

Saint Raphael Parish
Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes
March 31, 2025 7:00PM

Opening Prayer- John A.

Rose Marie M. facilitated the meeting

Attendance: Absent - Manfred M., Terri D.

Guest Observer: John Spinato

Acceptance of January 2025 meeting notes

Father John's Comments:

- Father John will meet with the IT company about the streaming capability at St. Gabriel Church
- John Kirkam removed the infested tree at St. Gabriel Church
- The council approved the investigation into installing a safety railing at both churches. Father has obtained a pledge of \$5,000 to cover the costs.
- The Triduum (3 holy week services Thursday, Friday, Saturday) will be held at St. Gabriel Church for Easter. Easter Sunday masses will be at both churches as usual.
- The discussion for moving the 11:00 AM Mass from St. Gabriel to St. Ann Church (air conditioning) during July & August (the hottest part of the summer) resulted in the council decided to keep the schedule as is.

Standing Committee Reports

Prayer and Worship Committee Report from Ann Eden

- No Report

Social Justice/Human Concerns Committee – Meeting held on March 24th, 2025

- **Kindness Project:**
 - Committee decided to cooperate with Tiheba Bain to provide personal care products to all (800) women in Niantic CT Prison two times per year (Mother's day and Christmas)
 - Four organizations (including St. Raphael Parish) will cooperate. A planning meeting will be held week of March 31 with all
 - Personal care and feminine care products to be collected by week of April 28. Volunteers will bag and deliver them by May 11.
- **Pro-life Ministry:**
 - Visit to St. Agnes provided information how to collaborate
 - Next meeting is March 27th 7 PM (virtual) to finalize plans for diaper drive tentatively scheduled for May 24th. Phil Liquori from St. Gianna's will make a presentation to the committee
- **Domestic Violence initiative**
 - No report
- **Safe-Haven Baby Box project**

- SB1310 was not voted out of the Children’s Committee to the General Assembly.
- CT Hospital Association opposed the bill, Elizabeth and Safe Haven committee will ask them to promote our current CT Safe Haven Laws.
- Nurses continue to “dumpster dive” at end of every shift
- **Human Trafficking**
 - House Bill 7236 is proposed to protect children who commit crimes while being trafficked (theft, etc). Testimony was submitted on Friday March 21
- **Homefront:** A date is identified for a new project – May 17, 2025.
- **Next meeting** is scheduled for April 24, 2025 at 7 PM. Meeting will be virtual.

Parish Life – Cathy Coda and Rose Marie Marmolejo

- Home front will be held on May 17th. Promotion will be done in the next two weeks.
- Coffee And will be May 4th benefiting Boys and Girls village
- Lenten supper was successful with 116 participants catered by Lasse’s. Kathlene, Rose Marie, Kerry and Cathy were the coordinators and were praised by the council for their wonderful work.

Faith Formation: Maria Tomasetti

- Monthly GIFT Program - April: Sunday, April 27 (afternoon) or Tuesday, April 29, evening – Nicene Creed: One Baptism, Resurrection of the Dead, Life of the World to Come. GIFT Easter Season Celebration, Friday, May 9, 6 to 8 pm.
- First Communion and Confirmation classes are ongoing. Six children/teens are completing preparation for First Reconciliation. Our First Communion weekends are May 3/4 and May 17/18.
- OCIA (RCIA). One candidate, a baptized Catholic, is preparing to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. We have started to receive calls for OCIA (RCIA) 2025/2026.
- Adult Confirmation. Two candidates are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Cathedral of St. Joseph on Thursday, May 15. We are also planning a late Summer Adult Confirmation program and have started to receive calls.
- Nurturing Seedlings: Community for Young Parents of children from birth to age 5. We will be promoting the program and reaching out to young families in late April and May.
- Our annual Graduate Recognition Mass and Reception is scheduled for Sunday, June 1, 9:30 am Mass at St. Ann Church, followed by a brunch reception.
- "True North" Summer VBS Camp. Scheduled for the week of July 21 thru July 25. Registration for campers (ages 4 thru 10/11) as well as teen and adult volunteers is in progress.

Goals

Father will provide John K. with an approximate total attendance on last year’s Mother’s day. John will estimate the number of mothers who and purchase flowers (roses) for all mothers at the masses on Mother’s Day weekend. Lectors will be asked to distribute.

The welcome packet will be reviewed and updated and move forward on the project.

Constitution By-Laws Committee Report:

- The Council approved and Father ratified change to last sentence of 2nd section of Art. IX to only read: ***A quorum is defined as 2/3 of the selected members.***
- The Committee recommended for discussion and possible approval at the April meeting the elimination of the last sentence of the 3rd section of Art. IX which now reads: ***The Council shall hold at least one open forum.....about parish matters.***
- The Committee recommended for discussion and possible approval at the April meeting amending the section of Art. XII under ***See Appendix Three....*** to now read:
 - ***The chairperson of each committee shall be discerned by and from the committee members, based on competence, leadership ability and knowledge of the committee's area of ministry.***
 - ***Temporary committees for special purposes (ad hoc committees) may be names as needed.***
- While no change or amendment was suggested, the Committee suggested the Council can better honor section 1 of Appendix One, ***Characteristics of a Parish Council***, by hosting a get together of the Council at a date convenient to the Pastor and Council in advance of the first meeting in September to include a short prayer service followed by refreshments.

The Committee then turned over the meeting to Joyce and Francis to give their report on how the Council can better communicate with the parish at large.

Improve Communication with parishioners: Discuss recommendations to improve communication/public relations to identify and acknowledge concerns of parishioners.

- A recommendation was made to ensure communication across all communication platforms is consistent in messaging and appearance. Joyce is willing to coordinate this responsibility. Joyce will also be willing to have access to the parish email (pcsaintraphael@gmail.com) and screen and distribute communication appropriately.
- Joyce and Francis will discuss the next steps with Father John and report at the April meeting.

Selection Committee

The 2025 selection process is underway and on time. The next step is the final bulletin announcement April 5/6. Nominees will be verified and notified in the week of April 13.

Open Forum

The council will be planning a farewell and thank you celebration for Deacon George and invite the parishioners. Cathy will contact Deacon George to get a date for a Sunday afternoon event. The council will work together to organize and coordinate the event.

We are grateful to receive permission from The Tides Organization during all masses at St. Gabriel.

Next Parish Council Meeting: April 28 Saint Gabriel Hall 7 PM