

Saint Pascal Baylon Catholic Church
Social Justice and Caring Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on Thursday, January 2, 2020

Present: Martha Arko, Anna DeCrans, Kendal Doom, Christine Malec (minute writer), Margaret Malec, Bonnie Steele and Julianne Wojick

Angel Tree Ministry

Christine mentioned, that Mary Weyandt, who was in charge of the Angel Tree Ministry, a program that provides the children of incarcerated parents with Christmas gifts, was unable to attend the meeting but that she sent an e-mail to the committee members reporting on this project.

- She thanked all who worked on this.
- Mary noted that the parish donated gifts to two families - an Angel Tree Ministry program family with four children and a parish family that recently suffered a house fire that has five children.
- She stated that she was unable to contact another Angel Tree Ministry program family assigned to the parish due to the fact that the parish had been given an incorrect telephone number for this family and her attempt to contact the family via United States mail was unsuccessful. (Mary said that the Angel Tree Ministry program informed her that having difficulty contacting a family is not uncommon but that, if the parish were to partner with this program in the future and such a thing were to happen again, she would try to be more proactive in contacting the organization for assistance.)
- Mary noticed that, on the weekend during which pulpit announcements were going to be made regarding this ministry, one was not made at the Saturday mass but that announcements were made at both of the Sunday masses - which resulted in all of the tags being taken off the tree.
- She mentioned that she contacted parishioner Toni Baker and had her send an e-mail regarding this ministry to all the members on her parish distribution list.
- Mary stated that the Angel Tree Ministry family ended up picking up the gifts at the parish instead of having them delivered to their house by committee members and that there might have been some confusion regarding who at the parish was responsible for greeting this family.
- She said that, although things went well, if the parish decides to become involved in this next year, there could be some improvement in communication regarding the project.

The committee members decided that, since the program was successful at the parish, they might try to expand the parish's involvement in it next year by either signing up for additional families, by also purchasing gifts for parish seniors in need or both.

The committee members agreed that, if the parish were to participate in this ministry next year, it would be advisable to roll it out earlier.

Christine noted that Mary submitted a bulletin announcement thanking those who supported this ministry.

JustFaith Catholic Program

Christine reported that Ann Karner, an absent committee member and one of the facilitators of the JustFaith Catholic program, sent her an e-mail containing some thoughts regarding the recently-completed Phase One. (The JustFaith Catholic 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). Ann made the below-listed comments.

- Most of those who participated in the program completed it.
- Most of the participants are interested in signing-up for Phase Two.
- She will speak at each of the masses on the weekend of January 11 - 12, 2020, to invite parishioners to participate in Phase Two of the program.
- It is not necessary to have taken Phase One of the program in order to participate in Phase Two.
- The parish will attempt to offer Tuesday evening and Wednesday afternoon sessions and that she is open to offering a Wednesday evening session as well if there is interest in this timeframe.
- The parish is already registered for Phase Two.
- The parish does not have grant money for Phase Two of the program (as it did for Phase One) but that funds for it might come from the Adult Faith Formation and Social Justice and Caring Committee budgets as well as from donations made from the Phase One and Two participants who paid/will pay for their materials.
- Nobody will be turned away from participating in the program if unable to pay for materials.

Anna, the other Phase One facilitator, commented that she would not be able to co-facilitate Phase Two of the program. She stated that, if any of the committee members were interested in serving as a facilitator, to let Ann Karner know.

She recommended that it would be helpful to have each of the returning participants invite another person to sign-up for the program - whether from the parish or not.

We Care Campaign

Christine informed the committee members that Theresa Ruttger, the parish's Business Administrator, had provided her with the totals for the "We Care Campaign" held the weekend of October 26 - 27, 2019. Chris said the individual totals raised for each option were:

- **Option 1: Catholic Relief Services Hurricane Dorian Relief in the Bahamas** - which brought aid in the form of emergency shelter, food and safe water to those affected by Hurricane Dorian - \$354.00,
- **Option 2: Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota** - a non-profit agency located in St. Paul that provides legal assistance to low-income immigrants and refugees in Minnesota which works to educate Minnesota communities and professionals about immigration matters and advocates for state and federal policies which respect to the universal rights of immigrants - \$366.50 and

- **Option 3: St. Mary's Health Clinics** - established in 1992 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet to provide free health care services to the uninsured and medically underserved people in the Twin Cities and surrounding metro area (including clinic visits, diagnostic tests, prescriptions, assistance in applying for governmental subsidy programs and other community resources) - \$386.50.

Combined with the money from the collection plate that weekend, each option received \$603.00.

Martin Luther King Junior Event

Bonnie announced that Calvary Church in Minneapolis (located at 2608 Blaisdell Avenue South) will be hosting an event on Saturday, January 18, 2020, from 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. entitled "Broken or By Design: The Traumatic Impact of Incarceration on Black Families."

Compassion Kits for the Unsheltered

Bonnie reported that the compassion kits for the unsheltered that were put together have been taken and that more need to be made. She stated that a parishioner contacted her and informed her that she would be interested in helping coordinate this project. Bonnie said that she would speak with this parishioner about this.

The committee members discussed the possibility of giving these kits to those living in local encampments or providing some to police officers to distribute to the unsheltered.

One Body

Bonnie mentioned that she is trying to put together a core team of people to plan the One Body event that will take place at the parish on Saturday, February 8, 2020. (One Body is 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.) She stated this event will serve as an introduction to One Body as well as a training for the caucuses (which take place on February 25, 2020).

Bonnie said that a "save the date" announcement will be placed in the bulletin regarding this event.

Social Justice Library

Christine and Bonnie said that pastor Fr. John Mitchell has volunteered to be the person who vets the books being added to the social justice library.

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative

Anna stated that she spoke with Pastor Emily Goldwaithe Fries who does housing and policy work with Beacon, an interfaith housing collaborative working to end homelessness in the Twin Cities, and informed her that the committee is currently not focused on partnering with this organization at this time but that she will continue to stay involved in these efforts.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Margaret announced that the next American Red Cross blood drive will be held at Grace Lutheran on Monday, February 3, 2020.

Next Meeting

Thursday, February 6, 2020, from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. in the Staff Lounge

The committee members agreed to begin their next several meetings at 6:30 p.m. instead of 7:00 p.m. and then make a final decision whether they want to keep the 6:30 p.m. start time permanently.