

Saint Raphael Pastoral Council
Meeting Notes from September 26, 2022

Cathy Coda called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. All Council members were in attendance except Paula Demirjian and Deacon George and read together Cathy Coda's opening prayer. May's meeting notes were corrected to reflect that MaryJo Downs, Pat Pritchard and **Frank Lacerenza (not Toni Gomes as originally written)** will be backups, available to serve if necessary. With that correction the notes were accepted.

Prayer Leaders for the coming months were chosen

October 2022 Terri Deveny...November 2022 RoseMarie Marmolejo...

December 2022 John Kirkham... January 2023 Andy Jorge... February 2023 Al May

March 2023 Tom Jagodzinski...April 2023 John Adams...May 2023 Tom Zawislinski

Everyone introduced themselves and gave some personal background information.

After discussion, Cathy Coda was selected as Chairperson of the Council and RoseMarie Marmolejo was selected as Vice Chairperson. The office of secretary is vacant: Cathy Coda will ask Paula Demerjian if she is willing to serve.

Father John's Comments:

1) Father John gave some insight about Council meetings, stating that we like to begin on time at 7PM and we strive to keep meeting length to one hour but cap it at one hour and a half at the most. 2) Father mentioned the signage project (required by the Diocese) for both churches has stalled. Cathy said that Rich Coda has been in touch with Fast Signs for a quote. John Kirkham and Wally Hauck also indicated an interest in this project. Paula Demirjian had previously worked up some drafts of potential signage so she will be asked to consult as well. Terri Deveny mentioned that through her employment at the Board of Ed she might have a contact with Bowman Signs.

Committee Reports:

Social Justice and Human Concerns: Al May

A meeting was held on September 19, 2022. Items discussed were:

1) HomeFront is a community-based, volunteer-driven home repair program that annually provides free repairs to low-income homeowners. A major partner in **HomeFront** is the Archdiocese of Hartford, which encourages its parishes once a year to dedicate a weekend to help one pre-selected homeowner.

Our parish has participated for many years now. It was reported that this year's project, although more difficult than past years because of the needs of the home involved, was quite successful, with between 40-45 parishioners taking part, including youngsters from Maria's teen group who were "a big help."

2) The rest of the meeting focused on a discussion of possible projects the Subcommittee may get involved in between now and next spring, in addition to the regular projects such as the Holiday Giving Trees at churches (which this year will reflect more the "One Parish / Two Churches" pro-life activity and support for Beth El Center and Milford's Way (the townwide refugee resettlement project). Also mentioned were a visit to a local nursing home during the holiday period, assisting the Food Pantry in replacing its very old truck and support for a possible fundraiser for an economic development project in Togo, West Africa, which Elizabeth created and in which she is still very much involved. Elizabeth will keep the Subcommittee informed on progress in this fundraiser's development.

3) CONECT is a Fairfield / New Haven counties collective of about 45 churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, and civic organizations that have joined together to take action on social and economic justice issues of common concern, such as rising health insurance rates, gun violence, mental health care and criminal justice reform. Under the leadership of Father Maroney, our parish was one of the founding members of CONECT.

Manfred reported on their recent general meeting, where new officers were installed. CONECT will be holding a gubernatorial candidates' forum on Sunday, October 23rd at 3 pm at Congregation B'nai Israel in Bridgeport. If interested in attending either in person or on ZOOM, contact Al at amay4713@gmail.com. Or go to

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/CONNECT/FMfcgzGqQmQvKITgKvDtKSJmKtwRfXNt>

No specific date was set for the Subcommittee's next meeting.

Prayer and Worship: Ann Eden

- 1) Thursday September 29 is the Feast of the Archangels and we will "Celebrate St. Raphael" at 8 AM mass. "Breakfast to Go" bags will be distributed.
- 2) The International Rosary, facilitated by Rose Cox, is scheduled for Tuesday, October 4 at 7PM at St. Gabriel Church. Multi lingual parishioners will begin the prayers of each decade in a different language-Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, German and Vietnamese-while the congregation will pray the second half of each prayer in English. Between each decade the congregation will sing hymns to honor our Blessed Mother. Following mass refreshments will be served in St. Gabriel Hall.
- 3) The parish's annual Mass of Remembrance is scheduled for Sunday November 6 at 2PM at St. Ann Church. At this Mass we remember and celebrate the members of our parish family who have died during the past year. Invitations to the Mass will be mailed to their families during late October.
- 4) During October, the committee will be looking at various booklets of prayers and reflections for Advent and will select one to distribute to parishioners for the Advent season, which begins Sunday, November 27.
- 5) The Tuesday Rosary group has resumed meeting at noon in the St. Ann Children's Chapel. First Saturday Fatima Rosary was scheduled to begin October 1 but has been postponed due to a funeral. It will continue starting in November through February in St. Ann Church at 11AM.

Parish Life:

Lou Servideo 1) reported that the bus trip to the Yankees/Mets game was a tremendous success. People are already asking for a repeat next year. Lou said it's possible they may attend a game at Citi Field. **2)** To better acquaint parishioners with the different ministries in place at St. Raphael, and encourage involvement, members of different ministries will be invited to attend our monthly coffee hours

and provide information and answer questions. Coffee And takes place after all masses on the second weekend of each month. 3) No day trips are planned at this point but the committee is looking into it. 4) Meetings are starting now for the Christmas Fair to be held on Saturday December.

Rose Marie Marmolejo reported that 1) Homefront took place on September 18. The many volunteers, both adults and GIFT teens, rehabbed the home of a local family in need. Immediately following the work day, Rose Marie hosted a dinner for all the volunteers.

2) The Advent Luncheon will be held on November 20 in St. Gabriel Hall following 11AM mass. In lieu of admission, those attending are asked to bring a non-perishable food item and a winter item such as NEW hat, gloves, scarves or socks. In the past, the clothing items have been donated to Beth El and Boys and Girls Village. The food items benefit the St. Raphael Food Pantry.

Christmas Fair:

MaryJo Downs reports that the Christmas Fair will be held at the Parish Center, St. Ann Campus on Saturday December 3 from 9AM-3PM. Items needed are Christmas trees, wreaths and decorations as well as gift cards to be used for raffle prizes. Volunteers are needed for set up, decorating, break down and helping in the kitchen, bakery and raffle room. Call MaryJo at 203-710-04714

Faith Formation: Maria Tomasetti:

Registration is still in progress for our faith formation program. In September, we held our First Reconciliation/First Communion Overview meetings for parents/guardians and our Confirmation Overview meetings for parents/guardians and Confirmation candidates. Classes for First Reconciliation and Confirmation will begin the first weekend in October. Our GIFT--Growing in Faith Together Program--begins on October 23/25. The theme for 2022/2023 is Catholic Social Teaching.

Open Forum:

- 1) Kathleen Buchanan inquired about the status of the water leakage problems St. Ann's has been experiencing. Father said there was no news

on the roof. He continues to seek help for this ongoing problem. **2)** By way of explanation, Father gave some details on the Forward with Faith Campaign and what the monies derived from that could be used for. The restrictions associated with these monies are coming to light and hamper some projects. **3)** Terri Deveny asked if the parish maintains a list of proposed capital projects and whether a capital campaign is possible. **4)** Tom Z asked about creating more handicap access spots near to where Father John parks at St. Ann's but since there are stairs going into the church it didn't appear to be a workable solution. **5)** Cathy Coda asked all members to **please** review their by-laws and select which standing committee(s) they would like to serve on.

Council Members choices thus far:

Tom Zawislinski....Parish Life

Rose Marie Marmolejo...Parish Life, Prayer and Worship, Social Justice and Human Concerns

Al May...Social Justice and Human Concerns

Andy Jorge....Christian/Lifelong Faith Formation

Cathy Coda.....Parish Life

The meeting adjourned at 8:30PM.

Cathy Coda

September 29, 2022