

Minutes of the St. Thomas Aquinas Human Concerns Committee Meeting - January 21, 2015

Attendance:

Paul Chestnut, Terry McCaffrey, Terry Atkinson, Ruth Chippendale, George Chippendale, Mary Fong, Chris Lundin, Susan Olsen

1. Faith-Sharing/Question of the Week

Susan led us in a prayer of her own design.

2. Approval of November minutes

The minutes were approved with changes.

OLD BUSINESS

3. Social Justice Day - Postponed & reborn

On Saturday, February 28, 2015, our parish will host a day of prayer, study and reflection on the social justice teachings of the Catholic Church and the call to live our lives according to those teachings. Deacon Ruben Solorio, the Diocese of San Jose's Director of Social Ministries, will offer our keynote address, helping us better understand Pope Francis' call to us to share the joy of the Gospel with others and to be a people of justice. Participants will also be able to take two workshops during the day on a variety of topics. A total of 8 workshops in English and 2 workshops in Spanish will be offered. The location is St. Albert the Great Church. The time: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

4. Plans for Have A Heart Sunday, February 14/15

Terry has organized volunteers to stand outside each church after each Mass on the weekend of February 14/15 to collect the underwear and the monetary contributions. A flyer is being prepared. An insert will be placed in the bulletin on the weekend of February 7. Notices in the paper bulletin and the e-bulletin are being prepared. Announcements from the pulpit will be made.

5. Death Penalty News

Plans are being made by California People of Faith Working Against the Death Penalty for another World Day Against the Death Penalty in October.

There was an event at the Cathedral centered on the death penalty and related issues, such as mental illness and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

A new video (The Gertrude Welch Memorial Film) on the death penalty concerns the murder of a state trooper in Virginia. Fundraising activity is going on to provide funds to develop a salesworthy video. Terry is working on a grant application.

6. Heart & Home Collaborative update

The H&H Collaborative is having difficulty getting use permits from the City of Palo Alto. The City requires a \$4000 fee for the permit for each site. No one seems to know the reason for the high cost of the permit. The cost will force them out of business unless a solution is found. The group failed to provide shelters this winter because of funding problems and city constraints.

NEW BUSINESS

7. Proposed: HCC should help with Wednesday evening soup kitchen at St. Francis of Assisi

The Wednesday soup kitchen at St Francis on Bay Road is working very well but help is always needed and appreciated. Usually 80 to 100 meals are distributed by the Ecumenical Hunger Program. Excess goes to the We Hope shelter on Bay Road. Many different community groups have helped prepare food, serve food, prepare take-home plates, converse with guests, and clean up. Could we consider presenting a plan to encourage STA participation?

8. Minimum Wage Campaigns

The cities of Mountain View, Sunnyvale and San Jose have started their own minimum wage plan. Paul George, executive director of the Peninsula Peace and Justice Center, is striving to get churches to support a minimum wage plan before the Palo Alto City Council. A petition to the council for a minimum wage is making the rounds.

9. What's On Your Mind?

George: Jean Smith and Sister Paul are trying to revitalize St. Francis parish with respect to St. Vincent de Paul.

10. Volunteer for Faith-sharing/Question of the Week

Susan was nominated by acclamation.