

Saint Raphael Parish  
Pastoral Council Meeting Agenda  
March 18, 2024 7:00PM  
St. Gabriel's Hall

**Attendance:** Absent: George S.

Opening Prayer-Paula K.

Acceptance of February 2024 meeting notes

**Father John's Comments:**

- Father Ricki Manalo's programs were well received. It was also fun to be with Father Manalo The Council members desire to have more of these types of programs.
- Next week is Holy week. Father Asks we all make a concerted effort to attend as many events and celebrations as we can.
- Last week the St. Josph Metal was awarded to George Rome. George has provided many years of service to the church especially to the responsibilities of the St. Gabriel's food pantry.
- August 3rd Father John will celebrate his 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary as Pastor of St. Raphael's Parish.

**Standing Committee Reports**

**Prayer and Worship Committee Report from Ann Eden**

**A Time for Prayer**

- This initiative began in mid-June of 2022 as we invited Saint Raphael parishioners to pray for peace and for an end to the violence "that seems to be consuming us." What started with printed prayer cards in the pews has continued with a different prayer printed every week in the bulletin. The prayers come from a variety of sources. Members of the Council are welcome to submit prayers for publication. You may send yours to Ann Eden at [parishpress06460@gmail.com](mailto:parishpress06460@gmail.com). Thank you.

**Lent**

- Fr. Joe Sica's Lenten booklet of meditations, *The Season for Healing Hearts*, from 23<sup>rd</sup> Publications has proven very popular, as Fr. Sica's booklets have always been. We have few, if any remaining.
- Parishioners have been taking the Lenten Care Notes and Prayer Notes booklets that have been left in baskets at the church doors.
- Praying and meditating on the Seven Penitential Psalms (6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130 and 143) during Lent is an ancient tradition of the Church. Beginning on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday we have sent one of these Psalms and its reflection to everyone on our parish mailing list as an opportunity for weekly prayer and meditation. We will continue to send them through the Tuesday of Holy Week. Printed copies have been available at each church for those without internet access. Several parishioners have emailed their thanks, some have mentioned downloading and printing the sheets, and folks have been taking the copies left in the churches. Thank you, USCCB, for having the Psalms and Reflections available online!

- Mary Lee Frisbie has been leading Stations of the Cross on Lenten Fridays at 3:00 p.m. at Saint Ann Church. (Great job, Mary Lee!) 30 or more people have been coming to Stations each week; several more have been watching via livestream. This past Friday (March 15) we used Amy Ekeh's very moving and newly published Stations booklet *Come to Me, All of You (In the Voice of Christ)*.
- Maria Tomasetti has coordinated Teen-Led Stations for people of all ages on Friday evenings, alternating between Saint Ann's and Saint Gabriel's. Last scheduled evening Stations: This Friday, March 22 at Saint Gabriel's.
- Father Ricky Manalo's 3-day parish mission *In These Days of Lenten Journey* was well attended and very well received. The Sunday afternoon/Monday and Tuesday evening schedule works very well for the parish. Thank you, Father Ricky, and thanks, also, to the Saint Ann Choir for their melodious contribution and to Peter DeMarco, who made the arrangements for the mission.
- Rose Cox and her committee, with Maria's assistance, continue to present episodes from Season 2 of *The Chosen* to enthusiastic audiences every other Sunday afternoon at 2:30 in the Parish Center "theater." On Saint Patrick's Day: Episodes 3 and 4: *Matthew 4:24* and *The Perfect Opportunity*. Admission is free.
- Kudos to the entire Lenten Supper Committee who worked very hard organizing the March 1<sup>st</sup> event. Great food, great ambiance, wonderful opportunity for the Saint Raphael Parish family to come together to share a meal and some spiritual refreshment as we heard Father John's reflections on the season.
- This coming Sunday (March 24<sup>th</sup>) is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week.
- All liturgies for the Triduum will be celebrated at Saint Ann Church:
  - Holy Thursday, March 28, 7:00 p.m. The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper
  - The Mass will begin with the presentation of the Holy Oils, which the Archbishop will bless at the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph on Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>.
  - The liturgy will close with the transfer of the Blessed Sacrament to the altar of reposition.
  - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 10:00 p.m.
  - Good Friday, March 29, 3:00 p.m. The Celebration of the Lord's Passion
  - Holy Saturday, March 30- Blessing of the Easter Food Baskets, 12 noon, at Saint Gabriel Church
  - The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night, 8:00 p.m. This year we will welcome both catechumens and candidates into full Communion with the Catholic Church.
  - Easter Sunday, March 31- Mass of the Lord's Resurrection
    - 8:00 a.m. Saint Gabriel Church
    - 9:30 a.m. Saint Ann Church
    - 11:00 a.m. Saint Gabriel Church

## **Social Justice/Human Concerns Committee**

### **Committee Membership**

- To attract new members, we plan to participate in a Mini Ministry introduction event during a “Coffee And” on March 9<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM (scheduled by the Social Action Committee).

### **Domestic Violence Initiative:**

- Wally requested an announcement about BHcare (Domestic Violence information) in the latest bulletin.

### **Supporting Prisoners and Their Relationships**

- Elizabeth will write a promotional announcement to introduce “Cards for Love, Healing and Relationships” (for Women Prisoners).
- Wally will call our consultant who supports women inmates at Niantic Women’s Prison and ask how many inmates for which we can supply cards.
- The committee will implement a process for providing the cards and postage to the warden which for Mother’s Day 2024 (May 12), Christmas 2024, Easter 2025 (April 20).

### **Facilitate the Safe Haven Newborn Device (previously called Baby Box) option in Connecticut**

- Elizabeth has created a coalition of individuals and organizations (government and private) that will collaborate to submit a bill in the 2025 legislative session. The purpose is to curb infant death. This device has been successful in saving lives in several other states including Alabama. Wally will contact Kathy Kennedy to gain her support to co-sponsor the bill.

### **Garden Project**

- Ann Eden and Elizabeth will shortly submit a “how-to” article to be published in the Archdiocese newsletter.
- Committee will submit three requests in the bulletin: Call for seeds; Call for volunteers for the “Garden Prep Day” scheduled for April 6<sup>th</sup> ; Call for volunteers for the “Garden Planting Day” scheduled for May 11<sup>th</sup>

### **Human Trafficking**

- Elizabeth will invite a guest to help committee identify what we can do to support the efforts of the Order of Malta and The Underground New England. How can we begin to end sexual exploitation in Connecticut ([www.theundergroundne.org](http://www.theundergroundne.org)).

### **Protect Connecticut’s Children Initiative**

- Our next Zoom meeting to educate parents and grandparents on the evil of Gender Ideology will be on March 21 from 7PM- 8PM.

### **Letter to the American Church**

- Wally will invite volunteers to screen the movie to see if it’s valuable to offer a free screening at the parish.
- Wally will send the trailer of the movie to the committee members and select volunteers.
- Our next Human Concerns Committee meeting will be April 22 at 7PM at St. Gabriel’s Church Hall.

- Wally will send links to the trailer, interviews of Eric Metaxas, and the movie Letter to the American Church. The council will watch these all before the next meeting (April 8<sup>th</sup>) to prepare for a discussion about making the movie available to the entire parish (as with The Chosen).

### **Parish Life-Cathy Coda**

- The Lenten Supper Committee worked very hard organizing the March 1<sup>st</sup> event. Great food, great ambiance, wonderful opportunity for the Saint Raphael Parish family to come together to share a meal and some spiritual refreshment as we heard Father John's reflections on the season.

### **Faith Formation-Maria Tomasetti**

- Our monthly GIFT program for adults and young people continues in March and April. On Tuesday, March 19 we will focus on the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. In April, we will focus on the two Sacraments of Service, Marriage and Holy Orders.
- Our First Communion and Confirmation classes also continue. First Communion is scheduled for regular weekend Masses on May 18/19. The following weekend (May 25/26) is the back-up First Communion weekend.
- Information re: catechumens and candidates receiving Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil was included in Fr. John's update.
- An Easter Season celebration for our GIFT families and friends is scheduled for Friday, April 12 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm in the Saint Ann Parish Center.
- We are planning to offer a Spring Adult Confirmation program.
- Reminder...our Summer Camp is scheduled for Monday, July 22 thru Friday, July 26 from 9:00 am to 12 noon (for campers ages 4-11). 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 scheduling summer camps for their children in March. We are already receiving registration.
- Our Christian/Lifelong Faith Formation Committee will be meeting in mid to late April.

### **Open Forum**

Selection Committee: Paula and Cathy are the two members of the selection committee for 2024-2025. The process will begin after Easter Sunday. See process below:

- Bulletin and Mass Announcement request for Nominations starting March 30/31 until April 20/21. Nominees are verified April 29 week. Orientation of new members May 16, 2024.

Finance report reviewed and accepted without objection.

Wally will request the BHCare notice be placed in the bulletin every week.

Wally will request an advertisement for new members of the Human Concerns Committee appear in the bulletin for the next 5 weeks.

**NEXT MEETING: APRIL 8, 2024 ST. ANN PARISH 7PM**