

**St. Augustine's Parish
Social Action Ministry Minutes
Wednesday, November 18, 2020**

Social Action Ministry Mission Statement: *The Social Action Ministry of St. Augustine's Parish Community seeks to carry out the mission of Jesus Christ to promote the wellbeing of all people through social justice, love and peace. We strive to embrace the dignity of all through active discipleship focusing on values taught and implemented by Jesus for the common good.*

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul DeFelice, Luanne DeFelice, Kathy Kelley, Marilyn Powell, Mike Conway, Ray Tonazzi, Cathy Golden, Dave Babcock, Kathy Fisselbrand, Kirstin Guanciale

WELCOME: SAM Zoom Meeting started at 7:00 with Paul welcoming everyone present and reciting the opening prayer.

REFLECTION:

- Dave Babcock shared that God is love and that love comes from God. We need to love and to pray that we dismiss from our lives animosity and fear. Love transforms our lives for good.

PARISH ANTIRACISM DISCUSSION:

- To be an antiracist means to speak up when we see racist tendencies in our society much like the leadership at Vera House is speaking up. Some of our society's structures continue to favor some groups of people over others. A possible theme for Lent is also being discussed. The next antiracism discussion will be on December 1, 2020 at 7:00 PM and all are invited. Dave will send out Zoom meeting directions for the meeting as it gets closer to meeting date.

ACTS:

- Work at ACTS is continuing to promote structural changes where needed and to root out racist tendencies within its own functioning. The Criminal Justice Task Force is now led by a formerly incarcerated African American. The Equity in Education Task Force is continuing its work as well. Sandy Baker is doing really good work as an advisor to the ACTS Youth Council that is promoting improving career counseling and job shadowing opportunities in the Syracuse City School District comparable to what is offered in suburban Syracuse school districts.

POSSIBLE THEME FOR LENT

- Ways to demonstrate the transforming power of God's love are being considered. One possible option is through an initiative called, "Braver Angels".

PERSONAL ENCOUNTER:

- Kirstin spoke about how she was on way home from work and encountered a man and his pregnant significant other
- The two were hungry, without a place to live and needed help
- 911 was called – unable to help
- Called 211 – was able to get the couple help within a few hours
 - 211 helps with resources for utilities, housing, family, food, mental health, substance abuse, health, transportation, finances, legal, military as well as other problem areas

SWEATSHIRT COLLECTION:

- Continues through the month of November
- Sweatshirts and cold weather clothing for men will be delivered to the Catholic Charity Men's Shelter
- Sweatshirts and cold weather clothing for women and children will be delivered to Vincent House
- Barb Pedrotti will look through supply to see if there is any clothing that can be donated

SAMARITAN CENTER FOOD COLLECTION AND MONTHLY DESSERTS:

- The Center is still looking for the following: INDIVIDUAL servings of juice, water, milk, butter packets, cookies, snacks, fruit cups, breakfast bars, as well as hand sanitizers and tissues. They also need, napkins, toilet paper, zip lock sandwich bags, plastic forks, and spoons
- Please remember to check dates on all food items – making sure that the items are not about to expire
- There have been 5 deliveries to the Samaritan Center since the collection started in April
- A cart is in the vestibule for **desserts** for the **Samaritan Center**
- Bring your **store bought individually wrapped desserts** to church during the hours that it is opened.

- The Samaritan Center needs financial support, good thoughts, and prayers.

THANKSGIVING FOOD COLLECTION/TURKEY TROT:

- Michelle Ekross and her students will make Thanksgiving Cards for the 30 families receiving food
- 30 families will be receiving Thanksgiving Food – (including 2 military families and 2 families from the VFW)
- Received food from Elizabeth Ann Seton from their Turkey Trot Food Drive – 2 carloads full of food

GIVING TREE:

- Luanne DeFelice, Coordinator of Giving Tree plus Kathy Kelley-Christmas Bureau, Kirstin Guanciale and Sandy Baker-St. Vincent DePaul Families – Sr. Joanna from St. Vincent gets the needed gift list together
- Will be virtual as well as tags will be available in the Gathering Room
 - Click on gift(s) you want to purchase – fill out necessary information
 - Print or handwrite Giving Tree Tag (include all letters and numbers)
 - Have all gift(s) returned to church by Sunday, December 13 unwrapped and with tag (having tag lets volunteers know exactly where gift is supposed to go)
 - Gifts are for parish families in need, children at St. Vincent DePaul and the Christmas Bureau
 - Tags in Gathering Room are for clothing, toys, gift cards
 - If picking up tags from Gathering Room – please remember to socially distance from each other
 - You can also give money – if the virtual and/or gathering room tags is not what you want to do
 - Send checks to St. Augustine's with note for giving tree gifts
 - Volunteers are needed to monitor Gathering Room before and after mass starting weekend of November 21 and 22 continuing if necessary, to December 12 and 13
 - Duties: making sure everyone is social distancing, answering questions and helping people find tags that they want
 - Volunteers are needed to shop for gifts that are not selected or are not returned on time
 - Volunteers would be needed after December 10
 - Gift Wrappers are also needed: Monday, December 7 and Tuesday, December 15 – both days 1 to 4 pm
 - Contact Luanne at lupd@aol.com or 315-857-3023 if you want to help

BREAKFAST AT THE MEN'S SHELTER:

- The breakfast is scheduled for Sunday, December 13, 2020
- At this time, we are unable to prepare and serve at the shelter
- Pizza from Tops will be ordered and delivered

RAMEN NOODLE COLLECTION:

- 800 individual packages of the noodles are needed for the Justice Center Gift Bags for people spending Christmas in the Justice Center
- Donna Tivnan is coordinating – she counted 150 as of meeting time
- Collection continues until Sunday, December 13

JAIL MINISTRY:

- Started program for volunteers to write letters to people in the Justice
- Can write couple times a month
- Kirstin, who is a Jail Ministry volunteer, has written and received letters
- Incredibly positive response from this new program – hopes it continues – thinks more people would volunteer to be a letter writer to bring a little happiness and peace to someone's life
- Writer of letters should expect nothing back, but the correct words could affect someone's day

BACKPACK PROGRAM:

- Plan this year is to provide take home meals on the last day of a student's in-person school day.
- As many last days do not occur on Friday, we lack a method of delivering our weekend bags.
- School Social Workers have expressed their gratitude and agree with the use of "bins and bags". Two schools working last year with the bins expressed their ability to provide supplements to students in need both during the day and to bag items to help with their afterschool needs.
- Food Items Needed
 - Breakfast Bars
 - Granola Bars

- Peanut Butter/Cheese Filled Crackers
- Raisin
- Fruit Cup
- Apple Sauce
- Single Serve Microwavable Meals
- Please be sure that expiration dates are not about to expire –

O'BRIEN ROAD CHRISTMAS PARTY:

- Was decided to give toilet paper (2 rolls) and paper towels to residents at O'Brien Road Apartments
- Cards will be made by teachers who have made them in the past (Cathy Garvey said she will contact teachers)
- Want to make sure that the cards say "from St. Augustine's Church"
- 65 people live at the apartment
- Count was taken = 66 rolls of toilet paper and 13 rolls of paper towels are available
- Need to have volunteers donate the rest
- Enough paper bags for packaging is available for the 65 residents to put toilet paper, paper towels and card
- 40 residents are in Building #1 and 25 in Building #2

MIGRANT WORKERS:

- Mike contact Tony Emmi
- Found out 2 migrant workers were still working
- The 2 workers were from another area farm
- They are from Guatemala and will be around for a couple more weeks
- Mike delivered food and other items to them, plus sweatshirts
- Mike found out that they needed backpacks for their way back home – Mike has the backpacks to give them

NEXT MEETING: TBD

ADJOURNMENT: After a brief closing prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Parsons