

St. Perpetua Social Justice Committee Meeting November 21, 2019

Members Present: Joan Liston, DeeDee Hanson, Mary Terjeson (Rotating Chair), Laura Monin, Buzz Sherwood, Pat Snyder, Ann Porcella, Marlene Matsuoka, Christoph Nauer, Marj Ho

Mary opened with a prayer.

Action Items Prior Meeting

Accompaniment training was put on hold. Buzz is checking on it.

We want to do voter registration only once and so we will skip the primary election and get trained in time for the general election in November. The deadline for that registration is October 19. The training is provided by the League of Women Voters and takes about an hour. We will need to schedule a time for it, as we can't fit it into a regular meeting. In August we will schedule the training; in September we will make a schedule to set up a table and to cover all the masses. We will also want a bulletin announcement and a pulpit announcement.

Several items, many related to volunteer activities, were brought up that are more suited to the Outreach Committee. We need to work on separating the domains of Outreach and Social Justice, and maybe do some education for the parish on the difference between the two.

Housing / Homeless

Ann Porcella will look into getting more 211 information cards; the ones at the back of the church are all gone. These cards offer entry to many service agencies.

The Homeless Sunday event was well received, but most people seemed more interested in volunteer opportunities and some wanted to donate money. Also, we might have offered too much printed information. Next year we should spend some time discussing how to do this. Some suggestions from this year:

-Maybe we should collect money for one chosen agency.

-It would have been good to have a video or a speaker, such as East Bay Housing Organization (EBHO), to put a human face on homelessness. Many people seem to have a poor understanding of the homelessness issue, especially the lack of housing units for the mentally ill and those with substance abuse issues. Some people do not want to engage with the issue.

-We need to let people know that the agencies actually are successful in placing people in housing.

-Maybe we could create a petition to sign, similar to the gun control one.

-We should probably do something more often than once a year.

-There will be relevant bills in the legislature; maybe we can create something in relation to them. MFAC could be the resource for these bills.

Health Care

The current news about health care is all in the various programs floated by the presidential candidates.

Immigration

Buzz called someone working at the border who informed him that the crisis at the border is as bad or worse than before, even though it is no longer in the news. Some children are still being separated from their parents, especially those who turn 18 while in detention.

The difference between being classified as an asylum seeker or a refugee depends on what you say at the border.

National Migration Week is the first week in January. There is a link in the agenda to an online toolkit -<https://justiceforimmigrants.org/take-action/national-migration-week/> . We should all take a look at this for the next meeting to get ideas on what we would like to present to the parishioners.

The timing makes it hard to get the preaching done in time, especially since January 5th is Epiphany. Decision was made to target the first part of February to present to the parish. 3 specific issues were identified as possibilities:

- 1) Support Dream Act of 2019 – S 874: more information can be found at the website noted above under “Action Alerts”.
- 2) Support the Bay Area Immigration Bond Fund. It supplies bond money for refugees and allows them to be out of detention until their hearings. This makes it easier for them to prepare. The money is returned to the fund when the person shows up for his/her hearing.
- 3) There is a need for attorneys and medically trained volunteers at the border to work for a few weeks at a time to provide services.

We could have a table to provide information on any or all of these issues. These would need to be introduced from the pulpit. They could be tied into the Gospel story of the flight into Egypt.

We could put statements in the bulletin, as we did for homelessness, starting in National Migration Week in January. These could lead up to an event the weekend of February 1-2. We will make final plans at the December meeting. Buzz to take the lead on forming the presentation on immigration to the parish.

Opportunity to participate

There is a proposal to amend Prop.13. It would change the way that commercial properties are taxed, which would change the amount of money given to the schools. The League of Women Voters is working intensively on this. They are now collecting signatures on the request to put the proposition on the ballot. We will plan in January on a weekend to collect signatures. 623,000 signatures must be collected by April.