

**Saint Pascal Baylon Catholic Church
Social Justice and Caring Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on Thursday, August 8, 2019**

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

Reflection

The committee members began with prayer and reflection regarding the recent killings in Dayton, Ohio and El Paso, Texas and discussed how all are called to reach out in solidarity to the victims of such violence.

Angel Tree Ministry

Mary reported that she had met with pastor Fr. John Mitchell and he gave her the box of supplies that he received from the Angel Tree Ministry, a program that provides the children of incarcerated parents with Christmas gifts. She stated that she will read through all the materials before the September meeting but that she did find out that, on October 31, 2019, the names of the five children that have been assigned to the parish will be revealed. Mary said that the parish would have to contact the families of these children and ask what type of gifts they would like to receive.

Mary stated that the parish could choose to deliver the gifts to the children or it could host a party at which the gifts would be distributed. The committee members liked the idea of hosting a party.

The committee members also discussed the possibility of expanding the ministry to include five children from the parish and perhaps five seniors.

Mary asked if the parish had a Christmas tree that could be used for this ministry. The committee members replied that, if she wanted to use a real tree, the Men's Club would probably be willing to supply her with one. They said if she wanted an artificial one, she could ask absent committee member, Carmen Johnson, about this since she is part of the parish team that decorates the church for the various liturgical seasons.

Compassion Kits for the Unsheltered

Bonnie mentioned that she had spoken to Fr. John about the parish making compassion kits for the unsheltered and he is very supportive of the project. She stated that Fr. John would like some on hand so that they could be distributed to those in need.

The committee members discussed asking parishioners to donate the items that will get included in the compassion kits (such as brushes/combs, fast-food gift cards, gloves, hand wipes, medicines such as cough drops and pain relievers, nail clippers, personal hygiene items, snacks,

socks, tissues, toothbrushes, toothpaste, water bottles etc.). Bonnie suggested that a flyer could also be included in the kits containing information about the parish as well as local services - such as the Listening House, Merrick Community Services etc.

The committee members thought they could ask for donations via bulletin announcements, the parish's Facebook page and pulpit announcements and that they could place containers in Brioschi Hall or the gathering space at which parishioners could drop off donated items. They also discussed the possibility of making themselves available after all the masses on the weekend when there is a pulpit announcement regarding this ministry to answer any questions that parishioners may have about the project.

The committee members noted that once enough items were collected, they would schedule a time to assemble the kits and that the completed ones would be placed in an area of the building to which parishioners have access so that they could pick-up the kits to be used for distribution.

The committee members decided that if this project proves successful, making such kits could take place throughout the year.

The committee members commented that they do not want this project to interfere with or replace the collecting that gets done for the Listening House. They also spoke about obtaining the support of the Parish Council for this project.

Christine, Julianne, Kendall, Margaret and Martha volunteered to work on this project.

Beacon

Bonnie reported that she had been contacted by Pastor Emily Goldwaithe Fries who does housing and policy work with Beacon, an interfaith housing collaborative working to end homelessness in the Twin Cities, regarding the possibility of partnering with this organization to work on housing-related issues.

Bonnie asked the committee members if they would like to be involved with this effort. Ann, Anna and Kendall said they would be interested.

Kendall noted that she is involved with groups from the East Side Freedom Library (such as ABC Realty and the Cookie Cart) that also work on housing-related issues and she suggested the possibility of all these groups working together.

Clothesline Project

Bonnie stated that she has not heard anything further regarding when the parish will receive the clothesline display from the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women which will have t-shirts hanging from it containing names of those who have been victims of domestic violence.

Donation Closet Flyer

Christine distributed the most recent version of the flyer describing the ministries for whom the parish collects donations for the committee's review (Brittany's Place, Joseph's Coat, the Listening House and Merrick Community Services). Other than adding some clarifying information regarding the sizes for the clothes being requested by Brittany's House, the committee members were fine with the flyer. Christine and Mary agreed to finalize the flyer with the suggested change.

Bonnie said that, once completed, the parish office could make color copies of the flyer.

The committee members discussed posting the flyer in the donation closet, adding some to the kiosks, including it in the bulletin as an insert, putting them in the table stands in Brioschi Hall, passing them out after all the masses on one weekend, posting it on the committee's webpage and on the parish's Facebook page etc.

End-of-Life Events

Bonnie announced that she met with Leo Guzman from the Basilica of St. Mary and he is willing to come to the parish to speak about palliative care and hospice at one of the upcoming end-of-life events that are being scheduled.

One Body

Ann, Bonnie and Mary reported that they had attended a planning meeting at Incarnation parish in Minneapolis on July 18, 2019, for 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.

Bonnie reminded the committee members that parishes are being asked to recognize the Catholic World Day of Refugees on September 29, 2019. She stated that Fr. John, will preach about, immigration during his homily. Bonnie said that the parish's Pastoral Associate for Music, Sharon Balcom, and Pastoral Associate for Liturgy, Keri Mader, will host a meeting of local liturgists to plan for the September 29th mass.

Stephen Ministry Program

Bonnie mentioned that she has not yet started to advertise for the Stephen Ministry program, which uses lay people to provide one-on-one care to people experiencing a difficult time in life.

Bonnie invited the committee members to attend an introductory workshop regarding this ministry that will take place in Eau Claire, Wisconsin on Saturday, September 14, 2019, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. She asked them to let her know if they are interested in attending.

JustFaith Catholic Program

Ann announced that it has been decided that the first phase of the JustFaith Catholic program (a three-phase small-group experience involving prayer, study, dialogue and immersion as participants explore contemporary issues through the lens of Christian faith) will be offered at the parish on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. and Wednesday afternoons from 1:00 - 3:30 p.m. starting on September 7th and 8th. She stated that she hopes to have ten to fifteen people join each group.

Ann said that, prior to this time, Fr. John will talk about the program during all the masses one weekend and that she would give an overview of the program at the end of each mass.

Ann stated that Kim Roering, the parish's Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation, has designed a flyer advertising the program and that Kim is also arranging to have childcare provided during the evening session.

Gift Cards

Bonnie announced that, as decided at a previous meeting, the parish has taken \$1,000.00 from the parish's St. Pascal Baylon Family Emergency Fund to purchase Cub Foods gift cards (in increments of \$25.00) which will be used to distribute to people in need (parishioners and non-parishioners) who come to the parish looking for assistance.

Mental Health First Aid

Bonnie reported that the Fairview Foundation has agreed to come to St. Pascal's (at no cost) to present a day-long "Mental First Aid" course to the parish staff. She said that the course helps one identify, understand and respond to signs of someone who may be experiencing symptoms of mental illness or who may be in crisis (such as contemplating suicide).

Bonnie stated that the Fairview Foundation would like to have fifteen to thirty people attend the course. She said that, if all the staff members attend, this would total approximately fifteen people, so she is extending the invitation to the committee members to take the course. She asked the committee members to let her know if they would be interested in attending.

Bonne stated that she is in the process of deciding when to offer the class. She said that the Fairview Foundation has openings in November 2019 and January 2020.

Come Together

Bonnie invited the committee members to attend a Come Together gathering at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis on Sunday, August 11, 2019, from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. (Come Together is an ecumenical group of people of faith who gather monthly for contemplation, discussion, music and prayer in a variety of churches and faith-based organizations around the Twin Cities to pray for peace and an end to violence in homes, communities and the world.)

Bonnie stated that this gathering would include discussion regarding the recent violence in El Paso, Texas, music, a peace walk, prayer, reflection, storytelling etc.

Possible Change in Committee Structure

Bonnie reported that she and Fr. John discussed the possibility of changing the structure of the Social Justice of Caring Committee by dividing it into two task forces - one focusing on justice-related issues and the other on pastoral care. She said it was their thought that this structure would allow committee members to better utilize their gifts and work with their area of interest. Bonnie asked the committee members to consider this change. She stated that she would send an e-mail to the committee members asking them to provide their feedback to her regarding this suggested change.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Margaret announced that the next American Red Cross Blood drive held at the parish will take place on November 22, 2019, which is on a Friday. She reminded the committee members that, in the past, the blood drives have always taken place on a Monday so she does not know if the change of day will have an effect on the outcome.

Next Meeting

Thursday, September 5, 2019, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the Staff Lounge

Ann volunteered to lead the prayer.