

GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH  
Social Concerns Committee  
September 25, 2018

Present: Susan Andrews, Marie Sypolt, Barbara Huntsman, Anne Fazio, Prosper Boudart, Kevin Wein, Barbara Snead, Marilyn and Bill Pare.

The meeting was opened with a prayer. The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

GLOBAL HEALTH MINISTRIES:

Barbara discussed her latest trip to Peru, including notes from another volunteer that stressed the critical importance of this ministry. They spent two weeks serving the medical needs of people who live in remote mountain villages, where health care is nonexistent, or too expensive for villagers to access. In Peru, health care must be paid for "upfront," if you don't have money, you receive no care. The volunteers in her group served over 1500 patients during their two week stay.

She said that although the Sisters of Mercy do their best, their resources are limited, and many people die for lack of basic health care. She thanked the parish for its great support of the vitamin drive last spring, and noted the need for financial contributions also. The sisters have had to change the name of the organization to "Global Health Volunteers," since there is another "Global Health Ministries" run by the Lutheran Church. The committee agreed to ask for vitamins and cash donations next spring.

PRAYER LINE:

Marie says that she still get calls from parishioners for prayers when people are ill, but that she needs more volunteers to sign up, as her lists have fewer participants than in the past, and as she put it, "Everyone can pray."

RESPECT LIFE:

Susan reported that the upcoming plans for Respect Life include baby bottles for birthright, 40 days for Life, and to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Humanae Vitae, on October 19, they are planning a Lasagna Dinner with speaker, Bud McFarlane, Sr. who will talk about upholding the Church's constant teaching on openness to life and its consequences.

CHRISTMAS IN APRIL:

Prosper passed out a new "Mission Statement" by Christmas in April. It states that its mission is to rehabilitate homes of lower income occupants such as the elderly, or disabled, primarily addressing issues of safety, comfort (heat, ventilation), or ability for independence (ramps.)

This service is open to all Cecil County residents, and that Christmas in April is taking applications now for next April's projects. The only requirement is that the applicant owns the property.

He said that one of their problems right now is that some trailer parks are requiring a special kind of lumber that will cost three times as much as the lumber they currently use. Marie suggested that perhaps part of that cost (approximately \$3600 vs \$1200) might be paid by the recipient of the project.

ST. VINCENT DEPAUL:

Marilyn said that approximately 30-32 families are receiving financial aid each month, about 55-60 families are receiving food from the pantry, including fresh vegetables from the Flying Plow. We continue to serve about 100 homeless meals twice a month in Elkton. The program for "Food Challenged Children" at Rising Sun Elementary School resumed last week with 17 children participating. We also continue to deliver 12-14 large sheet cakes each month to the V.A. for Veterans birthdays.

The funds are very low at St. Vincent DePaul right now, and they are hoping that donations will pick up this fall.

#### LAZARUS, BEREAVEMENT, PRAYER SHAWL:

Ann said that Lazarus has only served 4 luncheons this year, and Bereavement is holding steady at 3-5 people per meeting. But the prayer Shawl Ministry is taking off. They received a wonderful response for their work from Upper Chesapeake Hospital and the V.A. They also delivered 18 octopuses to A.I. DuPont for the children. Although there are only 6-8 members, they get a lot of work done. They also appreciate donations of yarn and supplies by parishioners.

#### SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY (SAM)

Barbara Snead talked about the Day of Recollection that the seniors held. They used a CD of Dr. Edward Sri, which focused on the Rosary. "Praying the rosary like you've never prayed before," was the theme and it was well received. The seniors held an indoor picnic at Chuck Breslin's house, and plan a beer and brats Fall meeting in October. About 15 people attend SAM events, and Barbara is looking for a project or special purpose for the group to undertake.

#### PARISH COUNCIL:

Kevin said that at last week's parish council meeting, they discussed the abuse problem in PA and how it affects parishioners. They also discussed the strategic plan, and decided that the most important objective should be to get more parishioners involved in the parish. He said, "Before I joined this group, I had no idea that any of this stuff was going on." Bill agreed that although there is a lot going on, communication is poor. Marie said that we used to get copies of the parish council minutes in each church. Ann said that they were available on the parish website, and then found, with some difficulty, three sets of minutes from last January, February and March. The group agreed that we're not very good at getting the word out.

Kevin plans to speak at all of the Masses one Sunday this month and mention each of the groups represented on the Social Concerns Committee, and ask for volunteers. "My goal," he said, "is to get three volunteers for every group." He also plans to set up a "Volunteer Booth" at the Fall Fest.

The group thought that Kevin's plan was excellent, and offered to help. Kevin asked that each group submit one paragraph to him on their activity by October 15, 2018.

The meeting ended with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted by

Marilyn Pare