

Minutes of the St. Thomas Aquinas Human Concerns Committee Meeting - June 18, 2014

Attendance:

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

1. Faith-Sharing/Question of the Week

Mary read a prayer from "Walking the Sacred Path" by Dan Schutte.

2. Approval of May minutes

The May minutes were not available.

OLD BUSINESS

3. Torture Awareness Month plans

June is Torture Awareness Month. Paul brought a DVD created by NRCAT (National Religious Campaign Against Torture) entitled "No Doubt It Was Torture." It is an 11-minute film that describes the key findings from The Task Force on Detainee Treatment and offers responses from several religious traditions to the problem of U.S.-sponsored torture. "In many respects, this Task Force report is the examination of the treatment of suspected terrorists that official Washington has been reluctant to conduct."

"The Task Force on Detainee Treatment is an independent, bipartisan, blue-ribbon panel charged with examining the federal government's policies and actions related to the capture, detention and treatment of suspected terrorists during the Clinton, Bush and Obama administrations. The project was undertaken with the belief that it was important to provide an account as authoritative and accurate as possible of how the United States treated, and continues to treat, people held in our custody as the nation mobilized to deal with a global terrorist threat." (NRCAT web site)

After a two-year investigation, the Task Force concluded that there is no doubt that the United States engaged in torture of detainees taken into custody after 9/11, that the torture was authorized at the highest levels of government, and that the use of torture was clearly illegal.

We discussed the possibility of an event at which this film would be shown and used as a vehicle for discussion. The difficulties of such a plan were clear; it was suggested that, as an alternative, a forum on the theme of the dignity of the human person could be developed with a goal of creating a presentation for the Spirituality Tuesday series. This forum would include other issues, such as the death penalty, human trafficking, immigration policy, homelessness, etc.

4. Campaign Nonviolence

We did not discuss this topic.

5. Death Penalty update

Terry provided updates: The District Attorney of Santa Clara County, Jeff Rosen, will ask the death penalty for the man suspected of kidnapping and murdering Sierra LaMar. The Amnesty International group at the Channing House is working on sending letters to the DA.

NEW BUSINESS

7. Assisting the homeless next winter

We did not discuss this topic.

8. 2014-2015 budget

Terry, Susan, and Paul had met with Chuck Tully the previous week to discuss the HCC budget. Chuck indicated which of the budget items from the 2013-2014 fiscal year have been paid, and which ones he intends to pay, as shown in the table below. The budget we presented for the next fiscal year is also shown there. The request for \$1000 for the Heart & Home Collaborative was turned down.

9. What's On Your Mind?

George is looking for volunteers to drive some children from East Palo Alto to the Hidden Villa Camp during July and August. Paul volunteered.

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

Next meeting - July 16, 2014

Budgets for this fiscal year and last fiscal year:

	FISCAL YEAR	FISCAL YEAR	FISCAL YEAR
	BUDGETED	SPENT	BUDGETED
HCC #572160	2013-2014	2013-2014	2014-2015
Peninsula Peace & Justice	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00
South Bay Sanctuary Covenant	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$250.00
Bread for the World	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
PIA	\$1,500.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,500.00
PIA Hero's Lunch	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00
Day Workers Center	\$1,000.00	\$1000*	\$1,000.00
Misc. (conference fees, graphics, literature, etc.)	\$200.00	?	\$200.00
California People of Faith	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
Heart & Home Collaborative		\$0.00	
TOTAL	\$4,100.00	\$3,100.00	\$4,100.00
		* payment pending	