

Christian Service Reports

January 2018

Corporal Works of Mercy when accompanied by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit provide opportunities for Missionary Discipleship. Survey priorities: Hunger and Homelessness, Mental Health, full scope of Respect Life.

Mission: Provide opportunities for prayer, service, education, and advocacy as inspired by our Catholic Faith in exercising the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. We strive to do this by sharing our passion for Christian Service in word and action with our neighbors.

PRAY TOGETHER

Each month the Pope's prayer intention is posted to the narthex bulletin board. Some months the graphic is posted to the message board. Most Fridays, intercessions are prepared for the Rosary group. The intercessions are based on the monthly calendar. The POF writers are notified as well. February themes will be human trafficking, CRS Operation Rice Bowl, Racism, Homelessness. January prayers were in the bulletin around Roe v Wade: Mass at St. Irenaeus, 9 Days for Life. A Staff retreat was on Missionary Discipleship and held at the Capuchin Retreat Center. The Good News Meets the Daily News was offered in the Gym during Advent in conjunction with Expect the Unexpected theme. Basically, it is an opportunity to share a connection between the Sunday Gospel and everyday life. Particularly, it is an invitation for works of mercy and deeds of justice. A sampler of Lectio Divina occurred over the Advent-Christmas Season.

Prayer for Migrants and Refugees

Mary Most Holy, you, together with St. Joseph and the Child Jesus, experienced the suffering of exile. You were forced to flee to Egypt to escape the persecution of Herod. Today we entrust the men, women and children who live as migrants and refugees to your maternal protection. Grant us the grace to welcome them with Christian hospitality, so that these brothers and sisters of ours may find acceptance and understanding on their journey. Teach us to recognize your Son in the migrant who labors to bring food to our tables in the refugee seeking protection from persecution, war, and famine in the woman and child who are victims of human trafficking in the asylum seeker imprisoned for fleeing without documents. May all those who are far from their place of birth find in the Church a home where no one is a stranger. We ask this in the name of your blessed Son, Jesus, Our Lord. Amen.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

REACH OUT TOGETHER Encounter Diversity, Ecumenism, Leadership, Community

Publicity for Crossroads Care Center Benefit Event on March 2 was in the bulletin and website. Some parishioners participated in the Pro-Life March in Washington DC. January was Poverty USA Awareness Month. This project is organized by the US Bishops to provide awareness and challenges through the bulletin board display and daily online emails for those who signed up. St. Michael's Food Pantry in Pontiac and the Neighborhood House Pantry Shelf (located at the Congregational Church in Rochester) provide opportunities for parishioners to connect works of mercy with advocacy efforts through Bread for the World. BFW is a Christian organization in DC that provides education, and legislative action around hunger. Parishioners attended the MOSES Banquet in which the keynote was Alycia Merriweather, assistant superintendent of DPS.

LEARN TOGETHER Catholic Social Teaching, Get the Facts, Discern the Call

The bulletin ran a brief summary of several CST principles. The art work was from Brother Mickey McGrath. The Round Table focused on Pope Francis' World Day of Peace message about refugees and the publication from Catholics Confront Global Poverty provided action steps and prayer opportunities. There is an examination of conscience posted to the website around CST. The Poverty USA calendar was posted to the website. All of which prompts the question: where is God calling you and the parish community? Christian Service will be recruiting during the next several months.

ACT TOGETHER Service and Relief, Advocacy, Preaching, Community Development

The Funeral Lunch Ministry has been upgraded and reorganized thanks to the efforts of Bev Schuler. A new packet of information is available and will be posted on the website. Fair Trade Sales are up, thanks to Diane Greba. The sole mate box for shoes is doing well thanks to Janet LaFleur-Hunker and Luke. St. Vincent de Paul had a great Trivia Night fund raiser. A speaker from Food for the Poor spoke at each of the Masses. Notes for Neighbors comes from the US Bishops every other month with links on many issues. Do continue to follow Pope Francis' campaign: Share the Journey. Kicked off around the world by the global Caritas network, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) are sponsoring the campaign in the United States. Both CRS, working in more than 100 countries around the world, and CCUSA, the Catholic Church's domestic agency, are members of Caritas Internationalis, the Church's worldwide charity organization that is the overall sponsor of the campaign. "This campaign is both spiritual and practical," says Cardinal DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, who is president of the USCCB. "The Pope is asking us to pray and reflect and to use the awareness we build to take action, both personally and publically. To our Church, this campaign is an embodiment of the Biblical command to love our neighbor." See the US Bishops Immigrants for Justice website for a summary of bills in congress.

Refugee Resettlement Mission

The North Oakland Catholic Parishes (Christ the Redeemer, St. Irenaeus, St. John Fisher, St. Joseph, St. Mary of the Hills) have identified two families to co-sponsor with Samaritas. One family from Syria lives in Warren with five young children. The other senior couple from Iraq lives in Madison Heights. St. Mary's is responsible for hospitality, mentoring and social engagement along with 35 parishioners from the other four parishes. Three of the five children had birthdays in January so the entire family had a Chuck E. Cheese experience. Meanwhile other teams are working on ESI, doctor appointments, and excursions to local Middle East markets.

The **Charitable Giving** committee meets every other month. January disbursement is \$6,175.34: SVdP 1000, Cristo Rey HS 300, Loyola HS 300, Knights of Columbus Charities Christian Refugee Relief 1,000, Gianna House 800, COTS 800, SAW 62.63. Outreach received \$1,912.71. From July-December, the Outreach Work Group has disbursed \$4,622.47 to local charitable organizations where parishioners have had the opportunity to experience life on the margins at HOPE Warming Center, Grovecrest Assisted Living, Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries, CCRT-Catholic Community Response Team, and CCSEM-Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan Hispanic Outreach. Meals, Personal Care Items, Gift Cards, Painting CCRT, and Back Packs have been distributed. Through these encounters, parishioners have met the poor Christ in our neighbors seeking housing, struggling with homelessness, seniors at assisted living, and families with young children. We are grateful that partner agencies are helping to address root causes; thus restoring hope to those most in need.

Unleash the Gospel We appreciate the good works of the parish; however, we think everything is not great and wonderful as reflected in the Chapel discussion. Perhaps a return to the deep dive might present an accurate picture.