

Saint Raphael Parish
Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes – St. Gabriel Hall
January 19th, 2026

Meeting called to order:

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

Frank facilitated the meeting.

Attendance: Absent – Joyce, Elaine, Maria, Melvin

Acceptance of November Minutes.

Next meeting is 02/23/2026

Reminder - Get those committees selected!

Father John's Comments:

- Passage report. Website has been down last couple of days but back on tonight. Need to confirm email to office.
- Parish Sign for St. Ann was destroyed. Working on getting this fixed.
- Request today for firm date of installation of hand rails. Awaiting company to confirm install. All approvals have been received.
- Father John is GONE ON VACATION!! Enjoy some R&R and bring some warm weather back with you!!

Standing Committee Reports

Prayer and Worship Committee Report

*See Addendum B

Social Justice/Human Concerns Committee

*See Addendum C.

Parish Life – Cathy Coda

- The New Year's Eve event was a great turnout and is generating a growing crowd! We have already booked for next year! There will be a meeting this Wednesday 01/21.
- Lenten supper **Friday 03/13** with Lassies providing the catering. We will be meeting on Thursday 01/22.
- Parish Council Picnic scheduled for 09/13. Mark your calendars!!

Faith Formation: Maria Tomasetti

*Addendum D

Knights of Columbus Report:

*Addendum E

Other Business

- Communication. We are still working on solutions for email correspondence and the 2 part identification quandary. Joyce is hard at work on it!
- Frances has a committee working on a parish welcome packet for new parishioners. When Covid hit, this went by the wayside. Samples were provided at the meeting with a request for comments. Packets will include welcome note, parish bulletin, press, and brochure. It was recommended that we ask other committees and organizations affiliated with the parish to see if they would like to include anything. Consider a list of ministries for reference but after a discussion on contact information, it was decided that this contact would be best directed towards Monica in the Parish Office. Packet will also include a Parish registration form. We are hoping to have this finished and out the door by Easter. The packet will be updated annually.
- Selection Committee. Cathy has volunteered to help facilitate. Check Article 6 in By-Laws for particulars. Beginning on 02/28 or 03/01 and ending on 03/21-03/22. Weekend of 03/23 nominees and committees will set orientation. 04/27-make selections and draw names. 05/18-new committee members will meet with existing.
- Getting younger people involved in parish committees and leadership. Meaning of younger people in this context: Those of working age, older than college but before retirement. What can be done to help bring more activity?
 - Invite those younger families, speak to them at church and invite them to be involved.
 - Ministry Fair? Table with information? Have at Coffee and?? Someone to just be available and give information if asked.
 - Review of ministries, are we serving the best that we can??

Open Forum:

- Advent. Accolades to Father John and his heartfelt homily's during Advent and Christmas!!
- Christmas Concert was a beautiful experience. There were comments from many that expressed gratitude for the joy that they felt while listening to the concert and the music during our celebrations of mass.
- Christmas Fair atmosphere was incredible!

Closing Prayer: Father John!

Next Pastoral Council Meeting is February 23rd at Saint Gabe.

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

Addendum A: Opening Prayer Schedule

February: Leo
March: Susan
April: Melvin
May: Joyce

Addendum B: Prayer & Worship Report

Lent!

The liturgical seasons are doing a quick turnaround this year – Ash Wednesday falls on February 18th –but we have plans in place.

Theme: Drawn to the Cross, from the title of a booklet of Lenten devotions from Henri Nouwen.

We'll incorporate the theme in the weekly prayers that will appear in the bulletin. Monica has been very kind in reserving a Prayer and Worship section each week. Beginning the weekend of **February 14/15 through Palm Sunday** the prayers will have a Lenten focus. Reflection Booklet; This week the committee will choose between "Not by Bread Alone" from Liturgical Press and "A Journey for the Soul" (The Best of Joe Sica) from 23rd Publications, and place an order which will include some copies in Spanish.

Stations of the Cross: Fridays from February 20th through March 27th (no Stations on Good Friday, April 3rd) 3 o'clock at Saint Ann Church. Livestreamed. Maria has scheduled Stations for Teens on 2 Fridays at 7 p.m: **March 20th at Saint Gabriel's, March 27th at Saint Ann's.**

Evening of Prayer: possibly on **Monday, March 9th** (confirming with Monica).

Possible agenda: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Reflection on material adapted from Henri Nouwen's "Drawn to the Cross and Benediction."

Lenten Supper: Cathy Coda and Rose Marie Marmolejo are planning for a parish Lenten Supper on **Friday, March 13th .**

Lenten Care Notes; to be available at the church doors

Dates for the Triduum (scheduled this year at Saint Ann Church)

Holy Thursday April 2

Good Friday April 3

Easter Vigil April 4

Submitted by Ann Eden

Facilitator, Prayer and Worship Committee

Addendum C: Human Concerns and Social Justice:

Action plans and agreements were created for both the Baby Bottle Drive scheduled for January 3-4th and the new project on Human Trafficking.

Baby Bottle Drive Scheduled for January 3-4: Great success! ~4,100.00

- Asked Father John's permission for Phil Liquori Chairman of the Board of St. Gianna to make 2-minute presentations at the end of each Mass on December 27-28 to explain and promote the drive scheduled for January 3-4. The Committee also asks Father John to make a reminder announcement at the end of each Mass on January 3-4.

- The Knights and committee volunteers will assist in the distribution and collection of the bottles. Bottles will be distributed on January 3-4 and returned January 10-11.
- St. Gianna will work with the Knights to collect the filled bins and bottles on January 10-11 and 17-18. Human Trafficking
- Elizabeth and the Human Concerns Committee are spearheading a project to propose and pass an ordinance in cooperation with the Milford Town Alderman Council. The ordinance will provide incentives for hotels and motels in Milford to cooperate to prevent trafficking.
- When the time is right, committee members will be asked to testify in support of the ordinance and to identify others who will be willing to testify.

Next meeting January 26, 2026

Addendum D: Faith Formation

- **First Reconciliation and First Communion.** 20 children received First Reconciliation in December 2025. Five additional children/teens are preparing to receive First Reconciliation. 26 children are preparing to receive First Communion in May. Our scheduled First Communion dates are **May 3 and May 16/17**. Children will receive First Communion at our regular weekend Masses. Our families select the Mass date/time that works best for them so the number of families/children at each Mass will vary.
- **For our January GIFT program** (Jan 25 and Jan 27), we are offering the VIRTUS Empowering God's Children, Teaching Safety program for children/teens in Grades 1-12 with their parents/guardians (as required by the Archdiocese of Hartford). The program focuses on boundaries, safe and unsafe behaviors, and healthy relationships. For February GIFT, we return to our sessions on "Following Jesus Through the Church Year--Suffering and Death of Jesus" (Lent and Holy Week – to Good Friday).
- **Confirmation.** Classes for our teen Confirmation program are ongoing. We had two Fall teen candidates who had unavoidable conflicts with our November 16 Confirmation date. One received the Sacrament of Confirmation on December 6; the other is scheduled to receive Confirmation on April 25. Adult Confirmation is scheduled at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph on May 12 (not sure if we will have any adult candidates). In Fall 2026, teens entering Grade 8, Grade 9, and older will be eligible to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

- **OCIA/RCIA.** We have three candidates preparing to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil (two baptized as Catholic and one baptized in another Christian denomination). We have two other adult candidates (one starting and one continuing preparation).
- **Nurturing Seedlings.** Community for Young Parents. Beginning personal outreach to young families (with children ages birth to five). We will be reaching out to local families with children who were baptized at St. Raphael Parish, including young families actively attending Mass with their children.
- **Winter Family Fun Night** (*scheduling in progress - late Feb or early March*). This had been an annual event for many years thru Feb 2020. In 2021 and 2022, this was a Zoom event--due to the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, this had been an informal, fun, family social event with pizza, snacks, arts & crafts, games, movie, and other activities. This is open to families with children age 3 and older. Our parish teens have always staffed this event.
- **Graduate Mass and Reception.** Sunday, June 7, 2026. 11 am Mass at St. Gabriel followed by reception for graduates, family and friends in St. Gabriel Hall.
(grade 8, high school, and college)
- **Summer VBS Camp 2026 - *Illumination Station: Shining a Light on Who Jesus Really Is*** - Monday, July 20 thru Friday, July 24, 2026 - Save the Dates! Registration opens on March 1. Details to follow next month.

Thank you for the support for Christmas Giving and KOF for their generous donations!

Addendum E: Knights of Columbus, Tinto Council

Report to St. Raphael Parish Pastoral Council: November, 2025

The following is an overview of what the Knights of Columbus have done with or for the parish, as well as other charitable efforts performed by the council.

- Support Homefront both financially and with volunteers.
- Organize and collect food for Parish Food Bank several times a year.
- Help in setup and takedown for parish events such as Christmas Fair,

- New Year's Eve Party, Parish Picnic, Bible Summer Camp, Lenten supper, various parish receptions, etc.
- Set up kiosks in both churches and provide spiritual literature material to be included in them.
- Support of parish Garden Program.
- Assisting with man power and logistical support for the Baby Bottle program (under Human Concerns committee) coming in January aimed at helped unwed or poor mothers with their children's needs.
- Provided a presence and feeling of security in both churches for nighttime Confessions that the parish conducts during Lent.
- Donated funds needed to provide air conditioning in the gym at St. Ann's grounds.
- Conducted programs centered around biblical and spiritual themes for men.
- Brought K of C Icon program to parish.
- Conducts monthly Rosary for all men and women centering on protection of children and the personal intentions of those who attend.
- Give prayer and financial support to a diocesan seminarian each year.

Besides these things, the Tinto Council of the KofC as also:

- Provided scholarships for the St. Raphael Parish high school students and another non-parishioner from Jonathan Law, all of which exemplify the ideals of the KofC.
- Supported the Beth El Center by providing a dinner for the homeless.
- Supported Boys & Girls Village by providing gifts during the Christmas season.
- Sponsored Milford's Camp Happiness by sponsoring an attendee.
- Sponsored the Toys for Tots program by providing gifts.

Overall, the Tinto Council of the Knights of Columbus follow the ideals of our founder, Blessed Michael McGivney, by providing a Catholic Men's organization for men of the parish and the community. Our commitment to charity all help to support each other spiritually and at times financially, while ensuring that everyone remains aligned with Christian endeavors, as well as Catholic goals and teachings.

Addendum F: 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 (*Father 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*)

Merry Christmas!