

Saint Raphael Parish
Pastoral Council Meeting Agenda
May 13, 2024 7:00PM
St. Gabriel's Hall

Attendance: Absent – Maria, Frank, and Joyce

Opening Prayer- Rose Marie

Acceptance of April 2024 meeting notes

Father John's Comments: Church Street Parking Lot is being cleared of extra brush and overgrowth. Parish Finance Committee and Father are considering the proposals for roof repairs for both churches.

Standing Committee Reports

Nominating Committee Report:

Four new members were chosen for those council members whose 3-year terms ended in 2024. Rose Marie Marmolejo, Francis O'Neil, Elaine Bataille, and Manfred Mohring have been selected to replace those members who have completed their terms namely Al May, Rose Marie Marmolejo, Tom Zawislinski, Paula Demirjam. Congratulations to all.

Prayer and Worship Committee Report from Ann Eden

- The committee met in the Saint Ann Library at 10:00 a.m. Committee members in attendance were Cathy Coda, Ann Eden, Mary Lee Frisbie, Joanne Judd, Joyce Marlow and Rose Marie Marmolejo. Deacon George Sartor was our invited guest.

Pro-Life Presentation;

- After an opening prayer Deacon George distributed booklets from Catholic Answers Press entitled *Why We're Pro Life*, written by Trent Horn. The booklets were meant to give us some background about the Pro Life presentation that Deacon George is planning, along with Bryan Mercier. Bryan is a Catholic speaker and apologist who lives in Milford, a familiar presence at Saint Raphael Parish. We see him often at Mass with his wife and two young daughters. The presentation is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday evening, June 18 at Saint Ann Church.
- Deacon George would like our committee's help in setting up and publicizing this event, which will feature Bryan's presentation, followed by Q&A, with refreshments in the Children's Chapel.
- The deacon will give an introduction, and pass out the *Why We're Pro Life* booklets to the congregation when he preaches on June 8/9. Publicity should go out prior to that, to the public and to other parishes, via newspapers, flyers, the *Catholic Transcript*, internet outlets like *Patch*, social media, etc. ***Deacon George will check w/Bryan about the publicity (press releases, graphics (event logo?), images, etc. that Bryan may have used for his other presentations and that we might be able to adapt.).***
- ***Please let me know by May 4 how you can help: publicity (including outreach within whatever groups you are a part of), refreshments, greeter, set up – what am I forgetting?***
- Before he left, Deacon George encouraged us to pray the Prayer for Priestly Vocations frequently, not simply after Masses, but with our families, with prayer groups, at meetings, etc.

Time for Prayer – review and discussion:

- The *Time for Prayer* initiative began in June 2022 as a weekly bulletin insert, asking us to pray as a parish family for an end to violence. Shortly thereafter, with the outbreak of so many conflicts around the globe, we modified our intention: for an end to violence and for peace. After a brief discussion the committee decided to change to a *monthly* insert – **with prayers submitted to Ann by committee members** – and to use the space Monica has so kindly allotted to highlight other prayer and worship related topics.

Lent – review and commentary on our Lenten efforts. What to keep? Change? Add?

Keep:

- Booklet of Daily Meditations (Kudos again to Val Yergeau for her selection prowess.)
- Lenten Care Notes booklets at church doors
- Stations of the Cross: Fridays at 3 o'clock at Saint Ann Church (Thanks, Mary Lee)
 - Livestreaming generated a lot of interest.
 - Friday evening teen-led stations alternating between the 2 churches
- Lenten Supper: Already on the calendar for 3/28/2025! (Thanks, Cathy and Rose Marie.)
- Lenten Retreat – March 10-12. Very successful. **Ann: Check w/Peter re: 2025.**
- Holy Week liturgies;
 - Holy Thursday - 2 candidates and KofC Grand Knight processed w/sacred oils
 - Holy Saturday Blessing of Food went well. More publicity/explanation needed for 2025.
 - Easter Vigil – Moving and beautiful. How special to have 7 catechumens/candidates.

Change:

- Wednesday Reflections on the 7 Penitential Psalms - (Psalms 6,32,38,51,102,130,143)
- Suggestions for a different focus for 2025?
 - Recently we've circulated notes through the bulletin and, of late, via e-blasts, on different Lenten topics: Saints for Lent - 2022; Suggestions for our Lenten journey (ideas for prayer/fasting/almsgiving) - 2023; the Penitential Psalms- 2024. **Please give some thought to ideas for next Lent.**

FYI – Wedding/Funeral outreach

- Wedding Outreach: Our Rosary groups, who pray before daily Masses and on Tuesdays at noon, pray during the 3 weeks before their weddings for couples who will be married at Saint Raphael's and for any parishioners we are aware of who will be married outside the parish. At parish rehearsals we give each couple a card wishing them well, signed by the people who have been offering prayers. We give a card to the parents of the out-of-parish couples, as well, during the days before the wedding.
- Funeral Outreach: Within 25-30 days after a funeral at Saint Raphael's we mail a condolence card to the family of/contact person for the deceased. A prayer card that is included has information about the parish Bereavement Support Group. During October we send them an invitation to November's Mass of Remembrance, when we will pray, by name, for those for whom we have celebrated funeral Masses or done graveside services. We include on our list any parishioners' family members we learn about who no longer live in the parish.

- The committee suggested that we highlight these outreach efforts and other Prayer & Worship material in the bulletin, in the *Time for Prayer* space during the weeks when we have no prayer to include.

Upcoming

- May crowning – 5/12/24: (Saint Ann (after 9:30 Mass); Saint Gabriel (during 11:00 Mass))
- Corpus Christi – ***Ideas (other than a procession!) for this year?***
- Celebrate Saint Raphael – Feast of the Archangels (9/29) Sunday this year. ***Triduum of Prayer beginning 9/27, ending 9/29?*** Hand out apples as congregation is leaving, in tribute to Saint Raphael the healer (*An apple a day keeps the doctor away??*)
- International Rosary – Tuesday, October 8 at Saint Gabriel: A Rosary for Priests
- Mass of Remembrance – November 3? (first Sunday of November)

Next meeting: Saturday, June 1, 10 a.m. in the Parish Library

Social Justice/Human Concerns Committee

Human Concerns Committee: Meeting Notes from April 22, 2024 - Attendance: Elizabeth S. Wally H., John M., Rose Marie M., Paula D.

Guest: Louise Simonetti, Global Strategic Operatives - Absent: Manfred T. – has resigned

Human Trafficking

- Louise Simonetti (educator) presented the Global Strategic Operatives initiative to eradicate human trafficking. The committee decided to make a request of the Council to participate in the 45-60 minutes Zoom presentation which Louise will be happy to deliver for us (no investment).
- Committee members will let us know if they are interested in participating in a presentation by Louise.
- Deacon George will find out another organization that is also working with the Archdiocese

Kindness Project: Supporting Prisoners and Their Relationships

- Committee will provide the consultant with 25 cards and postage paid envelopes who will work with the warden to distribute to the women at the Niantic prison in time for them to send Mother's Day cards to family.

Committee Membership

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

Domestic Violence Initiative:

- We continue to request and announcement about BHcare (Domestic Violence information) in the weekly bulletin.

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

- We have two politicians willing to work together to sponsor a bill in 2025
- Elizabeth has identified other key supporters including Ben McGorty a professional firefighter.

Garden Project

- The soil has been prepared. Planting will occur on May 11. A notice will be in the bulletin.

Homefront:

- The renovation project is scheduled for September 14. Details will follow at the fundraising dinner scheduled for June 23.

CRS Rice Bowl: Nothing to report.

Beth-El Center Dinner Teams: Nothing to report.

Saint Gabriel Food Pantry - Nothing to report.

Social Visits to Local health Care Facilities - Nothing to report.

Protect Connecticut's Children Initiative

Our next Zoom meeting to educate parents and grandparents on the evil of Gender Ideology will be on May 23 from 7PM- 8PM. (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3750816663?omn=84121197700>)

Parish Life-Cathy Coda

Social Gathering

Parish Life Rose Marie Marmolejo rmarmolejo@snet.net

- The next committee meeting will be on May 21st.
- The crowning of Our Blessed Mother was held on Sunday May 12th. Huxley and Jesse (two parish children) carried the crown and bouquet. These were donated by Tom Croteau in honor of his sister Michelle Pepin.
- The Annual Pork Roast Dinner will be held on June 23rd. This is to assist in the fundraising for the annual Home Front Project. Home Front is scheduled for Saturday September 14th. Promotional flyers are being distributed this weekend.
- The annual Advent Luncheon is scheduled for November 24th. This is a fund raiser for the Food pantry.

Faith Formation-Maria Tomasetti

- Our primary First Communion weekend is May 18/19. Children will be receiving their First Holy Communion at the 4:00 pm, 9:30 am and 11:00 am Masses. Our back-up weekend is May 25/26. 21 children have prepared to receive their First Communion in May.
- For 2024/2025, our monthly GIFT program will focus on the Nicene Creed. The GIFT faith formation mailings will go out in late July/early August. Registration materials will be available in both churches for all parishioners, including adults without children and teens. The monthly schedule will also include our Advent/Christmas and Easter celebrations. New for 2024/2025, we will be inviting families with children in Pre-K/Kindergarten to the two celebrations. Our Sacramental program mailings will also go out in late July/early August.
- Confirmation classes are ongoing through June. Make-up classes will be scheduled in mid to late August.
- Our annual parish Graduate Recognition Event is scheduled for Sunday, June 2, 11 am Mass at St. Gabriel Church, followed by a reception and luncheon in the St. Gabriel Hall. This event is open to students graduating from grade 8, high school and college--with their family members and friends.
- Reminder...our 14th annual Summer VBS 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. Registration is open. Adult volunteers and teens ages 12 and older are needed for camp week as well as for set-up and decorations for several evenings during the weeks of July 8 and July 15.

Open Forum

New Pro-Life Initiative:

Deacon George distributed the *“Why We’re Pro-Life”* pamphlet by Trent Horn to each council member. Deacon explained how and why the pamphlet will be distributed to all parishioners at all masses on June 18th. Deacon is planning to deliver his homily that day about pro-life.

It’s the Deacon’s, Father John’s, and the Council’s hope that an ongoing initiative to support Pro-Life will begin soon after this distribution of the pamphlet. To encourage the formation and support of this initiative, three actions are being taken:

1. Bryan Mercier will make a pro-life message presentation June 18th at 7-8 PM at St. Ann’s Church. The Prayer and Workshop committee will hold a reception afterwards.
2. The Prayer and Worship Committee will promote the Mercier presentation and the initiative.
3. The Human concerns Committee will also promote the Mercier presentation and brainstorm ways the Parish Council, the Parish Committees can form and create ongoing support for the new Pro-Life Initiative.

Ideally a new committee will be formed to keep the messages about Pro-Life to keep going.

NEXT Parish Council Meeting: September 23, 2024, St. Ann’s Church 7PM