

Minutes of the Social Justice & Ministry Committee

April 15, 2024, 7 p.m. via Zoom

Members present: Michael & Peggy R. (co-chairs), Carol J., Mary & Mike Q. & Jean D.

Not present: Eileen H.

- A. The Agenda was approved as distributed.
- B. The SJM minutes from March 18 were approved as distributed.
- C. Announcements and Reports:
 1. Budget: Michael reported that our request for \$800 for next year was approved. There was some confusion about last year's budget being spent out with food shelf donations, and some confusion about a payment for Laundry Love.
 2. Social justice efforts elsewhere: Peggy reported the following:
 - a. JRLC Day on the Hill is Thursday April 18 (though it isn't really on "the Hill"; it is close by.
 - b. JRLC has also posted a recording about the intersection of mental health and housing from National Alliance on Mental Illness on JRLC's website; Peggy sent the link ([here](#)).
 - c. ISIAH: had an advocacy for Children Day today, and other actions are under way regarding debt fairness, election laws, child care affordability, affordable housing using renewable energy, and health care in rural communities. Peggy forwarded an email from ISIAH today.
 3. The Office of Social Concerns: It will be moved, in July, to oversight by the Diocese instead of Catholic Charities. "The Immigrant & Refugee Community Organizer positions will not remain."
 4. Habitat for Humanity: Mike Q.: They are working on a house by Westwood, with three people from our parish helping. They hope to complete Genesis House in St. Joe this summer. There is a new field director with an extensive background in commercial construction. He has plans for Habitat to move it forward, standardize procedures and equipment, and bring in more crews. They have four homes underway right now, with more to be added from the high schools. We could do more promotion for volunteers from our two parishes.
 5. Laundry Love: All the April and May dates are filled. It seems to be going well, with no word of any need for more funds at the moment. The Sisters at St. Bens provided a nice donation.
 6. Soup & Speaker:
 - a. There was consensus that we had a really good group of people with thoughtful topics.
 - b. Mary had sent us all some speaker suggestions for next year; so did Tom Sibley.
 - c. The Pastoral Council is planning to do a survey; we might see if they would include a question about Soup & Speaker topics.
- D. Old Business:
 1. As reported earlier, Saint Ben's Monastery's Peace and Justice Task Force requested our "Vote Your Values" booklet, which Peggy shared with Sister Mara, but hasn't heard anything more.
- E. Future:
 1. A chair for next year: There seems to be some confusion as to whether the chair needs to attend all the Pastoral Council meetings, or, if they come, if they can even speak up. Presumably the point is improved communication. Jean was nominated, elected, and accepted the position, with Michael agreeing to serve as her vice-chair.
 2. Secretary for next year: Mike Q. volunteered to serve, at least for the first half of the year.
- F. New members: We can all try asking others, including from St. Joe.
- G. The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm.

The next SJM meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 20th.