

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

### Attendance:

George Chippendale, Ruth Chippendale, Mary Fong, Paul Chestnut

### 1. Faith-Sharing/Question of the Week

George offered inspirational stories: Four boys went to San Salvador with the intention of doing good. They gave the story of their experiences with the people there. This is a good example of spiritual solidarity. It brings out happiness in people, which is what faith is all about.

Another meeting took place at the Garden Court Hotel. An eleven year old boy collected gift certificates for poor people. A girl, fourteen years old made a kennel for homeless people. This is what Jesus wants; this is happiness.

### 2. Approval of September minutes

The minutes were approved.

### OLD BUSINESS

### 3. Social Justice Day - February 28

Susan had sent a message about the plan for a Social Justice Day in February:

“I would like to consider the Social Justice Day currently planned for February 28. One of the things we are working on as a parish is the New Evangelization. As part of it, we are commissioned to draft a plan for evangelization in each of three areas: Word, Worship, and Witness. I am in charge of Word and Witness.

“The goal for Witness is to get everyone (or most people) in the parish understanding and engaged in the social teachings of the Church. We have a few very active people, but there is a need to broaden those horizons. I see the Social Justice Day as something that could help to accomplish that goal if we can get a broad participation from our community. It would be a Deanery event (as long as we have the Dean here) and open to everyone in the diocese. But I'd like to see greater participation from our local folks. Are we open to supporting and helping with this day? I presume others who have worked on it in the past from other parishes will still be on board with us. As a suggestion, I have been in contact with Tony Magliano (who writes a column for the Valley Catholic). He is interested in coming to be a keynote speaker. Sharing this information with everyone so you can reflect on it at the meeting in my absence.”

The group affirmed that we are ready to help. We discussed possible locations for the event. We should be able to attract more people if the event is more centrally located than SESS. George affirmed that we would be able to present a story re what St. Vincent dePaul does. Other suggested names: Pat Keicher for food closet. Paul Baines, who started WeHope in East Palo Alto. Maria Marroquin re Day Worker Center or immigration (problems with getting work, rent control, just cause for eviction).

### 4. Current needs at Opportunity Center

At the July meeting, we agreed that some of the \$426 left over in the Have A Heart fund for the Opportunity Center be spent for continuing needs at the Opportunity Center for socks and

underwear. Terry Atkinson spent \$431 for warm socks and underwear, delivered to Environmental Hunger Program for those most in need, and Chuck Tully wrote her a check for total remaining balance in the account for \$426. No money remains in that account. Terry also collected clothing for boys from her neighbors and from parishioners. These were delivered to EHP, since they had a great need for them. Currently there is a great need for clothing and shoes for girls and boys twelve and under. Perhaps the youth of our parish would participate, as their families are likely to have used items that could be passed along.

#### 5. Death Penalty news

Although Terry McCaffrey was not present, Paul collected information from the Death Penalty Focus web site:

A Message from Mike Farrell: Mike Farrell has taken a leave of absence as President of DPF in order to investigate the possibility of an initiative campaign to end the use of state killing in California next year.

Busy term for the death penalty at the United States Supreme Court: A total of six cases will be considered by the justices over the next two months. They primarily involve procedural questions and none appear to have the ability to abolish capital punishment entirely, a subject the justices were divided on last term.

Pope Francis's call: It was the first time a reigning Pope has ever addressed the U.S. Congress. And in that historic speech on September 24, Pope Francis's call was clear: Abolish the death penalty.

13th Annual World Day Against the Death Penalty: Every year on October 10, people around the world rally to the cause of ending capital punishment. This year, the theme of World Day was "The Death Penalty Does Not Stop Drug Crimes."

Lethal Injection News Across the Nation: Montana, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Virginia have all had problems with lethal injection drugs.

#### NEW BUSINESS

#### 6. Pope's Encyclical "On Care for our Common Home"

Paul reminded everyone that the Spirituality Tuesday event next week is about the Encyclical.

#### 7. What's On Your Mind?

George said that the issue of rents is critical today. Rents are increasing and it appears that rent control is necessary to allow people to live in our community. Many people are living in cars. Rent control works well in East Palo Alto.

#### 8. Volunteer for Faith-sharing/Question of the Week

Mary Volunteered.

Next meeting - November 18, 2015