

St. Raphael Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2020

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Members Present: Silvia Abularach, Michelle Aldridge, Jane Coburn, Craig Correa, Jim Damron, Mark Dirlam, Teri Dwyer, Joe Feyder, Walter Gunz, Debbie Hynes, Janet Leonard-Walker, Sally McClean, Fr. Michael Salah, Fr. Tom Morrow, Fr. Bill Wadsworth

Meeting Minutes Approval: The meeting minutes from the October 19, 2020 meeting were reviewed and approved and will be posted on the St. Raphael website.

Church Security Update: Fr. Mike and Jim Damron reported that the new church security system has advanced with the installation of a laptop monitor and telephone line in the corner of the choir loft. A committee is now recruiting volunteers who will be trained to monitor the system during the masses and take action as needed for any adverse events. Security cameras now cover the front entrances of the church, the area outside the Duffy Center, in addition to the existing security cameras that monitor the school.

Pastor's Remarks: Fr. Mike reported on the Archdiocese's response to the new Montgomery County COVID-19 regulations regarding the number of persons that may be in the church at any time. The former regulations limited attendance to 40% of capacity or 320; the new regulations limit attendance to 25% of capacity or 200. Current attendance has been a little below 200 at most of the masses so this should not have a major impact on or parish. For the Christmas masses, since we no longer have access to the Richie Park School facilities, we will be limited to 200 in the church and approximately 150 in the Trumpet Room. Multiple mass times have been scheduled for both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. We will explore how to accommodate additional parishioners through outdoor speakers and live-streaming of masses to those who remain outside or in their cars. Additionally, communion will be distributed by eucharistic ministers to any outside overflow attendees.

St. Raphael School Update: Teri Dwyer reported that SRS continues to monitor carefully the health of our students and staff in regard to the COVID-19 threat. Recently, three individuals associated with the SRS community (though not themselves students or staff) tested positive so the school went to virtual learning until December 7. Teri also reported that SRS continues to exceed the student retention rate set by the Archdiocese and currently stands at more than 90 percent. School leaders are also addressing any concerns about racism through dialogue sessions and resources provided by the Archdiocese.

Council Members Remarks: During the general discussion Fr. Mike provided information on a November 17 webinar about racism and how to address it sponsored by the Archdiocese. Walter Gunz, who serves as the Spanish Council representative to the Pastoral Council, reported on plans for the upcoming mass honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m. The next virtual meeting will be held on January 18, 2021.