

St. Perpetua Social Justice Committee Meeting
September 26, 2019

Members Present: Mary Terjeson (Chair), Marielle Narkiewicz (Secretary), Sister Peggy, Christoph Nauer, Joan Liston, Ann Porcella, Pat Snyder, Sue Hickman

Welcome and Opening Prayer: Christoph welcomed everyone and began with an opening brief prayer.

Approve Minutes from last Month and Review Action Items:

- All minutes approved.
- Gun violence update: Thanks to Buzz and Pat for writing the letters and to all for working for getting signatures. We received 236 signatures. One parish member (Evan Brewer) offered his expertise in drafting any other letters in the future, since he works in the weaponry area. We will not include the NRA in this letters' distribution, as this was just to focus on elected officials; however, we may send something separately to the NRA.
- Logo: Create something similar to the logo used for the Outreach Committee (the hand-holding figures).
- MFAC November meeting: Will be discussed under Housing.

Housing discussion – Mary / Joan

MFAC was getting a calendar together for the Homeless Month (November), but it hasn't been released yet. Mary put together a 6-page document with highlights from the 2018 Continuum of Care Annual Report provided by the county, which included the data collected during the Point in Time survey done in January 2019. Notably, there was a 43% increase in the 2 year Point in Time count from 2017 to 2019 in Contra Costa County; the one year count from 2018 to 2019 showed only a 3% increase. An unusually low 2017 count was due to closed outreach and service centers due to organizational changes in the CoC (Continuum of Care). These centers were restored prior to the 2018 count. Also 46% of CORE respondents were actually born in Contra Costa County, indicating that almost half of the homeless population is not transplants from elsewhere in the country. We have increased our HUD funding by \$3.5MM in the last two years. Additional information is attached to these minutes.

Pat has the DVD on homelessness and will make copies available and we can show to various groups throughout the parish, when the need arises. In the future, we could dedicate a weekend where we speak from the pulpit on homelessness, possibly collecting signatures for something to aid in homelessness. We discussed speaking from the pulpit with dates of November 9/10 to provide information related to the Homeless month in Contra Costa County. We could have information and handouts at a table after mass and be available to answer questions. In our message from the pulpit, we could also ask questions, e.g., Do you know how many homeless are living in Contra Costa County each night, etc. When we address the parish, we should ensure that the message is relevant to the audience (discussing facts related to Lafayette, Walnut Creek areas). One idea is pairing a homeless person with a house-rich, cash-poor individual that wants to give back, wherein both parties would be screened for the opportunity. We can also leverage what EBHO is putting together pamphlets and factoids about homelessness. We will finalize this at the next meeting. After the Social Justice committee has this introductory address from the pulpit along with handouts after mass, we can hold a

follow-up address a few months later and can also ask one of our agencies that work in housing (CCIH, Shelter Inc., Trinity Center) for the homeless to come and speak from the pulpit sometime in the future..

Other issue update – Mary / Pat

- Immigration: Buzz is not here, so this will be addressed at the next meeting.
- Health: This is a big topic for the national election and people need to pay close attention during their voting. Prior to the primary election, Pat will address this for another meeting. We could do a date sometime in February for voter education and voter registration.

MFAC opportunities – Mary / Pat

Mary, Pat and Sue attended the 5-year overview of the MFAC activities. Mary has a handout of the different MFAC task forces (each group had a list of bills this past legislation):

- Shelter & Housing
- Jobs
- Health Care
- Education
- Food Security
- Racial Justice

A way to make an impact is leveraging these task forces and the bills associated with each of them, and then we could have a stronger handle on how we can help and educate ourselves on available advocacy.

Parish communications project – Mary / Christoph

Christoph still has myths, facts and information to include for the communication column. We should also include the mission statement in the column 3 or 4 months down the road. Mary asked should we include the Social Justice Committee documents and minutes in the St Perpetua online site? The committee agrees.

Opportunities to participate – Mary / All

- Today, September 26th was the last date for the Walnut Creek immigration sign holding. Maybe revisited in spring when it is not dark during the commute hours.

Next Meeting

- We will finalize the opportunities and materials available to give back for November's homeless awareness month.
- Discuss what to do with the signs from the immigration demonstration in Walnut Creek.
- More on parish communication, if Christoph needs more information for the committee column.
- The Chairperson for October will be Mary Terjeson.

Action Items

- Contact Evan Brewer to help write a gun violence letter to the NRA, no due date.
- Organize an address from the pulpit on homelessness for November 9th and 10th masses.
- In January review our three initiatives (housing, healthcare and immigration) and decide if we are still committed to them.

- Christoph to post our mission statement and meeting minutes for the Social Justice Committee on St Perpetua's website.

Next Meeting – October 17, 2019 at 7pm in the Parish Office, Chairperson will be Mary Terjeson