

Minutes of the St. Thomas Aquinas Human Concerns Committee Meeting -- March 20, 2012

Attendance:

Paul Chestnut, Laura Chiu, George Chippendale, Pru Delameter, Liz Lilly

1. Faith-Sharing/Question of the Week

OLD BUSINESS

2. Approval of February minutes

3. Our Congolese Refugees

On Sunday March 4, Laura, Rosie and Paul met with Emmanuel, Wilson, and the landlady, Nhu-Hanh Tonnu, to discuss the renewal of the lease for 380 Sherman Oaks Drive. The lease was up on March 1, so the tenants were delinquent in not making their ideas known by now. Emmanuel said that they would like to renew the lease for six months. Nhu-Hanh said that there are two different issues here: the rent for the next period and the length of the period. She made it clear that she prefers a 12 month lease. Laura articulated a specific plan: the question is simply the length of the lease. They should talk amongst themselves and decide whether they are willing to accept a 12 month lease. If the answer is no, then they should be prepared to leave the house within a short time, say 30 or 60 days, whatever the landlady agrees with. She has the right to say 30 days. They must come up with an answer quickly. They agreed to Wednesday at 6 p.m. Subsequently, we learned that one of the families, Pascal and Illumineta, who have four children, do not like the current arrangement and want to move out. After much discussion, they agreed to stay for another six months, and Nhu-Hanh agreed to a six month lease with no increase in rent.

4. Death Penalty issues: California initiative results

The SAFE campaign is complete. Over 800,000 signatures were delivered. That assures that the SAFE Initiative will be on the November ballot. Our parish delivered 240 signatures. The Parental Notification Initiative is still active. Our parish delivered 160 signatures for the PNI Initiative.

Fr. Matt has suggested there should be a forum about both initiatives.

5. June Is Torture Awareness Month

Banners citing "Torture Is Wrong" will be put up during the month of June.

NEW BUSINESS

6. Human Trafficking

The problem of human trafficking is one which the HCC hopes to take on. Liz Lilly said that one of the committees of the Social Ministry office is Global Solidarity, and Janet Ferree is the champion of the Stop Human Trafficking campaign. Liz will provide a contact for Janet. Janet.htag.dsj@gmail.com

7. People in our midst who need help

Judy Decker is a new member who expressed an opinion about people in our midst who need help but who do not ask for help. Since she was not present, we decided to postpone this discussion.

6. What's On Your Mind?

Liz Lilly, who is active in social justice issues in St. Williams Parish, was invited to our meeting primarily to discuss the annual Catholic Charities appeal. The appeal takes place every May. Their objective is to have speakers at each Mass in the San Jose Diocese to present a three-minute speech. We do not know at this time

whether Fr. Matt is willing to do this; we anticipate that he wants to do it, and we expect that the HCC will be responsible to find the speakers. Liz will put us in touch with Linda Pippin who is running the event.

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

Next meeting - April 17, 2012