

Social Action News: GHIAA

GHIAA is the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance, *an initiative started through the Center for Leadership and Justice in Hartford. It was launched October 28, 2019 and is committed to organizing for justice in the Greater Hartford area. They have membership from multiple different faith congregations and organizations. Our parish just recently joined and is the first Catholic parish to do so, which is very exciting and praised by Bishop Rosazza and Lynn Campbell, the director of The Office of Catholic Social Justice Ministry for the Hartford Archdiocese.*

Four of us attended the 2019 launch with over 1,000 people from all different faiths, and were so moved and impressed that we wanted to be part of this initiative. According to Pat Speer, one of the lead GHIAA organizers, there is a crisis in the Catholic Church and a systemic wide breakdown regarding the work for justice. Parishes like ours and Catholic organizations, such as Catholic Family Services, are very good at charity work, but not so good in doing justice work. Yet as Catholics, we have access to our rich Catholic social teaching, which throughout history talks about the need and importance to work for justice. GHIAA provides the avenue and pathway to act on social justice.

The 4 of us who attended the launch, participated in an orientation and then training in January & February 2020. In the training, we learned how to become effective leaders in faith based community organizing. As a result of this training, 1:1 interviews were done with the majority of the SAC from August to October 2020. Since then, 7 other Social Action members have done the GHIAA orientation. A number of us have participated in legislative meetings in January and February of this year on 3 of GHIAA's top efforts- Clean Slate, Welfare Liens and Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis. On January 5th, 4 of us from Social Action and 4 people from United Methodist Church in Wethersfield had a Zoom meeting with CT Representatives Amy Morrin Bello, new rep for Wethersfield and Kerry Wood, Rocky Hill's rep. We did a presentation about Clean Slate legislation and asked them to support it. Rep. Wood is already a supporter and will continue to do so and Rep. Morrin Bello said she will support this important legislation.

If you would like to be part of this exciting and very important endeavor, please contact Nancy Kiely at 860-721-0197 (home), 860-989-5548 (cell) or email- nkiely80331@cox.net.

Upcoming OCSJM Programs (Office of Catholic Social Justice Ministry)

1. *"Rooted in Faith, Opening Wide Our Hearts" webinar series: This monthly series is based on the Bishop's pastoral letter with the same name, which is about racism. You can sign up for an individual session or more than one. There is no charge or you can make a donation if you wish. The next webinar is on March 10th at 7 pm and is entitled: "Getting with the Program, The Original Program of the Gospels". It will be a look at how Pope Francis' encyclical on Social Friendship (Fratelli Tutti) encourages us to Racial Equality, led by Sr. Doretta D'Albero, ASCJ. Here is the link to sign up for this program and the others:*
<http://www.catholicsocialjustice.org/open-wide-our-hearts.html>
2. *OCSJM's Laudato Si' ("On Care for our Common Home") Webinar Series: This is also a monthly webinar series about Pope Francis' encyclical. The Laudato Si team has presented 2 of eight Zoom presentations on Pope Francis encyclical ON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME. They will be presented from 7:00 to 8:30 on the dates shown below. Registration is required so we can send you an invitation to the Zoom session. Send a request to Steve at lancesj@aol.com to register.*

The following are the 2 upcoming webinars:

- **Feb 25 Water – The Water we have on This Earth is the Water Necessary to Keep Us All Alive:** *Water is a part of our spiritual life and essential to our physical life. We all need to work together to preserve this resource for future generations.*
- **Mar 25 Breathe In, Breathe Out: The Air we have is the Air We Share – How Do We Take Better Care of the Air Around Us?** *We all breathe the same air. There is no more air than the air we have. Learn how we must take better care of our Common Air to sustain life among us all, locally, nationally and globally. This air represents part of our legacy to those who come after us. Presenter: Elaine Swords, Professor, University of Hartford.*