

# Social Justice & Peace Ministry Meeting and Minutes

Date: Wednesday, October 14, 2009  
Time: 7:15 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
Place: Lowering Gathering Space  
Scribe: Ginny Millard

**Attendance:** Pegie Doll, Liz Olynick, Bob and Jean Lampert, Elaine Papa, Lois Drobinske, John Dalton, Denise Dorn, Ginny Millard, Walt and Joanne Frantin

## Opening Prayer

### Prayer to Reduce Poverty in America

Good and Gracious God, we pray for your assistance in alleviating the pain and needless struggles of our brothers and sisters in need. Working together and with your grace, we know that each person deserves and should have affordable housing, adequate food, health care and economic security.

Loving God, we know that "whatever we ask, in your name, it will be granted to us." So help us in trying to alleviate poverty, and may our efforts give you praise and be a sign of your kingdom on earth. Amen.

*Catholic Charities USA's Campaign to Reduce Poverty in America*

## Special Intentions

### Special Blessing

Our Lady of Mercy's Guadalupe Project was honored at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark this past Sunday at 3:00 p.m. Mass. The Archdiocese of Newark honored OLM parishioners who have been leaders in the work of the Hispanic community: Our own Pegie Doll was among them. Congratulations Pegie and thanks for all you do.

### Special Presentation/Gift

SJPM was presented with a magnificent water color portrait of Jesus and the famous prayer of St. Theresa of Avila. The banner was lovingly painted by our own in-church artist, Bob Lampert. The poignant work is of a kind Jesus guiding us in all we do in our ministries at OLM. The artwork will be displayed at different SJPM events. Please come and see for yourselves.

## OLD BUSINESS

- The Archdiocesan Catholic Charities USA Campaign to Reduce Poverty Task Force

Ginny Millard attended "A Workshop on Advocacy" on October 11, held at the Archdiocesan Center in Newark. Highlights of the workshop included:

- The DVD entitled "Poverty In America: A Threat to the Common Good."
- Speaker the Most Rev. Edgar M. da Cunha, Regional Bishop for Essex County, who spoke on the themes of Solidarity (reaching out in unity or shared aims) and to have a Change of Heart (begin with your own heart: consume less, use only what you need to use and have to use).
- Speaker Kay Furlani who gave an overview of *Caritas in Veritate* (Charity in Truth). *Caritas in Veritate* is a major encyclical by Pope Benedict XVI. The major point of this important document is social justice and peace through the education of Catholics concerning Catholic Social Teachings: "When we consume a lot, it diminishes our ability to give." Pope Benedict XVI. For the complete encyclical, see [www.usccb.org/jphd/caritasinveritate](http://www.usccb.org/jphd/caritasinveritate).

The Archdiocesan Catholic Charities USA Campaign to Reduce Poverty Task Force (*continued*)

- Speaker Marlene Lao Collins, Associate Director of Social Concerns, who gave a summary about the NJ Catholic Conference: Advocacy: Overview of the Legislative Process.
  - Suggestions for a strong legislative advocacy:
    1. Prayer.
    2. Be familiar with Catholic Social Teachings.
    3. Have all ministries in a parish work together: ex. SJPM and Right to Life.
    4. Pastor support through communication.
    5. Connect with a larger advocacy groups, such as Catholic Charities, Pax Christi, IRATE.
    6. Contact government representatives describing stories of real people, complaints and solutions with issues.
  - Current issues for advocacy:
    1. Health Care Reform.
    2. In-State Tuition for Immigrants.
    3. Dream Act.
    4. Comprehensive Immigration Reform.
    5. What actions would you like to support as part of SJPM: postcards, phone calls, letters, stories in the church bulletin?
- **SJPM Items Reviewed**
  - 2009 – 2010 Meeting Dates.
  - 2009 – 2010 Activities.
  - Website.
  - Emails and phone numbers updated (Joanne, thanks for publicity).
  - Coat Exchange/Pictures Publicity (Elaine)
- **Coat Exchange Report**

John Dalton and Walt Frantin reported that the coat exchange went smoothly thanks to the volunteers who gave their talents, time and treasure to this worthwhile cause. Donations amounted to \$250 and donated to Haiti.

There were only 5 bags of coats left from the many bags of donations and the coats went to St. Andrews' Clothing Collection Box in Westwood.

## NEW BUSINESS

- Investigation of Women Religious by the Vatican in Rome Discussion
- Unemployment Concern

Members discussed actions to be taken to support the many unemployed in the Pascack Valley area.

Suggestions included contacting Bob Miller as an advocate (refer to the Ministry to the Unemployed at OLM's website [www.urolm.org](http://www.urolm.org)), establishing a support group, networking websites, remembering the unemployed in the Prayer of the Faithful at Mass, and publishing prayers for the unemployed in the church bulletin.

- Harvest Food Drive: November 7 and 8

The food drive will be publicized by posters and announcements in the Community Life, Pascack Press and church bulletin.

Volunteers are needed in the areas listed below. Please contact Ginny Millard at 201-391-6975 or email her at [vmillard@yahoo.com](mailto:vmillard@yahoo.com) with your availability to assist.

- Set up on Saturday at 9:30 a.m.
- Help, greet and thank parishioners for donations before and after Masses.
- Pack Food for pantries (1:00 - 2:00 p.m. on Sunday).
- Deliver Food to pantries: Park Ridge, River Vale.

- Handcrafting for Justice: November 14 and 15

This event comes the weekend after the food drive!

Volunteers will be needed to:

- Set up.
- Sell after Masses
- Clean up and pack.

The items will be delivered and picked up by Handcrafting. We will discuss these items in more detail either through email or at the next meeting.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 10, 7:15 - 9:00 p.m. in the Lower Gathering Space.**