

**Saint Pascal Baylon Catholic Church
Social Justice and Caring Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on Thursday, July 13, 2017**

Present: Martha Arko, Anna DeCrans, Kendall Doom, Carmen Johnson, Christine Malec (minute writer), Margaret Malec, Mary Tacheny, Mary Weyandt and Julianne Wojcik

Guest: Marie Rivard, Airline Ambassadors

Parish Council Liaison

Mary Weyandt was introduced and welcomed as the committee's new Parish Council liaison. She is replacing Ray Muetzel in this capacity.

Human Trafficking

Various human trafficking-related issues were discussed:

- **Possible Presentation Speaker:** Marie Rivard, a member of Airline Ambassadors, was invited to the meeting to discuss the possibility of her taking part in the human trafficking presentation that the committee is planning for the fall. She described Airline Ambassadors which is an organization that assists vulnerable children throughout the world by leveraging connections with the airline industry to conduct various services - such as delivering clothing/food/medical and school supplies to children in orphanages and providing them with humanitarian assistance, offering disaster relief, serving as escorts for children coming to the United States for medical care and providing training to airline personnel on how to recognize and report potential human trafficking situations.

Marie shared some stories of various young people who were victims of human trafficking. The committee members asked if she knew of any recovered victims who would be willing to share their stories at the presentation being planned in the fall. They felt this may be an effective way to put a human face on this issue. She said this may be a possibility.

- Marie discussed some of the strategies used by perpetrators of human trafficking - such as the use of date rape drugs and utilizing social media to misrepresent themselves to lure victims on-line. She emphasized the importance of educating young people on this topic. Given this, the committee members discussed the possibility of inviting the parish school children to attend the presentation being planned for the fall as well as youth from other community partners - such as Nokomis Montessori South Campus school (located across the street from the parish) and/or Battle Creek Recreation Center.

Marie stated that one of the most effective ways to stop this crime is to make stronger laws against those who participate in it - aimed at those who purchase sex as well as those involved in trafficking. She urged the importance of communicating with legislators regarding the passage of stricter laws. The committee members discussed having

postcards available at the presentation containing the contact information of Minnesota's local and national legislators.

Marie gave the committee a copy of the book Renting Lacy: A Story of America's Prostituted Children by Linda Smith with Cindy Coloma. The committee members agreed to add it to the social justice library they are creating. Marie stated this book has been made into a movie that theaters are willing to show upon the request of community groups.

Chris informed Marie that the committee would like its presentation to give some basic information on human trafficking, discuss some of the warning signs that may indicate that someone is a victim of this crime, provide some statistics regarding this crime in Minnesota and/or the eastside, its connection to events such as the upcoming Super Bowl etc. Marie said that she could provide the committee with some statistics and that she would send these to Chris via e-mail.

- **Human Trafficking 101:** Chris reminded the committee members that Meg Royer from Women's Advocates informed her that this organization also has a "Human Trafficking 101" presentation that she would be willing to make at the parish.
- **Bulletin Insert:** Mary Tacheny stated that absent committee member, Bill Dorgan, is working on having an insert authored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops regarding the topic of human trafficking placed in a future bulletin.

We Care Campaign

Chris informed the committee members that she has not yet received the results from the We Care Campaign held the weekend of June 17 - 18, 2017. She reminded the committee members that the Campaign was originally going to be held the weekend of June 3 - 4, 2017, but she did not get the bulletin announcements submitted to the parish office in enough time for this so it had to be scheduled at a later date. The three options chosen for the campaign were:

- the **Hmong American Partnership** - a non-profit organization founded to serve the Hmong community in Minnesota by improving the lives of individuals and families through culturally sensitive social services and by focusing on empowering the refugee and immigrant community by moving its clients out of poverty towards social and financial prosperity,
- **Smile Network International** - an organization that provides life-altering reconstructive surgeries and related healthcare services to impoverished children and adults in developing countries and
- **The Sheridan Story** - an organization in the Twin Cities area that fights hunger by providing a weekend supply of food to hungry children whose only meals may be the breakfasts and lunches given to them at school.

Chris said that with Parish Administrator, Mike Lentz, leaving St. Pascal's, it may take a while before these results are received.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Margaret reported that fifty-six pints were donated at the American Red Cross blood drive held at the parish on Monday, July 10, 2017, and that the goal was sixty pints. She stated that the next blood drive will be held at Grace Lutheran on Tuesday, September 5, 2017.

Women's Advocate Domestic Violence 101 Presentation

Chris mentioned that the "Domestic Violence 101" presentation given by Meg Royer from the Women's Advocates (a shelter for women and children escaping domestic violence) on May 30, 2017, was very well done but not well attended. (Only some committee members and one parish staff member were present.)

Committee Logo

Carmen displayed the new committee logo that she created. The logo shows three figures (one in red, one in blue and one in purple) with their arms reaching out to each other - surrounding the committee name located in the middle. The logo has the shape of a fish. The committee members really liked the logo. They hope to use a new logo as part of the committee's branding efforts.

Social Justice Library

Mary Tacheny told the committee members that she and Chris met to go through the books stored in the room near the staff lounge to determine if any would be appropriate to add to the social justice library the committee is forming. She stated they discovered that these books were faith formation resources so would not be appropriate for this effort.

Mary also said that, currently, there are approximately fifteen items in the library - including some adult and children's books and some digital versatile discs.

Mary Tacheny stated that she spoke to parish staff and it was determined that the social justice library will be put on cart that can be moved to locations desired by the committee - such as the venue of a committee event or Brioschi Hall during fellowship.

Mary also mentioned that Chris had said that former committee member, Margaret Anzevino, who has worked as a librarian, has offered to assist with the library collection if so desired.

The possibility of putting an announcement in the bulletin asking for donations to the library was briefly discussed.

The committee members briefly spoke about creating a list of on-line social justice-related resources.

1st Annual Eastside Community Peace Celebration

The committee members discussed the 1st Annual Eastside Community Peace Celebration being held at the Battle Creek Recreation Center on Saturday, July 22, 2017, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. This event hopes to unite the community around the common goals of friendship, peace and solidarity. It will include activities for children and families, food, ethnic music and dance performances...They remarked that events such as these are good opportunities to interact and form relationships with those in the neighborhood, to spread the word about the parish, to listen to the concerns of those in the community etc.

Bulletin Board

It was reported that part of the committee's bulletin board space may be used to display photographs of the Parish Council members.

Next Meeting

Thursday, August 3, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Christine Malec