

Minutes of the St. Thomas Aquinas Human Concerns Committee Meeting - November 16, 2016

Attendance:

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

1. Faith-Sharing/Question of the Week

2. Approval of October minutes

The minutes were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

3. Death Penalty News

Proposition 62 lost by 54% to 46%. Proposition 66 won by 50.9% to 49.1%.

4. Spirituality Tuesday Plan

George Chippendale is organizing a presentation for the Spirituality Tuesday series; the date is November 29. George and Ann gave us a preview of the event. The plan includes four presentations by four parishioners: George, Virginia Duluk, Mike Veuve, and Ann Fillin. Veronica Duluk will start off with a discussion of showing mercy to people all over the world. George will describe a history of East Palo Alto. He will discuss how the community changed over the years, how African Americans settled there in large numbers in the post-war period, and later how real estate industry stampeded white people to sell their homes out of fear. Rents were kept very low as codes regarding living arrangements were not enforced, with the result that many people moved into very dense living arrangements. When codes were recently enforced, many people were left with no place to live. Today, there is a real housing crisis. George will then explain the concept of the "Safety Net" established by United Way over 30 years ago. He will provide examples of families in our neighborhood who lose their homes, their work, and children's school. Anne Fillin will then tell us how, when a family is really devastated and needs mercy, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and other helping agencies do not give up on them. Finally, Mike Veuve will talk about the community plan to end homelessness in Santa Clara County. This part of the talk describes what programs are coming along that the general public needs to support to provide the facilities and the personnel for doing Corporal works of mercy.

5. Mission Statement

We have been asked to revise our Mission Statement, according to suggested guidelines. Here is our proposed Mission Statement:

The Human Concerns Committee of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish responds to Jesus' command to love neighbor and self by inspiring the parish community towards peace, justice, and mercy.

Objectives:

- To alleviate the distresses of hunger, homelessness, disease, lack of housing, health care, and other human needs.
- To see the face of God in others and pray for God's oversight and guidance as we proceed.

6. The Looming Crisis

We were asked to consider issues having to do with our faith. See the list of items below. We did not have time to discuss these items.

NEW BUSINESS

7. Gently-Used Sturdy Shoes

On November 2, the following notice appeared in the ebulletin:

GENTLY USED STURDY SHOES NEEDED for the Opportunity Center.

If you have any gently used sturdy shoes in your closet that need a new home, the Opportunity Center really needs them! Comfortable sturdy walking shoes are most appreciated. Every day clients ask for shoes but there are none to give. To help provide this need, the Human Concerns Committee is placing a collection box at each parish church site in November through

December. We thank you and are most grateful for your donations.

8. November Food Drive

Grocery bags are in every church.

9. Christmas Activities

The Giving Tree will be up in every church in December. The gifts go to the Environmental Hunger Program.

10. What's On Your Mind?

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

Next meeting - January 18, 2017

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Current Mission Statement:

The Human Concerns Committee of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish on behalf of the parish community responds to Jesus' command to love neighbor and self by working for the common good of all. The committee works to inspire the parish community to discern and act in ways that make the works of peace, justice, and mercy integral to their daily lives. To become salt of the earth and light of the world, we work to alleviate the distresses of hunger, homelessness, disease, lack of housing and health care, and other human needs. We are sustained in this mission by seeing the face of God in others and pray for God's oversight and guidance as we proceed.

Proposed Mission Statement:

The Human Concerns Committee of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish on behalf of the parish community responds to Jesus' command to love neighbor and self by working for the common good of all. The committee works to inspire the parish community to discern and act in ways that make the works of peace, justice, and mercy integral to their daily lives.

Objectives:

- To alleviate the distresses of hunger, homelessness, disease, lack of housing and health care, and other human needs.
- To see the face of God in others and pray for God's oversight and guidance as we proceed.

AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

1. LOSS OF FAITH IN THE EUCHARIST/REAL PRESENCE – WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SUNDAY MASS IS NO LONGER THE “GLUE” THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE TO THE CHURCH
2. THE CHURCH HAS LOST HER MORAL AUTHORITY – “THE DEADLIEST RESULT OF THE SCANDAL”
3. FAITH VS. SCIENCE: YOUNG PEOPLE’S SKEPTICISM OF THE “FAIRY TALE”
4. THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE PRE-VATICAN II GENERATION – NEVER TO BE REPLACED
5. FAITH NO LONGER MATTERS – WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?
6. “LET THE CHILDREN MAKE UP THEIR OWN MINDS”
7. WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT OUR LATINO, FILIPINO & VIETNAMESE SISTERS & BROTHERS? WHAT’S THEIR STORY?
8. THE GOSPEL IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE – DON’T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!
9. THE RISE OF THE CATHOLIC “NON-CULTURAL WARRIOR”
10. WHY DO THEY STAY?