

Minutes of the St. Thomas Aquinas Human Concerns Committee Meeting - April 20, 2015

Attendance:

Anne Fillin, George Chippendale, Ruth Chippendale, Mary Fong, Paul Chestnut, Terry Atkinson

1. Faith-Sharing/Question of the Week

2. Approval of March minutes

The minutes were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

3. Death Penalty News

We participated in an effort to place an initiative on the November ballot to replace California's death penalty system. This initiative, called the Justice That Works Act of 2016, will re-sentence the nearly 750 people currently on death row in our state to life in prison without the possibility of parole. It is estimated that this approach will save the state \$60M. 350,000 signatures are necessary to get this initiative on the ballot. Volunteers were at all of the Masses for the past two weeks to gather signatures. The following are approximate figures for the number of signatures gathered:

St. Thomas Aquinas: 77; Our Lady of the Rosary: 60; St. Albert the Great: 25. Total: 162.

4. SESS Books for Summer Reading

Our group will collect books on the May 1 weekend for the second graders at Elizabeth Seton School to provide reading material for these new readers for their summer vacations.

5. Interfaith Potluck With Muslim Community

The Thomas Merton Center (TMC) has arranged a family potluck luncheon on Saturday, April 23 in the OLR Hall with members of the Palo Alto Muslim community. Official guests will be the a Muslim community Imam, Bishop Patrick J. McGrath, and Father Matt Stanley. The Muslim community will be providing two or three large trays of typical hot Muslim dishes. The objective is to show solidarity between our two communities.

NEW BUSINESS

6. A Spirituality Tuesday Plan

George is formulating a plan to have a Spirituality Tuesday event on the subject of homelessness. He contacted Veronica Duluk, who is planning a presentation on "Ending Homelessness in Santa Clara County." Others who are involved are Anne Fillin, and Mike Veuve. George will contact Bev Wade to define a date.

7. Voter Registration

The Green Committee, with help from the Human Concerns Committee, is planning voter registration sessions after Masses at all churches in future weeks. The events will start on April 24 at OLR after both Masses. On the weekend of April 30/May 1 we plan to be at St. Albert the Great, and on May 15 we will be at St. Thomas Aquinas.

Because we had never done this before, we requested the League of Women Voters to provide training so that we get it right. They graciously agreed to provide training and to get us started at the sites.

8. Palo Alto Peace Walk

Multifaith Voices for Peace and Justice is planning a Peace Walk in September. The walk will take us from the Muslim temple in south Palo Alto to the Jewish Community Center on San Antonio Road, to the Unitarian Church on East Charleston, to the AME Zion Methodist church on Middlefield and concluding at Our Lady of the Rosary. After the walk we will gather at Mitchell Park for the annual 9/11 Peace Picnic hosted by American Muslim Voice.

9. What's On Your Mind?

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

Next meeting - May 18, 2016