

Diocesan Social Justice Committee Meeting
Minutes
September 12, 2019

Present were: Nola Courtney, Dr. Emily DeMoor, Susan Gesser, Ranni Dillard, and Richard Murphy.

The meeting opened with a prayer.

Minutes from the May 2, 2019 Committee meeting were accepted as published.

Old Business

1. CCHD Grant Awards and Next Collection on November 23/24, 2019: Richard Murphy shared information about the awarding of \$7000 among those that applied for the grant. An Ad Hoc Committee looked at all the applications and considered the criteria for the grant. On the basis of this, they made several recommendations for awarding grants to organizations in the Diocese of Owensboro. All grant recommendations to receive awards were submitted to Bishop Medley for his approval.

2. Parish Social Ministry Reports and Needs:

a. Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Henderson Ky- Ranni Dillard, the Social Concerns Committee Facilitator for the Parish, shared what the Committee has been involved with since we last met. 1) They began their 3rd Aging Mastery Program at the Henderson County Public Library. They were able to develop a good partnership there for the event at a modest price and received free publicity from the Library for the event. A lot of interest developed though the participant numbers were lower than hoped. This builds interest for the next program. 2) The local Salvation Army in the County has developed a soup kitchen that operates 6 days per week. The Parish assists on the second Saturday with serving. 3) The Parish sponsors a program called "Faith Quest" the first week of June each year. There was a great response to the program this year. A collection was taken up to assist those in need and \$721 was donated. They had agreed to assist the St. Edwards parish back to school program in October 2019. 4) JustFaith group has 17 participants. 5) The Parish is considering beginning Financial Peace University.

b. St. Stephen Parish in Cadiz Kentucky- Committee Coordinator, Nola Courtney reported that the Parish assists with providing food for a community After school program on a monthly basis. They also support on a monthly basis a community Laundromat Assistance program with cleaning products and children's snacks. They continue to support the yearly Baby Bottle Campaign to raise money for the local Crisis Pregnancy Center.

c. St. Leo Parish in Murray Kentucky- Committee Coordinator Michael Basile left a report on their activity. 1) Backpack: Served all county and city schools this past January; program continues on annual basis. 2) Soup Kitchen: Our commitment schedule remains the same, i.e., every two months. August 19 we served over 80. Next date will be in October. 3) Collections for Boxes of Joy program partnered with Cross Catholic Outreach occurring now.

d. St. Stephen Parish in Owensboro Ky- Committee Coordinator, Joe Abel, left a report on their activity. 1) The Committee invited a speaker from CASA to present to the group on their purpose and activities for involvement. 2) A spring 2020 trip involving medical personnel was under consideration. 3) The group planned for donations during Advent to various community organizations.

4) The Parish Community Garden is under scrutiny and discussions occurred about its continues role. 5) Consideration was being given to a Habitat for Humanity donation. 6) The strategic plan for the outreach Committee was discussed.

3. New Catholic Charities of Owensboro (CC O'boro) Initiatives: Susan Gesser explained some of the new efforts at Catholic charities of Owensboro to assist in the Social Justice realm in our Diocese.

a. Fulton Ky Mission – CC O'boro did some research into some of the poorest areas of our Diocese. Fulton Ky is one of them. CC O'boro was in the process of an outreach to school age children in the Fulton area with school supplies etc. They are joined by two other Parishes in our Diocese to assist in this need: St. Jerome Parish in Fancy Farm and Holy Name Parish in Henderson.

b. Staff lending to serve on the Board of the Daniel Pitino Shelter- Susan Gesser has joined the board there to assist in a difficult transition there.

c. Paralegal Assistance- CC O'boro has obtained the services of Miguel Quitanilla to help in the immigration process in the Diocese.

d. Help at the Mexican American border- CC O'boro sent 8 volunteers (3 in May for one week and 3 in June for one week; an added 2 were sent to Arizona also in June 2019) to Texas & Arizona areas to assist with processing immigrants coming into the USA.

e. Assistance with obtaining citizenship- Susan is an attorney and has been working with a number of immigrants to obtain their citizenship.

f. Know Your Rights Courses- Susan is working with undocumented Immigrants to help them understand what legal rights these folks have in encountering ICE officials.

g. Housing 101 is training on landlord /tenant rights offered throughout the Diocese.

h. Expungement clinics are clinics for release felons that may qualify for having their records cleansed so they can vote among other things.

i. Human Trafficking Training to notice behavior and to expose it. These clinics are also available in the parishes.

4. Report on Living and leading with Love Courses- Dr. DeMoor reported on this work that she conducts with select students each year. Students come from all over the area. It is a theology class that covers a wide range of Catholic social Teaching areas including the environment.

New Business

1. There was no issues that members wished to raise.

2. Social Justice Committee Diocesan Survey- the survey is completed every other year and is due to be renewed in 2020. Members will be contacted about their committees and what they are doing to include in the survey later next year.

3. JustFaith Initiative: the JustFaith organization has decided to initiate a role in dioceses of helping them develop community organizing groups that work with other churches and civic organizations for the improvement and betterment of low and moderate income families.

4. Staff Report and Sharing of Resources (Report on Collections)- The Kentucky Interfaith Power and Light Group sent us a thank you for the donation of \$250 made in March of this year to join their organization. Richard shared the collection results For Catholic Relief Services in 2019 and the collection was worth \$31,916.07. The diocese also contributed to a collection for Southeast Asia and the Pacific rim as a result of weather-related disasters worth \$23,330.43. The diocese donated \$16,501.60 the Catholic Campaign for Human Development in 2018/19.

The meeting closed with prayer.

Next meeting was set for November 7, 2019 at 6 PM at the MCC.