

Saint Raphael Parish
Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes – St. Ann

March 23, 2026

Meeting called to order:

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

Frank facilitated the meeting. An ornery washing machine was insistent on being heard.

Attendance: Absent – Cathy (Covid), Rose, Maria (OCIA)

Acceptance of January Minutes.

Next meeting is 04/27/2026.

Father John's Comments:

- The St. Joseph Medal of Appreciation is an annual award that is presented to one volunteer at each parish. This year we are proud to recognize Elaine Baille as the recipient of this year's award for St. Raphael Parish. Congratulations and thank you for all that you do for us!!
- Lou Servideo-Old Rectory (White House) discussion. A walk through was performed of the building and it was found to be in significant disrepair. Pictures were taken for reference. Repairs were determined to be cost prohibitive. The only viable options for this building (aside from some Old Testament intervention) is demolition. A proposal was submitted by PRC Builders. The building was last used in 1991 and has since become a safety liability along with blight, trespassing, and a target of vandalism. The price does not include inspection which will add another \$3k. Current proposal is ~\$30k. Removing the building will eliminate these concerns and reduce insurance. Father has reached out to the Arch Diocese for guidance on the requirements to raise this building. Awaiting further comment. John has volunteered to set up an inspection/health study to determine potential issues-quotes coming.
- (Quick update on UConn vs Syracuse game confirmed that all is right at least in the sports world, UConn Women dominating.)

Standing Committee Reports

Prayer and Worship Committee Report

Prayer service held on 03/09.

Stations of the Cross-Continuing Friday PMs.

Lenten booklets have been a big hit.

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 27th at Saint Ann's.**

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

Holy Thursday April 2 7pm

Good Friday April 3 3pm

Easter Vigil April 4 8pm

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Social Justice/Human Concerns Committee

*See Addendum B.

Parish Life – Cathy Coda

- The Lenten Meal was held on Friday March 13 at St. Ann Parish Center. The attendance was approximately 110. Pat Pavlucik was the guest speaker. Everyone enjoyed the fish dinner catered by Lasse's.
- Coffee And took place the weekend of March 14/15. Next Coffee And is April 18/19.
- Arlene Lacerenza is working on a flyer to promote a bus trip to a performance of Jesus Christ, Superstar at Goodspeed Opera House on May 5th. Bus will leave at 9:30.
- Parish Tag Sale is May 23rd. Collections will be start on April 20th. Please no large furniture, non-working toys, appliances or glassware. All else is greatly appreciated. Please bring to St. Ann Hall.
- Arlene Lacerenza is organizing a bus trip to the Yankees vs the Atlanta Braves on either Saturday August 8 (Old Timers Day) or Sunday August 9. More info will be out soon.
- Parish Picnic Sunday September 13.
- Our own Leo Dorsey is putting together a Chili cook off tentatively planned for October 24. More info to come. We are actively looking for parishioner-chefs to share their best Chili!

Faith Formation: Maria Tomasetti

*Addendum D

Other Business

- Frances; Welcome packet. New and completed packets ready and passed around. Will be at the churches for any new visitors. Thank you Frances!
- Communication of the Council. Joyce-we want to make sure we promote what we are doing. Potential for increasing the social media presence. Need someone that is regularly checking email. Church holds the email account. Will have this communication figured out before the end of June!
- Selection Committee. Yesterday was the last day for nominations. There will be a date scheduled for the new nominees to meet with the Pastoral Council where they will receive and explanation on responsibilities, schedule, and if they wish to continue. Names will then be drawn at random (from the sacred vessel) for as many names as needed. Pastoral council should have 12 selected members.
- Recruiting “younger” parishioners; those of working age, older than college but before retirement. What can be done to help bring more activity?
 - Making sure that committees meet at times where more may be available. Or alternate meeting times.
 - Ministry Fair? Discuss an opportunity for parishioners to see what is out there.

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- Don't be scared of commitment-does not have to be every day. Once in a while-this messaging will help.
- Pull a report of new parishioners-send welcoming packet and offer information?
- Maybe meet 2x per year for all new parishioners to meet up.

Open Forum:

- Publish the attendance that come to each mass?
- Make room in the pew-the middle is ok if physically possible. Jesus loves you no matter where you sit! Help all feel welcome and scoot if possible.
- The St. Anne Choir was asked to record a live version of "Have Mercy, Son of David" at the 9:30 mass on 03/15 from the original hymn's own composer, Steve Angrissano! Our Music Minister, Peter Demarco, composed an original score for a 4-part choral ensemble. This is one of many examples of our Parish that shows something special is always happening at Saint Raphael in Milford, CT!

Closing Prayer: Father John!

Next Pastoral Council Meeting is April 27th at Saint Gabe.

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

Addendum A: Opening Prayer Schedule

April: Melvin
May: Joyce

Addendum B: Human Concerns and Social Justice:

Minutes Human Concerns & Pro-Life Committees for Pastoral Council 3-5-26

Promotion of Human Life Video Series with TPUSA Faith scheduled for May 9th 10 AM - 12 Noon

- Pending Father John's permission, committee is planning a presentation by TPUSA Faith for May 9th. This is the same presentation we had planned for October 25th 2025. The description is here:
<https://courses.tpusafaith.com/courses/human-life/>

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- Members of the Pro-Life Committee have seen the presentation and highly recommend it for the Parish.

Safe-Haven Legislative Update

- Our bill is S.B. No. 156 (RAISED) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE VOLUNTARY SURRENDER OF INFANTS. The Children's Committee recommended to the full General Assembly that they pass SB 0156. This is GREAT NEWS.
- <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2026/TOB/S/PDF/2026SB-00156-R00-SB.PDF>
- **ACTION ITEM: email Senator Martin Looney** to ask him to bring SB 0156 to the floor for a vote of the full General Assembly. Looney@senatedems.ct.gov

Human Trafficking Update

- There is a new bill raised in the General Law Committee concerning the prevention of human trafficking: No.116 (<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2026/cbs/S/pdf/SB-0116.pdf>)
- The bill does exactly what we were hoping our ordinance will do, i.e. encourage hotels (through penalties) to avoid and notify authorities of any possible trafficking activity.
- Action: Committee will submit a draft ordinance to the Town Clerk.
- Action: At the proper time, volunteers from the committee and the Parish will attend an Alderman Meeting and express their support for the Ordinance.

Home Front Update

- The date is May 2nd for our final Home Front initiative
- The Pork Roast fundraiser is April 26th at 3:30 PM at St. Gabriel Hall.
- John M. is asking we all promote this event.
- Elizabeth S. will be the administrator for the event.
- Maria will be reaching out to volunteers and also submitting bulletin and newsletter notices re: volunteer recruitment (adults and teens age 14 and older).
- The Home Front Bakeless Bake Sale will be included in the bulletin from March 29 thru April 12...and will also be mentioned in the April Parish newsletter.

Church Security: A Question for the Pastoral Council

- Does the Pastoral Council see an immediate need to boost security for the churches in light of recent events?
- If so, in our inquiry to have security at the TPUSA Faith events, we have learned of a Church in CT that has organized and improved security. Robbie Rassa is willing to assist us at no charge. Her contact information is Ph: 570-872-7877; Email: eibbor52@yahoo.com
- I am happy to help set up a presentation at the Council's convenience to learn more.

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- A widely cited dataset from the Family Research Council (a conservative Christian advocacy group) reports a **sharp rise in “hostility incidents” against churches** since around 2021. These incidents include **vandalism, arson, bomb threats, shootings, and disruptions of services.**ⁱ

Over 400 Acts of Hostility against US Churches: <https://www.christianpost.com/news/over-400-acts-of-hostility-against-us-churches-in-2024-report.html>

Addendum C: Faith Formation

St. Raphael Parish-Parish Advisory Council, March 2026 - Faith Formation Update

- 23 children are preparing to receive First Communion at our regular weekend Masses on May 3, May 16, and May 17. 16 teens are preparing to receive Confirmation in Fall 2026 at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph. Beginning in Fall 2026, teens in Grade 8 or older will be eligible to register for our Confirmation program since the Archdiocese of Hartford is changing the minimum age for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- OCIA - Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. Three adult candidates will be receiving the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion at the Easter Vigil. Two additional candidates are continuing preparation.
- Monthly GIFT Program: Following Jesus Through the Church Year. April GIFT is scheduled for Sunday, April 19 and Tuesday, April 21. Topic: Following Jesus Through the Church Year, Living as Disciples. GIFT Easter Season Celebration is scheduled for Tuesday, May 5--between 6 pm and 8 pm.
- Spring Adult Confirmation. Two candidates are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph on Tuesday, May 12.
- 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. Email invitations will be sent to parents/guardians by the end of March.
- * 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! Camper registration is in progress. Needed: Adult and Teen Volunteers age 12 or older. A camp volunteer kick-off meeting will be scheduled for late May. There will also be a training session for teen volunteers in July.

Addendum D: Saint Raphael Pastoral Council
2025 – 2026 Meeting Schedule
All meetings begin at 7:00 PM

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~~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*)

i Over 400 Acts of Hostility against US Churches: <https://www.christianpost.com/news/over-400-acts-of-hostility-against-us-churches-in-2024-report.html>