

Christian Service Commission
December 13, 2014

Facilitator: Mark Joyce

Note Taker: Mark Joyce

Present: Cheryl Bida, Mark Joyce, Grace Keane, Cyndie Ferrera, and Debbie Jackson

Agenda:

1. AOD functions esp. administrative.

a. Maintain a close working relationship with, and coordinate the efforts of, all parish social ministry organizations to maintain the strength of individual organizations within the effectiveness of the whole.

b. Coordinate parish response to national Catholic action for justice programs, e.g., Catholic Relief Services, Catholic Campaign for Human Development and others designated by the archdiocesan Department of Parish Life and Services.

Under this heading it was mentioned that our life committee activities and CCRT are probably good example of St Mary's involvement.

c. Engage Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan and other archdiocesan charities, organizations and institutions, as well as other local community resources when appropriate and, when necessary, after consultation with pastor/vicar. *Under this heading it was mentioned that like (b) above, CCRT, RANH and St. Vincent de Paul is where we work this.*

d. Provide within the Christian service budget a model of good stewardship and, within the social ministry goals and objectives, a functional model that takes into account parish, community and global outreach. *Discussion centered on tithing, and how our priorities are reflected. It was agreed that we should discuss and explore more with Finance/ tithing commission to learn more of how our parish specifically supports this function.*

Structure of the CS Commission; Grace distributed a listing of our CS committees grouped by Corporal/Spiritual Works, and this was discussed.

2. Almsgiving for Lent. The CRS (Catholic Relief Services) program Operation Rice Bowl needs to be looked at, it was mentioned, and there are online guides on their website (CRS.org or csrricebowl.org) to help with administration, etc. We need to make a call on Lent Almsgiving by January 17th meeting, and a coordinator needs to be recruited.

Peggy Casing has some rice-bowl experience from GIFT, mentioned from November. Operation Rice Bowl would fulfill more a global outreach as contrasted by recent Lent almsgiving to regional charities like St Michael's Food Pantry, Lifespan and CCRT that we have recently supported. Agreed to do research and with it poll everyone early next month so that a decision can be made at January commission meeting.

3. Reports

- **St. Vincent's (SVdP)** held their Detroit area telethon on December 4th, and Debbie reported that it was successful but that the participation has been trending downward in recent years due to lower TV viewership.
- **Giving Tree**- Cyndie reported a very good response, citing 1125 gift cards alone. The program is concluded with the trees taken down earlier than usual. Some changes that Cyndie has in mind is a lower use of gift cards in the future (to prevent fraud, etc.) and more real gifts.
- Cyndie's daughter Danielle will be finishing up her mission trip to **Belize**, returning December 15. She is expected to bring back pictures and a recap for the parish.
- **Lifespan Christmas cards** were on sale the weekends of Nov 23 and 30th and Karen reported that income was \$\$, down significantly in recent years. Her full report follows:
 - Christmas card sales yielded \$510; \$260 is the net profit. Sales have dramatically decreased over the past five years.
 - Wee Care collected all of its 60 gifts, but only 5 of the 6 gift card requests were returned from the Giving Tree outreach. Additionally, the prayer shawl ministry donated a dozen crocheted baby afghans to Wee Care.
 - Nine busloads of students will be attending the January March for Life in Washington, DC. This is an additional bus for 2015, which shows the dedication and commitment of teens to wipe out the horror of abortion in the U. S. Anyone wanting to help fund this event can send in a tax-free donation to Educational Center for Life, 1637 West Big Beaver Road, Suite G, Troy, Michigan 48084
- **Rochester Area Neighborhood House (RANH)** is looking for a replacement executive director, and is also planning to acquire a new building to replace the current location at St. Andrews parish. The location will be disclosed soon and will be in Rochester Hills.
- **The Red Cross Blood** drive just concluded on December 7 ran smoothly and was successful in obtaining 58 pints from St. Mary's, according to Sal Trupiano/Lori Irwin vs. the target of 57 pints. Honey Baked Ham coupons will be available in the office for those who donated. Next blood drive is scheduled for March 8, 2015.
- **Christmas ham/kielbasa sale** is ongoing and culminates with distribution on December 18. Joan has acquired a cart for all the Fair Trade items that will be used for the Sunday sales. The shoebox donations are still strong. Joan has plans for a Father's day diapers event?
- **Evangelization**: The *Christlife* training session was held on November 22 for our parish with approximately 32 people attending at Holy Family SC. Publicity is

ongoing with registration planned for the Christmas season leading up the first night on Thursday, January 22nd. The program is expected to help re-evangelize our Catholic community here at St Mary's consisting of seven consecutive evenings with a meal and small group discussion on DVD presentations.

4. Spring or Fall 'Retreat'- Grace suggested a 2 hr retreat for all CS ministers. The timing has the weekend following Easter Sunday, April 11th. The group discussed and decided that this would probably not be ideal due to spring, Easter season vacations. Hopefully, we can look at calendars and pick out some potential replacements. Due to the calendar this will likely be in the fall.

Next meeting January 17 : Items up for discussion will be finalizing the Lenten almsgiving as well as discussion of Outbound (formally CFCA) and St. Mary's involvement with that organization.

Note taker will be: Judy Rhoads