

## ST. JEROME SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 27, 2009

**Present:** Barbara Bagnato, Father David, Bill Halstead, Kathy Jimenez, Dan Loch, Annette Maiberger, Jennifer Prescott, Rebecca Sweeney

The meeting began at 7:04 p.m. with a prayer, Psalm 8:3-6, offered by Rebecca.

### RECENT PROJECTS:

**Recap of Monthly Food Drive** -- Our 4/26 food drive tally was 1,178 items, and the Milk Fund total was \$228. Many volunteers helped Barbara to sort the food. Frank Lilithy and Bill Halstead made deliveries to CCA and Mid-Fairfield AIDS Project. Rebecca delivered the 6 p.m. Mass food to The Norwalk Emergency Shelter bin at Source Marketing, I-Park. With John DiDomizio's announced sabbatical from food drives, the Committee is focusing on carrying out his good work, and making sure all the steps for a successful food drive are in place. Next up is our May 30-31 food drive, scheduled to avoid Memorial Day Weekend, when church attendance may be low. Rebecca shared that Christi Pope, from CCA explained in her "wish list" for May a one-time request for toilet paper and diapers. Since CCA will benefit from food collected from the Postal Carriers' food drive this month, there is an opportunity to collect necessities besides food (expensive and not food stamp-eligible products). We agreed to add these items to our Bulletin note for "most needed items." Also, we agreed to advertise the May Drive in both the 5/15-17 and 5/23-24 Bulletins, due to the holiday.

**Cell Phone Update** -- Kathy shared that she collected several more cell phones before Easter, which brings the total number collected to nearly 200. Barbara offered to write a reminder note for the Bulletin.

**Emergency Management Meeting** -- Barbara passed on the information from Norwalk's Fire Dept. Office of Emergency Management re: churches' emergency plans to Father Dave and Bob DeSimone, Pastoral Council Chairperson. Father Dave noted that St. Jerome's has an arrangement with the American Red Cross to use the buildings to house people in an emergency. Also, all parish records are backed up off-site. Parish Council will invite the Office of Emergency Management to come to a Fall meeting to present the topic and information.

**Tags for Lenten Cross** -- Dan reported that the project went very well, and a great number of Prayer Request tags and Acts of Kindness tags were taken, in addition to the collection of requested donations. All donations have been delivered -- to Malta House, Americacares Kids. Honey Secchi delivered the donations to CCA.

**Fodor Farm** -- Barbara, Kathy J., Honey, and Francie Mansager are all committed gardeners for the two garden plots. At this point, they are a couple weeks away from putting plants in the ground. In addition to donating vegetables to local food pantries, Barbara will invite parishioners to donate vegetables from their family gardens this summer.

**Earth Day Flyer** -- Many thanks to Dan for creating such a beautiful lay-out for the "Going Green" flyer, which was inserted into our 4/18 Bulletins.

**Soles for Souls** -- Barbara placed boxes in the hallway and already we have some donated pairs of shoes.

**UPCOMING PROJECTS:**

**Once and Again, The Norwalk Emergency Shelter Clothing Room** -- Barbara will advertise a schedule for days and hours for volunteers to come and help sort through the clothing, organize, and hang clothes on hangers. There is a big need for help there.

**Memorial Day Plan** -- Barbara is waiting to hear back from Joanne Romano re: toiletry collection for active-duty soldiers.

**June Book Collection** -- Barbara suggested having a gently-used book collection for the children who visit CCA's Food Pantry, preferably books for preschool, kindergarten, and grades 1-3 levels.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Bill shared his concerns for the disorganized state of The Norwalk Emergency Shelter's kitchen and food storage. There was some discussion as to whether or not The Shelter would be moving into a larger facility.

Jennifer suggested that we involve the teenagers in more parish projects like the organization of Once and Again. Particularly we should encourage them to join in summer projects, when they may have more free time and they could earn their Confirmation service hours.

Rebecca offered to write up a Bulletin note for collecting eyeglasses. She has touched base with The Lion's Club, which will accept them and send them to needy people.

Our June meeting will be an end-of-the-year dinner at the Rectory, possibly Tuesday, June 16 or June 23.

**Our next meeting will be May 18, 2009.**

The meeting ended at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Sweeney