

**Saint Pascal Baylon Catholic Church
Social Justice and Caring Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on Thursday, July 11, 2019**

Present: Martha Arko, Kendall Doom (and son Oskar), Ann Karner, Christine Malec (minute writer), Margaret Malec, Bonnie Steele and Mary Weyandt

New Member

The members welcomed Ann Karner to the committee.

Meeting Prayers

It was decided that the committee members would take turns picking out the prayer for their meetings. Margaret volunteered to bring the prayer for the next meeting.

Clothesline Project

Bonnie reported that she heard back from the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women and was told that the parish had been approved for the Clothesline Project for the month of October. She said she will pick-up/return the clothesline display which will have t-shirts hanging from it containing names of those who have been victims of domestic violence - which could be placed in the gathering space.

Bonnie stated that she hopes to get further details about the display closer to the event.

Bonnie said that she spoke with Sharon Balcom, the parish's Pastoral Associate for Music, regarding the possibility of having a prayer service to remember those who died as a result of domestic violence and to give people an opportunity to pray for those affected by domestic violence and that Sharon is willing to do this. Bonnie stated that a date has not yet been decided for this service.

Stephen Ministry Program

Bonnie spoke about the Stephen Ministry program - which uses lay people to provide one-on-one care to people experiencing a difficult time in life (such as divorce, grief, illness, job loss, relocation etc.). She announced that she discovered that there is training for Stephen Ministers held locally but that the training for Stephen Ministry Leaders is out-of-state.

Bonnie said that she is hoping to have one to two parishioners serve as Stephen Ministry leaders and five who would serve as Stephen Ministers. (Stephen Ministry leaders establish and direct the Stephen Ministry in the parish by: building awareness of Stephen Ministry in the parish and community, recruiting and training Stephen Ministers, meeting with potential care receivers to assess their needs, matching care receivers with Stephen Ministers and providing Stephen Ministers with ongoing supervision and continuing education. Stephen Ministers are

parishioners trained by Stephen Leaders to offer high-quality, one-on-one Christian care to people going through difficult times.)

Bonnie told the committee members that Ann is a Stephen Ministry leader. Ann stated that she is willing to train others for this ministry.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Margaret announced that 45 pints of blood were donated at the American Red Cross blood drive held at the parish from 1:00 - 7:00 p.m. on Monday, July 8, 2019.

JustFaith Catholic Program

Ann updated the committee members on the JustFaith Catholic program. (This program is a three-phase small-group experience involving prayer, study, dialogue and immersion as participants explore contemporary issues through the lens of Christian faith.) She reminded them that St. Pascal's received a grant that would provide reimbursement for the costs associated with offering the first two phases of the program at the parish. Ann said that each phase lasts for eight weeks and that the current plan is to begin the first phase in October of this year - offering one session during the day and another in the evening (perhaps on Monday). She stated that the second phase would be offered next spring and the third phase next fall.

Ann said that she registered for the program and downloaded the necessary materials - which includes various handouts, Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, and another book. She stated that participants would be asked to pay approximately \$30.00 for the materials so that the grant money given to the parish could be used to run the program instead of paying for materials.

Ann stated that she would now concentrate on recruiting participants. She said that she had placed announcements in the bulletin but that she thought it would be more effective to invite people by word-of-mouth. She asked the committee members to talk about the program to other parishioners. Ann stated that she hopes to get eight to twelve participants including members of the committee and young people from the parish - and that the program will help improve their spiritual lives and energize them to get involved in social justice-related issues.

Ann mentioned that the parish's Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation, Kim Roering, is working to have childcare provided for the participants.

Angel Tree Ministry

Bonnie informed the committee members that pastor Fr. John Mitchell received a request from Angel Tree Ministry, a program that provides the children of incarcerated parents with Christmas gifts, asking if the parish would be interested in participating. She said that she and Fr. John discussed this and decided that the parish would participate.

Chris reminded the members that the committee had agreed to participate in this program last year but that when Fr. John contacted this ministry, he was informed that no additional assistance was needed for 2018 but that the parish would be contacted again in 2019.

Bonnie stated that the parish has been assigned five families. She said that she has a guide that includes information on: the ministry, recruiting volunteers, contacting the children's caregivers to obtain information regarding gift requests, promoting the program in the parish, delivering the gifts etc.

Bonnie agreed to place announcements in the bulletin asking for volunteers for this ministry and stated that she would also contact parishioners personally. She asked the committee members to let her know if they would like to work on this with her and she invited them to give her names of parishioners who they thought might like to work on this. Mary agreed to work on this with her.

Bonnie also said that she would place announcements in the bulletin asking parishioners if they would like to be an Angel Tree Ministry recipient.

The committee members discussed the possibility of expanding the Angel Ministry program to include seniors in the parish.

Care Kits for the Unsheltered

Bonnie asked the committee members if they would be interested in putting together care kits for people who are unsheltered which could include items such as: brush/comb, fast-food gift cards, a flyer containing information about the parish, gloves, hand wipes, medicine such as cough drops and pain relievers, nail clippers, personal hygiene items, snacks, socks, tissues, a toothbrush/toothpaste, a water bottle etc. She passed around example of kits that she put together.

Bonnie stated that parishioners could drop off such donated items at church (in an easily accessible and visible place) and volunteers could assemble the kits. Bonnie noted that the assembled kits could be made available for parishioners to take and use to give to the unsheltered people they encounter.

Bonnie said that, if the committee members were interested in pursuing this effort, she could put announcements in the bulletin about it. The committee members supported this idea.

The committee members acknowledged that passing out care kits to the unsheltered would not solve the problem of homelessness but felt that it would demonstrate that they are cared about as individuals, that their dignity is being supported etc.

The committee members discussed the need to work on the causes of homelessness - such as supporting bills at the legislature that would increase housing. Kendall volunteered to gather statistics regarding this issue.

The committee members also discussed renewing the parish's relationship with Grace Lutheran and Progressive Baptist churches on social justice-related issues. Mary mentioned that her sister Anne knows the president of Grace Lutheran's church council so this might be a connection to cultivate.

End-of-life Events

Bonnie announced that she had scheduled two end-of-life events - one on Saturday, September 28, 2019, at 9:00 a.m. and the other on Saturday, November 9, 2019, at 9:00 a.m.

Bonnie stated that the September 28th event would provide information regarding funeral planning, burials (normal and green), preparing for burials at home, cremation etc., that Mueller Funeral Home has agreed to participate and that she is still waiting to hear back from Catholic Cemeteries and the Cremation Society.

Bonnie said that the November 9th event will focus on end-of-life planning and that she hopes to bring in speakers from Allina Health, Cerenity Senior Care and/or St. Therese of Woodbury to discuss assisted living, transitional care, dementia, hospice and and/or palliative care.

Bonnie also expressed an interest in having attorneys who specialize in estate planning at the event and/or physicians who may be willing to discuss advanced directives and providers orders for life-sustaining treatment.

Bonnie stated that she may decide to split the November 9th meeting into two parts - having the second half in January.

One Body

Mary informed the committee members that she, Sharon Balcom (the church's Pastoral Associate for Music) and Bonnie met with Catalina Morales from One Body, an organization whose goal is to teach others how to welcome the stranger and immigrant and how to treat them through the lens of Catholic social teaching.

Mary said that One Body raises awareness about the immigrants living within the community, creates safe places for those living in fear of deportation, gives Catholics the opportunity to talk about the issue of immigration, helps others realize it is a moral imperative to act justly on behalf of the marginalized and partners with laity and priests around the archdiocese in working on this issue. She stated that three groups meet - the laity, liturgical ministers and priests.

Mary said that parishes are being asked to recognize the Catholic World Day of Refugees on September 29, 2019, by preaching about, talking about and sharing stories about immigration.

It was noted that Bonnie and Mary will attend the next meeting of laity and priests on July 18, 2019, at 6:30 p.m. at Incarnation parish.

Meeting Guidelines

Bonnie distributed some meeting guidelines that the committee members could consider adopting. She asked the committee members to review the guidelines and let her know if they wished to adopt any of them.

Center for Mission

Bonnie reported that she had met with Adam Fitzpatrick, the Social Mission Outreach Coordinator for the Center for Mission of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. She stated that he is visiting all the parishes to discover the social justice-related work that is being done so that he could take this information back to the archdiocese. Bonnie stated that Adam would like to support parishes in these efforts - and that he recommends that parishes work on doable, local efforts.

Bonnie mentioned that she and Adam discussed having a day of reflection for the committee during which the members could consider the work that they do, determine the committee's values, decide what work should get done etc. Bonnie asked the committee members to let her know some possible dates for having this event.

Welcome Crew

Bonnie suggested the possibility of organizing a group of parishioners who would serve on a crew that would welcome newcomers to the parish. She said that she would like to get fifteen to twenty people to serve in this capacity. She stated that volunteers would have to be comfortable meeting new people.

Donation Closet

The committee members briefly discussed the flyer describing the ministries for whom the parish collects donations (Brittany's Place, Joseph's Coat, the Listening House and Merrick Community Services). Chris said she would send the most recent versions of each write-up to Mary so that she could finalize the flyer. Once it is completed, it will be placed in the donation closet and may be used as an insert in a future bulletin.

East Side Freedom Library

Kendall alerted the committee members to events held at the East Side Freedom Library (located in the former Arlington Hills Library) which take place every other Tuesday and are open to the public. She mentioned that some upcoming talks concern affordable housing and racism.

Next Meeting

Thursday, August 1, 2019, from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the Staff Lounge