

SJCC March 30, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Strategic Plan - Option for the Poor & Vulnerable-

Mary W. had us watch a short video from Catholic Relief Services entitled Option for the Poor & Vulnerable-A Call to Family, Community and Participation.

Highlights from this video show that Jesus had a special love for the poor among us, because they are in need, marginalized and sometimes forgotten in our society.

- We need to recognise the person who is poor.
- We should allow what we see and hear to touch us and to try to understand their suffering.
- Lack of love from the community at large seems to perpetuate the plight of the poor.
- The people who are poor and in need must be treated as the face of Christ.

We need to always address their immediate needs with charity, but not to stop there. We need to tie charity in with how can we address the larger issues and make the systemic changes needed. Structures and systems within our society can make it very hard to get out of the cycle of being poor, and these structures necessitate the need for radical change. We are called to love and support the poor, while trying to make a difference in their lives.

If our church communities are the bearer of good news, who else but the church can work to make these changes?

Old Business

Beacon Interfaith Housing Cooperative-

Ann K. mentioned that the team attended the Senate Hearing on March 16th in support of the Bring it Home MN bill. On March 20th, it was Lobby Day at the Capitol which started in the morning with visits to Representatives and Senators, either thanking them for their support or giving them brief overviews of what the Bring it Home MN bill provides, with the hopes that they would support the bill. Starting at 1:30 there was a large Rally in the Capitol Rotunda that was attended by many faith groups and many legislators who have signed on to the bill. It was well attended and we all left very hopeful.

The following week the budget targets came out and housing got a high target, \$1billion for the two-year budget cycle. They allocated a part of the surplus, (only one-time dollars) meaning it is not projected to be there for the next budget cycle. This is disappointing, because rental assistance requires ongoing resources. Beacon will continue to stay engaged, so we will see if there are any changes going forward.

Gladstone Crossing is starting to gain momentum and our team at St. Pascal's will start to schedule visits with Maplewood City Council to see if we can gain their support to work with Met Council as we try to procure the Project Based Vouchers (PBV) needed for this housing. Beacon will start to organize community informational meetings in the neighborhood to educate them about what deeply affordable housing is and to address any questions they might have.

This summer we will try to get approval from the Maplewood Planning Department and get the Land Use Permits, which are both needed to move the project forward.

The Met Council Key Campaign will start right after Easter and this is where we are calling on all parishioners to donate old keys that will be collected in a marked container, in the gathering area. This will hopefully provide a large visual when we approach the Met Council later on this Spring to show that everyone deserves a home.

Donation Closet-

In March, donations were taken for our Merrick Food distribution and there are some leftover donations which are marked Merrick, that will remain in the donation closet until they are needed. In April, we will be taking soup and cereal donations for Progressive Baptist Church Food Distribution.

National Night Out-

August 1st is the date and Kim has sent the application into the city. Mary W. will be the chair of the committee and will plan an organizing meeting in May. The committee will try and receive a grant either from the Lilly foundation or the Women's Club to help defray costs.

Thoughts so far:

- Invite people from Progressive to attend
- Coordinate with the Women's or Men's Clubs to provide food, for example, Hot dogs
- Open Brioche Hall for space
- Review feedback, other ideas?

Merrick Community Services Food Distribution-

Mary W. reported that all food was given out by 4:00. Will continue to work with Josh, at Merrick to discuss program and how to support the current food scarcity. Merrick is currently low on food because of the huge demand, so the question is, should we be looking at other resources to increase or improve our food supply? Ann K. mentioned if this is to grow, perhaps getting a newly retired person to take the program on as a coordinator, since there is a lot of time and paper work involved with an increased food distribution program.

June 24 Event with Michael Keating-Rios-

Kim and Father John updated us on this event which will start right after the 4:30 Saturday Mass. It will be a similar format to the Mardi Gras dinner held in February.

- Dinner starting at 5:30. No cost, because Lilly grant will cover expenses. No caterer selected as yet.
- After about 30-45 minutes at dinner, Michael will start his talk which will last about 30 minutes.
- After talk, attendees will assemble compassion kits together that will be distributed on weekends at the Listening House. Before the June 24th dinner, we will ask parishioers to donate summer items such as sunscreen, lip balm, snacks, etc. Kim might have notes of encouragement that can also be enclosed.

- Last 15 minutes, we will ask attendees to fill out commitment cards to Social Justice concerns within our parish.
- Assistance will be needed and Mary W. suggested we ask the Parish Life & Activity Committee.
- Limit of 125 attendees.

SJCC Outreach & Action Email List-

Mary W. has combined email lists from various parishioners/committees that will be used to invite parishioners to events and to reach out to them for acts of charity and justice in the future. Mary plans to launch this email list with an invite to the June 24th dinner.

Mary will send out a test email before launch and will ask for any feedback that we might have. An unsubscribe option will be added to the first email in case anyone wishes to not receive any future emails.

May 1st Red Cross Blood Drive-

Margaret is looking for volunteers to help out during the afternoon with the St. Pascal's Blood Drive. So far: Julie L, Martha, and Julie M. have offered to assist during the blood drive. If anyone else is free on May 1st, please contact Margaret.

Next Meeting-

May 4th at 6:30

Kim will send out Zoom information

Prayer: Chris Malec