen by Archbishop Blair, but not Archdiocesan money. It is not in the Archdiocesan General Fund.

***Finance Council/Saint Ann School Roof Flashing:*** The Finance Council has approved repairs to the roof flashing between the auditorium and the main building of the school (south side of auditorium). The flashing over the fascia is lifted up. The contractor will pull up all of the fascia flashing, remove and replace the rotting wood, and then replace the flashing. This will be done around the whole perimeter of the roof. They will also conduct a moisture and density test. The company being used is the same company who completed this type of work for Father John's parish in Plainville. We are taking a step by step approach with big projects.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Lou reminded members of our next meeting: Monday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Saint Ann Parish Center.

Maria Tomasetti for Ann Eden  
November 14, 2021