

## ST. JEROME SOCIAL CONCERNS MEETING MINUTES

January 27, 2014

**Present:** Barbara Bagnato, Kathy Coyne, Shelia Rietano, Florence Loch, Dan Loch, Father Dave, Honey Secchi, Kathy Jimenez, Francie Mansager, Rebecca Sweeney, Jennifer Prescott, Maureen Morrissey

The meeting began at 7:04 p.m. with a prayer offered by Barbara.

### **ONGOING PROJECTS**

**Food Drive/Milk Fund Collection:** Rebecca reported the Jan. food drive, which extended over several weekends, had great results -- 1,277 food items, plus 70 pounds of potatoes, 39 pounds of apples, 30 pounds of onions, and 11 pounds of apples and carrots. In addition, for the second month, we invited parishioners to buy cartons of ten chicken noodle soup cans for \$10, after Masses. The sale resulted the sale of 390 cans of soup. The Milk Fund Collection total was \$205.00.

Our upcoming Food Drive Sundays are: Feb. 23, March 23, April 13 (Palm Sunday will be our Special Lenten food drive); and May 18.

Rebecca asked for feedback on the idea to next try selling cans of beef ravioli, as Person-2-Person's food pantry is low on beef ravioli. It was decided that we will try selling 5 cans of ravioli for \$5.00 after the Masses during the Feb. 23 food drive weekend.

Also – since Person-2-Person's food pantry is open until 4 p.m. now, instead of the noon closure, we may be able to have more volunteers available as delivery drivers for our food drives.

**CONNECT (CSC) Update:** Father David reported that St. Joseph's is now on board. A current focus for CONNECT is gun control – efforts are in place to have Norwalk's new mayor, Harry Rilling, have Norwalk commit to a national program for police departments to insist that gun companies have safety modifications on guns before the departments will purchase them. On this topic, Barbara passed around a flyer advertising Understanding Gun Laws and School Safety, to be held on March 5, by CT Against Gun Violence.

Dan reported that CONNECT's healthcare focus is on determining which CT doctors accept Medicaid. Despite CT encouraging people to sign up for Medicaid, it does not serve them well if their doctors do not accept Medicaid. Work continues on establishing a list of CT doctors who do not accept Medicaid so people can make an informed decision.

**Cell Phone Collection:** Kathy J. suggested that since the cell phone collection has stalled for many months, that this project close. This lack of donations is a result of a newer practice for people to turn in their old cell phones when purchasing upgraded phones. The totals for this effort: 319 phones with chargers, and 49 phones without chargers. Kathy delivered all to the Women's Crisis Center in Norwalk.

**Make a Difference Project:** Discussion focused on moving forward with this campaign to help parishioners who may need assistance with meals, grocery shopping, errands, rides to appointments or Mass, and respite from roles as caregivers. Sheila reported that the one request slip from the Make A

Difference Box concerned an elderly person who needed a ride to daily Mass. (The offer was later refused). Francie suggested that we invite Father Joe to one of our meetings, as he is in contact with parishioners who could use help, and could be our resource person. Barbara offered to draft a flyer explaining the project for a Bulletin insert. She asked the Committee to view the draft and offer feedback.

**C.D. Players and C.D. Collection for Notre Dame Convalescent Home:** The consensus was to continue to keep the marked basket up for this collection to see if any more are brought in this month.

### **UPCOMING PROJECTS**

**Toiletry Items Collection for Mid-Fairfield AIDS Project and The Open Door:** Barbara shared that when she delivered food drive items to Mid-Fairfield AIDS Project, she asked if there was any other way that we might lend support. She was told that the clients are in need of basic toiletry items and cleaning supplies that are not permitted for purchase with food stamps. Also, she mentioned that Daniela had spoken with her about running a similar collection with TOTAL, to benefit the residents of The Open Door. Rebecca offered to contact Daniela and write a Bulletin ad to promote this collection for both places, and run it for the month of Feb.

### **NEW PROJECTS**

**REACH Project:** Kathy Coyne is exploring the idea for REACH students to support Person-2-Person's food pantry by getting them involved in a hands-on project. One idea would be to have the students scoop small bags of rice from oversize bags, for the preferred distribution size for each family. She will investigate with Person-2-Person.

**Series of Lectures on Conservation and Christian Social Teaching:** Kathy C. passed around information about a series of 7 lectures on how care for the earth fits into Christian social teaching. The materials looked fitting for a focus on Earth Day.

**The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.**

**Our next meeting is Monday, February, 24<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup> and Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup> are meeting dates for March and April.**

Sincerely,  
Rebecca Sweeney