

“When I was hungry, you gave me to eat, . . .”

Matthew 25

Vision for Social Ministry of the Catholic Community of the East End for our new parish

Welcoming neighbors in need and assisting those who come to our door are at the heart of the Gospel call to love and service. The Catholic Community of East End straddles some of the most impoverished neighborhoods of Pittsburgh. Nearby residents experience a host of social challenges from poverty, lack of healthcare, inadequate employment opportunities, poor housing, racism, violence, drugs, gangs, hopelessness, and a host of others. We cannot solve the depths of the problems that they bring. But we do what we can to respond with mercy, to offer hope, whatever tangible assistance seems appropriate, and leads to other resources.

As Catholic Christians, we recognize our call to assist neighbors in carrying these heavy crosses. Building on past parish efforts through the St. Vincent de Paul Society, food banks, health ministry, Mary’s Child, and other social services, we respond in works of mercy as best we can to address these needs. Guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, we also confront the root causes of these problems through peace and justice efforts. We cooperate with individuals and organizations beyond our Parish like the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, St. Vincent de Paul Society, PA Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN) and the Thomas Merton Center to support and enhance their efforts and augment our own.

As a ministry within the parish, we try to widen and deepen the commitment of parishioners in our efforts – to give generously of their time, talent and treasure. We strive to respond appropriately to each person as Christ at our door, with hospitality and deep respect. Following the tenets of Catholic Social Teaching, we also invite parishioners into practical ways to address the underlying causes that undermine our neighborhoods and our world.

A **Parish Social Ministry Coordinator** is charged with supporting these efforts, facilitating the integration of each parish effort into our new parish, and encouraging parish involvement in them. The Coordinator’s duties include networking with each campus, recruiting and training parishioners, developing resources, meeting and assessing need of those who come for assistance, and providing leadership as new opportunities present themselves. The Coordinator is also the liaison to the broader community, developing mutually beneficial ways of collaborating.

We envision the Coordinator working in collaboration with the parish staff, with a 3-parish Social Ministry Committee, and with volunteer program leaders to carry out the work.

The goal of our Social Ministry is to model discipleship to Jesus and the principles of Catholic Teaching: within the parish, in our charitable outreach to neighbors in need, and as a voice for Justice and Peace – advocating and acting on behalf of and with the poor, marginalized and oppressed locally and around the world.

Existing Programs by Parish

Vision: We hope that the new parish will build on existing programs, find ways to learn from each other and cooperate, and empower parishioners to join existing efforts across the new parish. We will grow as a parish that cultivates wholehearted response and taps talent to minister to and

advocate for Christ in need: the hungry, the stranger, the elderly, those who are poor economically, socially, spiritually.

Parish programs

Those in common are in bold.

St. Charles Lwanga:

Structure: Pastoral Council – ministries report to and flow from.

- 1) St. Vincent de Paul
 - A. Food Pantry**
 - Holy Rosary serving Homewood-Brushton – 1st and 3rd Wednesdays
 - They deliver food to the Sen. Citizens Housing Units – **Senior Food Boxes**
 - B.** Provide in kind and sometimes financial assistance including burials, energy assistance, etc.
 - C.** Twin with some other parishes and are supported by collections
- 2) Relationship and Support of Community Empowerment Association which includes a youth ministries
- 3) Relationship and Support of Homewood-Brushton Council of Churches serving those in poverty and advocacy.
- 4) Use of Parish Facilities for Hospitality
- 5) Ladies Auxiliary of Knights of St. Peter Claver – supports the school and other ministries
- 6) Member of Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN)**
- 7) Angel Tree at Christmas Time**
- 8) Immigrant Assistance – sponsored Somalia families

St. James:

Structure: Pastoral Council, Social Justice and Community Action Committee

- 1) **Food and Paper Bank for Wilkinsburg Residents** – Third Saturday
- 2) Mary's Child -Third Saturday
 - serves mothers and children up to age 5
 - diapers, wipes, formula (when available), books, toys, clothing, referrals, health ministry
 - (gets help from the St. Peter Claver Women's Auxiliary)**
- 3) Health Ministry:
 - Parishioners: last weekend after Masses – blood pressure, flu shots
 - Those served at food bank – third Saturday – same services, counseling on meds and nutrition
- 4) **Magi Tree** – children up to age 12, shut-ins, utilities assistance, pantry families, children from Kelly and Turner Schools

5) Member of PIIN

- 6) Monthly Letter Writing and other activities of Social Justice and Peace Committee
- 7) Monthly Volunteer Team to Gr. Pittsburgh Community Food Bank in Duquesne – 2nd Sat.
- 8) Member of Wilkinsburg Block Watch
- 9) Covenant Member of Bread for the World
- 10) Financial Support for Orphanage and Health Clinic in Fondwa, Haiti through Partners in Progress (monthly envelope and proceeds from Fair Trade Fair)
- 11) Part Time Operation of the St. James Ministry Center
- 12) Senior Food Boxes – Last Friday of the month
- 13) Community Garden – Stone Soup, 1227-1229 Franklin Avenue
- 14) Member of Sanctuary Project – supporting youth in Wilkinsburg
- 15) Weekly Vigil – 7 – 8 PM on Tuesdays; available for families of victims of violence
- 16) International Fair Trade Christmas Sale (benefits Catholic Relief Services and Partners in Progress serving in Haiti)

St. Bede

Structure: Pastoral Council, Committees, Opportunities to Serve

- 1) **St. Vincent de Paul** – home visits, corporal works of mercy; partnering with St. Charles Lwanga and St. James Social Ministries
- 2) **Christmas Angel Tree** – holiday gifts to those in need through area organizations
- 3) Martha's Ministry – assisting people during time of illness or crisis
- 4) Miryam's House – prepares and serves a monthly evening meal for homeless women
- 5) Produce to People – 1st Sat. of the Month; Braddock or Homewood
- 6) Good Deeds Task Force – parishioners volunteer for time-limited projects in parish and other community volunteer programs: Sisters' Place for one.

Updated: May 23, 2019