

Minutes of the St. Thomas Aquinas Human Concerns Committee Meeting - April 19, 2017

Attendance: Mary Fong, Paul Chestnut, Chris Lundin, Ruth Chippendale, George Chippendale, Anne Fillin, Terry Atkinson

1. Faith-Sharing/Question of the Week

2. Approval of March minutes

The minutes were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

3. Synod Proposal

The proposal for a synod on the death penalty was discussed at both the March 8 and April 12 meetings of the PSC. At the March meeting, there was a motion to write a letter to Bishop McGrath asking him to request the California Catholic Conference of Bishops to convene a conference consisting of bishops, clergy, and lay experts in order to study the issue of the death penalty in California. The motion passed 15 to 1. All present except for one member seemed interested in the proposal, and expressed support. Chris and Henry Organ volunteered to prepare the letter. At the April PSC meeting, the letter was presented and discussed at length. This time, the support for the concept was much less enthusiastic. A vote on the motion to send the letter to the Bishop was 6 in favor and 5 against. Father Matt then said "I don't accept the PSC's proposal" and canceled it as pastor. Earlier in the evening he said "I think this is a waste of time but I'm not going to stand in your way," and then he did just that. Reasons for this reversal of his opinion were not given. On March 8, he had been enthusiastic in his support.

4. Death Penalty

5. Parish Survey

The PSC has requested each ministerial organization to fill out the Strategic Plan Survey. These will be used to understand how the PSC can better support the mission of each ministry and in the formulation of a five year plan. Paul had filled in the survey and the committee approved it.

6. Books for SESS

Terry reported that many books had been collected for the second graders and, in addition, over \$1400. Orders for books have been made. A list of individual student favorites was provided by the teacher. Leftover cash will be held to next year.

NEW BUSINESS

7. Immigration - What can we do?

Paul cited an article in NCR: “San Jose diocese backs efforts to shelter immigrants,” (<https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/san-jose-diocese-backs-efforts-shelter-immigrants>) on January 19 of this year. The efforts of the San Jose Diocese to organize a “loose-knit consortium of faith congregations willing to provide housing and other assistance to immigrants who have been locally displaced for various reasons,” were described. Our issue is the role our parish might take. Paul volunteered to contact Fr. Jon Pedigo to find out more.

8. What's On Your Mind?

This Sunday, April 30, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County will present an immigration forum in Our Lady of the Rosary Hall from 10:30-11:30 a.m. The forum will be conducted in Spanish.

9. Volunteer for Faith-sharing/Question of the Week

Next meeting - May 17, 2017