

**Social Justice Committee Meeting
Minutes
March 12, 2020**

Present were Richard Murphy, Joe Abel, Emily DeMoor, and Susan Gesser.

The meeting opened with a prayer.

The minutes from January 9, 2020 were accepted as published.

Old Business:

1. **Diocesan Survey for 2020:** The Committee conducts a survey of parish social ministry committees around the diocese every two years. This is done to learn which parishes have the committees, which would like to start one, and how parishes are providing needed support for people and families in need of services. This can vary for many reasons: the change of pastor to make a difference; loss of volunteers or recruitment of new volunteers to serve in committee roles makes a difference; and the needs of the community can change over time. Two years is a long time for volunteer service. The leaders of these committees can change from year to year and it is hoped that the survey will provide important information about making connections with these leaders and supporting them in their role. The 2020 survey has had a preliminary beginning and it may take few months to complete it.
2. **Parish Social Ministry Reports and Needs:**
 - a. St. Stephen Cathedral-Joe Abel is the Committee Chair for that Parish. The Committee has reintroduced their community garden to raise food for the community neighborhood to make use of. They have 21 plots that are attended by individuals. The St. Stephen community had a medical mission trip to Mandeville Jamaica planned, but the Covid 19 pandemic has caused this trip to be canceled. The parish takes up several Lenten offerings for nonprofit groups providing care to needy persons. The committee recently took up a baby bottle collection for Birthright and raise \$2800. In April 2019, the parish will develop a three-year strategic plan that includes social justice activities.
 - b. Sts. Joseph and Paul Parish: Susan Gesser reported there had not been another meeting since last reported. They did have a successful Block Party. They did a shipment of shoes to Haiti. They continue with immigration clinics. They work together with their St. Vincent de Paul Society.
 - c. L-3 Program at Brescia University: Emily DeMoor reported on the program at Brescia. The program decided not to apply for a second grant as it required an equal match. They will work with UEN on their annual conference to be held in Owensboro. There will be a June retreat for the program in June. The program will have a one semester class in the Fall of 2020 at Brescia University.
3. **Report on Catholic Charities of Owensboro Initiatives:** Susan Gesser discussed Senate Bill -1 and the likelihood of its passage Kentucky Gen. Assembly. She believed that it may not be passed this year. Henderson County was amid the discussion about providing drivers licenses to undocumented workers. The city and County were discussing this, and it was hoped that a positive result would come from the discussion. Father Daniel Dillard the pastor of Christ the King parish in Scottsville Kentucky was considering allowing a mission trip to that area for July 18-25. During that same week, a trip to Fulton Kentucky was under consideration. Susan

discussed Catholic Charities work with the Center for a youth Day activity once per month it could be a whole communitywide gap developing and providing school supplies to those in need. A planning day was set for March 19, 2020. Catholic charities is also working to assist the census effort in the area. They had applied for a grant to assist in April and May. Catholic Charities is also working to develop a program called Food from the Farm Food Pantry.

4. **CCHHD Grant Deadline May 2020:** each year one out of every four dollars taken up in the Catholic Campaign for Human Development collection in November, stays in the diocese. The Diocese notifies persons in the Diocese of the opportunity to apply for some share of those dollars to be distributed. Given the Covid 19 pandemic it may not be possible for a May deadline, but rather an early June deadline. The disbursement would still be before beginning of the next fiscal year.
5. **CRS Rice Bowl and the regular collection March 21/22, 2020:** The Rice Bowl Collection generally takes place on Holy Thursday. The regular collection generally occurs about the third Sunday of Lent. Both collections may be severely hampered by the pandemic. An alternative date for the taking up of the rice bowls and they CRS collection will be developed if possible.
6. **Diocese of Owensboro Day at the Kentucky Gen. Assembly 3-17-20:** this legislative advocacy project was canceled due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

New Business:

1. **Issues That Committee Members May Wish to Raise: Issues That Committee Members May Wish to Raise:** Emily discussed her recent trip to Spain and England where she took part in ecumenical work in the promotion of the Caritas School. While in England she studied with a black theologian named Anthony Reddie who taught at the Oxford Center for Religion and Culture. During her studies she enjoyed the study of love and religion from the Christian and Jewish perspective. Some of this work may be incorporated into the Brescia University strategic plan for 2020-2025.

Susan had taken part in a Families and Service Crisis program concerning the Covid 19 pandemic. Some work was being done by youth groups to help families in need, such as the elderly, by running errands for groceries and then leaving them on the porch.

2. **Covid 19 Closings in the Diocese:** only recently have schools been closed in the diocese. At the time of the meeting it was believed that they would be closed for two weeks.
3. **Opioid Abuse in Kentucky-Recent Training:** Richard shared information about training received in Madisonville Kentucky on the widening opioid abuse crisis. He also shared resources for those families affected by the crisis. Other information would be sent to committee members about these resources.
4. **Foster Care/Adoptive Family Support:** the numbers of children in out of home care has soared in the past decade two nearly a thousand children. Richard expressed a desire to explore ways that the committee could be of assistance to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. The committee suggested that Richard reach out to Heather Cann to learn what could be done to

possibly develop a support group for families working with children in foster care or considering adoptions.

5. **Staff Report and Sharing of Resources:** the Mandeville container collection was still under consideration despite the Covid 19 pandemic; however, this status would be reviewed monthly. Two different teams scheduled to go to Mandeville have been canceled: a Medical Mission trip in late March and early April by the St. Stephen Cathedral community; and a Mission Immersion Trip sponsored by St. Jerome parish in Fancy Farm Kentucky for late May and early June 2020.

The next scheduled meeting for the committee will be on May 28, 2020 at 6:00 PM. It too will be a telephone conference. More information about the call will be sent out closer to the meeting time.