

Saint Raphael Parish Pastoral Council Meeting Notes

February 13, 2023, 7:00 PM Saint Ann Parish House

Cathy Coda shared an opening prayer and then opened the meeting.

In attendance: Father John, Deacon George; John K.; Tom Z; Cathy C.; John A.; Kathleen B.; Maria T.; Wally H.; Rose Marie M.

Absent: Terri D.; Paula D.; Tom J.; Al M.

November 2022 meeting notes were accepted. December meeting was delayed due to Christmas Celebrations and January meeting was rescheduled due to Father John's travels.

Father John's Comments:

- Mass attendance is growing although still about 2/3 of pre-covid. This is consistent for all parishes.

Standing Committee Reports:

Prayer and Worship Report from Anne Eden:

- Members of the Saint Raphael Prayer and Worship committee are Cathy Coda, Rose Cox, Ann Eden, Frank Elliott, Mary Lee Frisbie, Joanne Judd, Rose Marie Marmolejo, Manfred Mohring, Pat Pritchard, Yvonne Torsiello and Val Yergeau.
- The committee's immediate focus: **Lent**
- **Ash Wednesday** falls on February 22. Schedule for Mass and Ashes: 8 a.m. and noon at St. Gabriel Church, 7 p.m. at St. Ann's.
- **Booklet of Reflections:** Copies of Alice Camille's *40 Days of Faith, Hope and Love* will be at church doors this weekend. (Original selection from Fr. Joe Sica had sold out.)
- **Stations of the Cross:** Fridays at 3 p.m. at Saint Ann Church, beginning on February 24. Stations will be livestreamed via the parish website (saintraphaelmilford.org). No stations on Good Friday. Maria Tomasetti will schedule Stations on two Friday evenings at St. Gabriel's once we have a date for the Lenten Supper (also a Friday evening event).
- **Lenten Retreat:** *Following Jesus Into the Desert*. Fr. Maroney (reflections), Music by the Saint Ann Choir, in a format similar to the Advent retreat, which was very well received: Sunday, March 12 at 4 p.m. at Saint Gabriel's, continuing on Monday, March 13 at 7 p.m. at Saint Ann's.
- **Weekly bulletin notices:** Suggestions (prayer, fasting, almsgiving) that might make our Lenten journey more meaningful.

- **Holy Week:** Based on our established alternating schedule, the Easter Triduum will be celebrated at Saint Ann's this year.

Additional Prayer/Liturgy opportunities for 2023:

- **Healing Mass:** Date to be decided (fall?)
- **Celebrate Saint Raphael:** We'll honor our patron saint on September 29th, the feast day he shares w/Michael and Gabriel. Details to be determined.
- **International Rosary:** Tuesday, October 10 at Saint Gabriel; Program: Pope Saint John Paul II's Rosary for Peace (the Joyful Mysteries).
- **Mass of Remembrance:** A November Sunday near All Souls Day.
- **Dates for our teen-led Evening Stations of the Cross** for people of all ages, including parish families with children.
 - Friday, March 10, beginning 7:00 pm, Saint Ann Church, will be live-streamed
 - Friday, March 31, beginning 7:00 pm, Saint Gabriel Church

Notes:

- *The committee continues to publish weekly prayers for peace and an end to violence in the parish bulletin under the heading *A Time for Prayer*. (First entry: 6/19/22)
- *The committee has submitted recommendations to Father John re: 1) moderation in altar decorations consistent with the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (#305) and 2) consistency between our 2 churches in decorating for liturgical seasons. Father will review the recommendations and act on them as he deems appropriate.
- Lenten Monday Confessions will begin the first week after Ash Wednesday every Monday during lent at 6:00 - 6:30 PM starting at St. Gabriel's and alternating after that with St. Anne's.

Social Justice/Human Concerns:

- In December, the Committee held a special "get to know you" meeting with members of **All In for Milford (AIFM)**. AIFM is a relatively new alliance of **community leaders and neighborhood organizations, (including several churches)** working to make Milford a place where "*everyone has a place to live, food to eat; where everyone's voice is heard, and we all can thrive.*"
- Because one of the group's areas of focus was food insecurity and we run a food pantry, it was thought it would be worthwhile for the two groups to get to know each other and to explore areas of future collaboration.
- Much of the meeting ended up focusing on proposed reforms to the City's Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) /"in-law apartments" regulations, which **All In** supports and one member of the Subcommittee said she totally opposes, claiming

they will raise taxes and lower property values. The proposed revised regulations were recently approved by the City's Planning and Zoning Board. It allows homeowners which ADUs attached to their homes to rent them out to non-blood relatives if desired. Previously, they could only be used for family members / blood relatives.

- Subcommittee members agreed it would be appropriate to stay in touch with each other in the future.
- The Subcommittee also will be meeting on Monday, February 20th to discuss how to better handle requests from individual parishioners for support for causes such Ukrainian war relief and natural disasters like the recent earthquake along the Syrian / Turkish border.
- Rather than organizing our own efforts for each cause, it is felt a better service would be to publicize in our bulletin/ newsletter the names of local organizations involved in these relief efforts, so parishioners can contact them on how they help.
- Also on the agenda for the Feb. 20th meeting will be possible participation in the upcoming March for Life on, Wednesday March 22nd in Hartford.

Parish Life

Rose Marie Marmolejo shared dates of events for the Parish Family members to participate in and to volunteer where to best use their talents.

- We are planning our Lenten dinner for March 24th. The committee will share details in a timely manner once when decided.
- We will collect \$10.00 beginning after masses before our Easter Celebration. The money will be collected when people sign up for each event. All events will be detailed in the bulletin.
- The crowning of our Blessed Mother will be held on May 14th. Tom Croteau is donating the crown in honor of his sister.
- The fund raiser for The Home Front will be May 21st at St. Gabriel's Hall campus. \$10.00 will be collected when people sign up. This will be promoted starting after all masses the Sunday after Easter (April 16th).
- The Home Front project date is September 16th. We will be calling for volunteers from both campuses to assist with the project. John Marmolejo is the captain and Richard Wheeling is the co-captain of the project. A volunteer supper will be held that evening at the St. Gabriel campus following the project completion.
- A tentative date for a healing mass will be on or about September 29th celebrated by Fr. John.
- Mary Jo Downs shared the results from the Christmas Fair: The following donations were generated: Raffles \$2,600; White Elephant \$450; Kitchen \$425; Bakery \$870; Scrip program \$2,000. There were many positive comments and much joy and appreciation expressed. The choir was a hit with their great songs.

Faith Formation: Maria Tomasetti

- 29 children received the Sacrament of First Reconciliation in December 2022 and January 2023. 4 more children are completing their preparations.
- First Communion and Confirmation classes are ongoing.
- Families can choose the following weekends for their First Communion celebrations: May 6 & 7 and May 20 & 21.
- Our next GIFT program session is scheduled for February 26 and 28th. The topic is Catholic Social Teaching – Option for the Poor and Vulnerable. The program is for people of all ages.
- Our summer camp is scheduled for Monday July 24 through Friday July 28th from 9am – 12 noon. This program is designed for ages 4 – 11. The theme is STELLAR: Shine Jesus' Light. We are hoping to increase our registrants to reach pre-pandemic numbers. We need to recruit more volunteers (adults and teens ages 12 and older). Please help us spread the word to your circle of friends, families, and neighbors.

Open Forum:

- There will be “Coffee And’s” each month and, when possible, will have a theme. “Coffee And” is for the Parishioners to talk and get to know each other better.
- Deacon George suggested different ministries could be invited to volunteer for set up and clean up and promote their ministries. Cathy will look for the list of church ministries who can be approached to see if they are willing to sponsor “Coffee And’s.”
- Signage project has been completed. Everyone is pleased. John K. suggested a small sign with the Mass times be added to make it easier for walkers to know times of masses. John K. will draw a sample and present it at the next meeting for decision. Both churches can have their own.
- St. Gabriel Hall update – flooring will begin the week of 2-13-23. Construction is ongoing. Food pantry is moved. Ideally the construction will be completed by the end of the week of 2-13-23. Kitchen will be cleaned by Tuesday 2-21.
- Painting may need to be done in the children’s chapel in St. Anne’s. We still have issues that need to be investigated about the roof and leaks.
- Our Souper Bowl of Caring to benefit Beth-El Center and our Saint Raphael Parish, Saint Gabriel Food Pantry began this weekend with our drive-thru collection event on Feb 11 and an information table at all “Coffee And's”. Our parish teens organized our drive-thru collection. Parishioners were very generous, donating requested non-perishable food items, paper goods, cleaning supplies and toiletries. We also received some monetary donations and Shop Rite gift cards. Requested items for the Souper Bowl of Caring can be donated through the end of February when you come to Mass.

Next Council Meeting is March 27th at 7PM at St. Ann’s Parish house