

Saint Raphael Parish
Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes – St. Ann Parish Rectory
October 27, 2025 7:00PM

Meeting called to order:

Opening Prayer- Rose Marie
(*See Addendum A for Opening Prayer Schedule)

Rose Marie facilitated the meeting.

Attendance: Absent: Susan, Joyce, John

Acceptance of September Minutes.

Whoopsie!! Agenda had some tests to make sure you are paying attention!
Next meeting is 11/24!!

Constitution and bylaws were printed and made available.
Reminder-Get those committees selected!

Father John's Comments:

- Railings: Arch bishop has approved the layout. Additional meeting was required with the Head of Liturgy to come down and do an on-site evaluation. 1 adjustment was made after this meeting. Change will be reassessed for confirmation and then we can begin the installation process. Consider all boxes for approval checked!
- Streaming from St. Gabe: Signed contract last week. IT Company will be researching, costs will be approx. \$7k. Still confirming completion date. Question about Wifi in church if this would be a possibility? Father will look into this. More details to come.
- Archbishop Visit. Archbishop Coyne will be visiting Sunday 11/02 at the 9:30 mass. Fr Maroney, Fr John, Fr. Hau celebrating. Reception following Mass. Hoping for a good turnout!

Standing Committee Reports

Prayer and Worship Committee Report

*See Addendum B

- Feast of St. Raphael went very well!
- Mass of remembrance this weekend! Mass of Remembrance on Sunday 11/02 at 2pm at St Ann.

Social Justice/Human Concerns Committee

*See Addendum C.

Parish Life – Cathy Coda

- Met this past Tuesday.
- Trip to Goodspeed Opera House to see “A Chorus Line” was a crescendo of a success that left all in attendance encouraged to believe even “I Can Do That.” We will be looking at more of these opportunities in the future. Show, dinner; it was all great!! Even the bus driver was pleasant! (One more Opera Pun) A bus trip to the Opera never results in a flat! We hope to see you at the next one!
- Coffee And
 - November will be Wounded Warrior Project donations during “Coffee And.” Baskets will be out after masses. Cash, checks, and Credit Card Donations (Online at <https://www.osvhub.com/saintraphaelmilford/giving/funds>. [Saint Raphael Parish - MILFORD, CT | Online Giving](#)) all accepted. Thank you for your support!
 - Starting in January, it was recommended that we move “Coffee And” to the 3rd Sunday of the month due to conflicts (Father’s Day, Mother’s Day).
- New Year's Eve Dinner Dance! Stay tuned for more details!
- Christmas Fair! December 6th.

Faith Formation: Maria Tomasetti

*Addendum D

Other Business

- Celebrate Mass with Arch Bishop Coyne! Reception at St Ann Auditorium following. Simple reception, light fare, cake and fruit! Help setup Saturday 11/01 at noon. Knights of Columbus always helpful. Committee: Elaine, Joyce, Kathleen Buchanan (Thank you Cathy Coda!).
- Mass of Remembrance on Sunday 11/02 at 2pm at St Ann.

- Discussion was had on the potential for White House at Saint Ann Parish. House is mostly abandoned and in disrepair. Seeking options for property use.
- Parish Council Emails-issue with 2-factor authentication. Continuing to work on solutions. Will speak with Joyce. Potentially set up a new account.
- Discussion of Goals (Youth Participation and Parishioners)
 - Youth Participation-
 - Thank you to Maria and all of her efforts in the youth programs!
 - Vocation of Marriage committee will be working on ways to help all married couples and mentoring newly married couples.
 - New Parishioners orientation? Discussed potential for introducing any new parishioners to our parish and churches.
- Father Rob Galea Concert. Congratulations to Peter and the choir for an amazing 3 days of reflection, prayer, and praise through the powerful gift of music!! Attendance was extraordinary and the combination of Father Robb's message and voice blended marvelously with the string instruments and the choir! Thank you for sharing this special occasion with us!
- Laurel Ave Gate issue. New gate at Laurel Avenue at St. Gabriel has been causing an issue with departing on Sundays. It was recommended that we reach out to Chris Saley at Milford Public Works office to start the conversation on options.

Closing Prayer: Father John! Beautiful prayer and a good reminder to make sure you are always on the right bus!!

Next Pastoral Council Meeting is November 24th at Saint Gabriel.

- Meeting Schedule (**please see Addendum E**).

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Addendum A: Opening Prayer Schedule.

November: Elaine
January: Joshua
February: Leo
March: Susan
April: Melvin
May: Joyce

Addendum B: Prayer & Worship Report

- **Mass of Remembrance**

Sunday, November 2, 2:00 p.m., Saint Ann Church; live-streamed
At this annual Mass we will remember and celebrate all the members of our parish family who have died during the past year (October 2024 through mid-October 2025). Parishioners, families and friends are invited to attend.

- **Advent**

The season of Advent begins on Sunday, November 30. The order we will place very soon for seasonal booklets of prayer and reflection will include a number of Spanish-language booklets to accommodate what appears to be a growing number of Spanish-speaking parishioners. The booklets will be available at all the church doors the weekend before Thanksgiving.

Addendum C, Human Concerns and Social Justice:

Social Justice/Human Concerns Committee Report 10-13-25

Attendees: Wally Hauck, Elizabeth Simonetti, Maria Tomasetti, John Marmolejo, Rose Marie Marmolejo

- **Pro-Life:** Thank you, Father John, for giving permission to have The Pro-life committee organize and deliver an in-person video presentation by Turning Point USA Faith. This will be held on Saturday morning October 25th. It's entitled "Human Life" and provides a scientific argument for preserving the sanctity of life. The video features Dr. William Lile, a board certified OBGYN. Several Pro-life

Committee members enthusiastically wrote testimonials. St. Raphael Parish, Precious Blood Parish and all local deaconry have been invited to attend. Ideally the council will attend.

- **Pro-life:** The committee is working with St. Gianna Pregnancy Center in New Haven to run a Baby Bottle fund raiser the weekend of January 3-4, 2026. The funds will primarily be used to support the advisory program and ultrasound program. We ask Fr. John to give his permission to have Phil Liquori from St. Gianna make a 1-2 minute announcement at the end of each mass ideally on January 3-4, 2026 explaining the Baby Bottle purpose and process. The Knights of Columbus and the Pro-Life committee members will be cooperating to make this a success. John Marmolejo will be a liaison between the committee members and the Knights.
- **Security Ministry:** Elizabeth Simonetti identified a parish that has organized a security ministry. St. John Paul the Great parish in Torrington, CT formed the Protect the Flock security ministry because 94% of 262 church incidents between 2014-2020 have taken place at Catholic and Christian churches. The committee will discuss this issue at the next meeting:
<https://www.johnpaulgreatparish.com/protect-flock>
- **Child Trafficking:** The Underground New England made a presentation about on Sept. 27th critical role of the Church and community in eradicating human trafficking.
<https://theundergroundne.org/>
- **Homefront:** Father John, Maria Tomasetti and John Marmolejo have tentatively scheduled the next Homefront project for Saturday May 2nd, 2026. The Pork-Roast fundraiser will be coordinated by Rose Marie Marmolejo the 2nd week of April 2026.
- **Kindness Project:** The committee has decided to table the project at this time for two reasons: 1) Our contact Tiheba Bain will no longer be the contact with Niantic Women's prison. 2) St. Gianna has decided to suspend their cooperation with Niantic because of less-than-optimal experiences. Our committee also experienced less-than-optimal experiences dealing with Tiheba during the personal care item collection on Mother's day 2025.
- **Safe Haven Baby Box:** Elizabeth is coordinating a communication to reinforce support for this legislative effort. The bill will be resubmitted likely in 2026 at the next full legislative session. Portion of an Email sent to the Safe Haven Committee:

*Thank you for your interest in **anonymous infant surrender via "baby boxes"** during the last legislative session.*

The good news!--The number of states that allow anonymous surrender via baby boxes in the US is now 23, up by 1 state since last year.

Sadly, there are still none in New England.

*And since the non-partisan Safe Haven Laws are already on the books in CT, **expanding the law to include anonymous surrender** is the next safe haven step.*

- Four Corners RCF, Charades and Sing-a-Long, Saturday, Oct 18, 10:30 am
- Cross Catholic Outreach, Box of Joy Projects. Thanks to generous donations from parishioners, teens will be assembling and packing approximately 50 Christmas Boxes of Joy on Thursday, October 23rd. The final destination of these Boxes of Joy will be children in developing countries like Haiti, Dominican Republic, and El Salvador.
- 14th Annual Milford Trick or Trot to benefit Beth-El Center, Saturday, October 25th. Some parishioners participate in or volunteer for this event every year. All proceeds support Beth-El Center's emergency shelter, no freeze shelter, community kitchen services, and other services for the poor and homeless.
- **Milford Food 2 Kids - Teen Project - Assisting with packing of weekend food bags for Milford children and teens who have little or no food resources during the weekends when away from school. October 30th at the First United Church of Christ.**
- St. Raphael Parish, Christmas Giving Program - Planning for our 2025 program is in progress. Giving tree ornament prep meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 24th at 6:30 pm in a Saint Ann Parish Center classroom. Trees with gift tags will be by the doors of both St. Ann Church and St. Gabriel on the first weekend of Advent, Nov 29/30.

Our next meeting is scheduled for on-line November 17, 2025 @ 7 PM

Addendum D: Faith Formation

- Our November monthly GIFT session is scheduled for **Thursday, Nov 20 and Sunday, Nov 23**. Theme: Following Jesus Through the Church Year. November Topic: Preparing for the Coming of Jesus (Advent and Christmas Seasons). We currently have 69 families participating in our GIFT program for 2025-2026.
- Our GIFT Advent/Christmas Open House for GIFT families and friends is scheduled for Tuesday, December 16 between 6 pm and 8 pm.
- 23 children (with at least one parent/guardian) are participating in our First Reconciliation and First Communion program. Our scheduled First Reconciliation date is **Saturday, December 13** (St. Gabriel Church). 17 teens are participating in our 2025/2026 Confirmation program. First Reconciliation and Confirmation classes are ongoing.
- 23 teens are registered to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph on **Sunday, November 16**. Two teens are

selecting alternate dates due to conflicts.

- Seven adults are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph on **Tuesday, November 18.**
- As of today, we have three adults participating in our OCIA/RCIA program.
- Communications for Nurturing Seedlings: Community for Young Parents--for parents of children from birth to age 5--will begin in **November 2025.** This ministry, created by the Archdiocese of Hartford, is designed to help bridge the gap for young families between Baptism and First Eucharist. We're building our volunteer team and hope to offer the five Nurturing Seedlings sessions to young parents in Spring 2026.
- Thank you for your very generous donations for our Christmas Boxes of Joy project through Cross Catholic Outreach. Twelve of our teens packed approximately 65 boxes on Thursday, October 23rd. Next stops: Our local distribution center at St. Margaret Parish in Madison and the Cross Country Outreach national screening center in Miami, FL--where boxes will be sorted, matched to a child, and shipped to a child in need in a developing country.

Addendum E:

Saint Raphael Pastoral Council

2025 – 2026 Meeting Schedule

All meetings begin at 7:00 PM

September 22 Saint Gabriel

October 27 Saint Ann

November 24 Saint Gabriel

No December meeting as everyone is busy around Christmas.

January 19 * Saint Ann

Earlier as Father will be on vacation the 4th Monday

February 23 Saint Gabriel

March 23 Saint Ann

April 27 Saint Gabriel

May 18 * Saint Ann

Week earlier due to Memorial Day