

Saint Raphael Parish
Pastoral Council Meeting Agenda
February 12, 2024 7:00PM
St. Ann Parish House

Opening Prayer-Cathy Coda

Acceptance of December 2023 meeting notes

- Absent Paula Demirjian, Terri Deveny, Wally Hauck, John Kirkham

Father John's Comments

- Coming from the Archdiocese-each parish needs to establish a vocation ministry-Bert and Cindy Sissick will attend a workshop and get more information-Rose Marmolejo and Frank Lacerenza expressed an interest in involvement with this.
- Father queried the council on their thoughts as to location of the Easter Triduum-concerns with parking and ability to livestream prompted those in attendance to agree that St. Ann's was the best location.

Standing Committee Reports

Prayer and Worship Committee Report from Ann Eden

- Stations of the Cross; Still waiting for the schedule from Mary Lee. (Dates/times are firm: Fridays, 3:00 p.m. at Saint Ann's, February 16 through March 22, live-streamed). Based on our afternoon schedule, Maria is planning for 3 Friday evenings of teen-led Stations, dates to be determined.
- John Marmolejo, with some prompting from his lovely wife, will let us know which Tuesday evening he plans to have Stations for the Men of St. Joseph at Saint Gabriel Church. Parishioners are welcome to come.
- Care Notes: Trish Black, who had ordered the notes in the past, was kind enough to check with Monica who has ordered some Lent-related notes, which should be in soon. Our plan, if you recall, was to leave baskets with a variety of notes at the doors of both churches - another prayer opportunity for members of the parish family. With the assist from Trish and Monica (Thank you!) we'll have more than the relatively small number we started with.
- Lenten Meal: Cathy has sent me the date and time (Friday, March 1, 6 p.m.) the menu (baked cod w/lemon and tartar sauce; roasted vegetables; mac and cheese; dinner rolls; beverages and dessert) and the prices (adults \$15; under 12 \$5), all of which will appear in the bulletin and in The Parish Press. Tickets on sale weekends of February 17 and 24. Father John will offer Lenten reflections.
- Parish emails and registration: Bulletin notice re: submitting emails for our mailing list and how to register for the parish scheduled for January 24/25.
- Notice re: availability of Book of Petitions at Saint Ann's: Will appear in a future bulletin and in the newsletter.

- Lenten Retreat w/Fr. Ricky Manolo: March 10-12, Sunday afternoon at Saint Gabriel's, Monday and Tuesday evenings at Saint Ann's. Peter DeMarco is coordinating this event. P&W would like Peter to work more closely with our committee when planning/scheduling events that come under the Prayer and Worship umbrella. Beneficial for everyone.
- Wednesday Lenten Reflections on the Penitential Psalms (6, 32, 38, 51,102, 130, 143): Psalms and Reflections (from USCCB) will be circulated via parish mailing list (with printed copies available) on Tuesday evenings beginning February 13. (Another prayer opportunity for members of the parish family.)
- Lenten Theme: Fr. Joe Sica's booklet of daily Lenten meditations (on order) is entitled The Season for Healing Hearts. We thought our overall theme could also focus on the heart: a healing heart; a listening heart (for Lenten prayer, in which we talk to the Lord, but should also listen for the Lord's response, as young Samuel did in this past Sunday's first reading); giving from the heart, most appropriate for Lenten almsgiving; a change of heart, giving up habits that lead us away from God. All of these are a way to respond to the Lord's words from Joel, the first reading on Ash Wednesday: Return to me with your whole heart (Joel 2:12)
- We'll try to pull these ideas together for things we publish in the bulletin/newsletter. If you have suggestions, please share them as soon as you can.
- Blessing of the Easter food: Takes place on Holy Saturday. Deacon George presides. Please approach the deacon with questions, ideas, and suggestions.
- Triduum liturgies was planned to be celebrated this year at Saint Gabriel Church. Note: The Council after considering parking, livestream capability, etc., decided to have the Triduum services at St. Ann's this year.
- Other: Mass etiquette - best way to bring it to parish family? Need an earlier start on planning seasonal events - keep in mind as we move forward. The Chosen - Rose Cox and her ad hoc committee have screening of series episodes under control. Well done!

Social Justice/Human Concerns Committee

Meeting Notes from January 8, 2024

Attendance: Elizabeth S. Wally H., Rose Marie M., John M., Marie T., Paula D. Guest: Cathy Coda

Absent: Manfred T.

Committee Membership

- To attract new members, we plan to participate in a Mini Ministry introduction event during a "Coffee And" when it is scheduled by the Social Action Committee.
- Rose Marie will write a request for new members and submit it for publication in the Church Bulletin.
- John will speak to the Knights Council about sponsoring some Coffee And events.

Domestic Violence Initiative:

- Wally will request Monica publish the information about BHcare in every bulletin if there is room. The committee thought it was important to publish the information more frequently than monthly.

Supporting Prisoners and Their Relationships

- Marie will send Wally contact information for Deacon Dean who facilitates a “clothing closet” for the poor. Wally will ask Deacon Dean how clothes can be delivered to Career Resources halfway house clients. Wally will contact Career Resources (Christina) and explore how to coordinate with Deacon Dean.
- Kim at Career Resources will provide Wally with a contact who can help our committee provide cards and postage and bible reading materials to inmates in the various prisons within CT. John M. has bible reading materials which can be donated to the inmates.

Facilitate the Safe Baby Box option in Connecticut

- Elizabeth is in contact with State Senator Frank Smith who is willing to co-sponsor a bill in the 2025 legislative session. Wally and Elizabeth will work with both Kathy Kennedy and Franks Smith to submit a bill which allows for anonymous submissions to a Safe Baby Box when installed. Parishioners will need to play an important role in influencing our legislators to pass the bill.

Garden Project

- Ann Eden and Elizabeth will create and submit a “how to” plant and harvest a Church Garden Project to Catholic Transcript.

Social Outreach

- Christmas Giving: Parishioners donated over 490 gifts and gift cards which were distributed to St. Gabriel Food Pantry, Milford Youth & Family Services, Milford Sr. Center, Bridges, Milford Health Care Center, Beth-El Center, St. Vincent’s Special Needs, Four Corners RDF, Amistad Catholic Worker House, IRIS, Civita Care Center, Bridgeport Rescue Mission, Mary & Joseph’s Place, Boys & Girls Village, and The Umbrella Center.
- Social Visits to health Care Facilities: Visited were Four Corners RCF and Civita Care Center.
- Beth-El Outreach: We are continuing our monthly pizza dinners-to-go.
- Souper bowl of Caring: Collection of non-perishable foods, personal hygiene products, paper goods, and cleaning supplies will happen on January 27th from 11 AM – 1 PM as a drive-through event at the St. Ann’s Church Parking Lot

Human Trafficking

- We continue to be informed through communication published by The Underground New England which exists to end sexual exploitation in Connecticut (www.theundergroundne.org). We will continue to look for opportunities to participate in this important issue.

Protect Connecticut’s Children Initiative

- Our next Zoom meeting to educate parents and grandparents will be on January 18th from 7PM- 8PM.
- Our next Human Concerns Committee meeting will be March 4th at 7PM at St. Gabriel’s Church Hall.

Parish Life-Cathy Coda

- Social Gathering Team meeting February 20, 2024, St. Ann's Parish Center
- Lenten Meal March 1 6:00pm St. Ann School auditorium

Faith Formation-Maria Tomasetti

- Twenty-one (21) children and teens are preparing to receive their First Communion in May 2024. Their parents/guardians are also participating in this process. First Communion is scheduled for regular weekend Masses on May 18/19. The following weekend (May 25/26) is a back-up First Communion weekend.
- Two additional children have received First Reconciliation (19 so far in 2023/2024). Two additional children are still preparing to receive the sacrament.
- Confirmation classes are ongoing and continue through June with make-up classes in August (if needed). We currently have 22 candidates who are preparing to receive Confirmation in October/November 2024.
- RCIA/OCIA classes continue for four catechumens who will be receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist and for three candidates who will be receiving the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil on March 30.
- Our monthly GIFT program for children, teens and adults continues in February, focusing on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The dates are Sunday, February 25 and Tuesday, February 27. Our March GIFT program dates are Sunday, March 10 and Tuesday, March 19 (Tuesday date moved due to Parish Mission on Tuesday, March 12).
- An Easter Season celebration for our GIFT families and friends is scheduled for Friday, April 12 from 6 pm to 8 pm in the Saint Ann Parish Center.
- Nine of our parish teens collected, sorted and packed non-perishable foods, paper goods, toiletries and cleaning supplies at our Souper Bowl of Caring drive-through event on Saturday, June 27 from 11 am to 1 pm--thanks to the generosity of our parishioners. Items were collected for Beth-El Center, the Saint Gabriel Food Pantry and Amistad Catholic Worker House in New Haven. Some checks and a gift card were also collected for the St. Gabriel Food Pantry.
- Reminder...our Summer VBS Camp is scheduled for Monday, July 22 thru Friday, July 26 from 9 am to 12 noon (for campers). The theme will be SCUBA, diving into friendship with God, an amazing undersea adventure where kids will experience the ever-flowing, never-ending love of God. Registration is open. Thanks for helping to spread the word. Parents/guardians often start booking summer camps for their children in March.

Open Forum

- Selection committee will be selected pending Father's approval of the selection process timeline.
- Financial report was distributed-to allow members time to review discussion was tabled until March meeting.
- Deacon George distributed a booklet-"Why We're Pro-Life" and asked us to read in preparation for discussion at the March meeting
- Please note date change for March meeting-from March 11 to March 18

NEXT MEETING: MARCH 18, 2024 ST. GABRIEL HALL 7PM