

OLOL Social Justice Minutes September 14, 2023

Present: Mary Yank, Steve Szymanski, Terry Falk, Mary Botsford, Karen Streich, Pat McKay, Joann Godkin, Eileen O'Connor; new member: Cherie Esposito and guests: Patty Sereno, Sharon Thyne, and Lucy Nigh

Opening Prayer: Offered by Pat McKay

Black Lives are Sacred: Reminder of the witness to take place at 58th and Forest Home Avenue on September 16 from 10:30 to 11:30 am.

Evolutionary Theology: Saint Matthias Parish has scheduled a two-part presentation entitled Evolutionary Theology: Sexual Morality and the Catholic Church. Part 1, a history of sexual morality in the Catholic Church, will take place at St Matthias Catholic church in Steiger Hall on Monday, October 9, 2023 from 6:30-8:00 pm. Part 2, areas for potential dialogue in understanding sexual morality in a new perspective, will be presented on Monday, February 12, 2024 at the same time and location.

Recognition of Migrants and Refugees will take place at all OLOL Masses September 23 and 24. JoAnna Boey will give a short talk following Communion at the 5:00 pm Mass on Saturday. Pedro Martinez will give a short talk following Communion at the 8:00 and 10:30 am Masses on Sunday. A bulletin insert will contain a fact sheet on migration, and prayer cards will be distributed at all Masses. Eileen, Pat, and Joann will distribute prayer cards at the 5:00 pm Mass. Pat, Mary Botsford, and Pat Sereno will distribute them at the 8:00 am Mass. Steve, Sharon Tyne, and Mary Yank will distribute them at the 10:30 Mass. The prayer cards will be on the shelves of the movable cart in the hallway in front of the church.

Sister Lucy Nigh spent many years at the Mexican border in Arizona and has conducted immersion groups with student groups as well as parishes including videos of people dying in the desert and pictures of other situations at the US/Mexican border. Sister Lucy has a story to tell and has been interviewed regarding her experiences. We will keep her in mind for a future event on migrants and refugees.

Book Discussion: We will be reading the book, The Risk of the Cross by Arthur Laffin. Discussions of book will be held in Room 3 at OLOL on Mondays beginning at 6:30 pm from October 23 to November 20.

Steve mentioned sites available on line related to the topic of the book, non-violence in a nuclear age: "Living the Season of Creation" and America Magazine's "The Francis Effect." Steve will send the links to committee members. Information regarding the book discussions will be provided to parishioners.

Possible Event: A guest speaker from the Jewish community. Karen is in touch with someone and believes that a speaker will be available. We are considering March and April dates. Sally Ann said she would be able to secure a speaker from the Holocaust Education Center, if needed.

It was suggested that we address issues related to LGBTQ. The topic will be on the agenda for the October SJ meeting.

Possible Event for February: Sally will arrange a time when the Gospel Choir from St. Paul's Lutheran church can provide an evening of Gospel Music at OLOL St. Paul's. The choir supports a teens' homeless shelter with donations of hygiene items. It is suggested that attendees at the event donate a hygiene item as the price of entry. Sally Ann will seek to arrange a date and also talk with Deb Steppe, the Human Concerns committee (to assure that a collection in February would not interfere with any of their collections), and Anne Van Deusen, the Director of Music Ministries. It was suggested that we include a social gathering with light refreshments following the musical presentation.

A possible speaker, Brenda Calhoun, will also be considered for this or a later date. A young person from the teens' homeless center told Sally Ann how excited she had been to hear Ms. Calhoun.

All Saints Meal Program Summary: Twenty-one people from Our Lady of Lourdes helped with the meal program this summer, some more than once. We can help throughout the year. Marquette students help during the school year; however, All Saints often needs a few more people to complete their minimum of seven and always welcome extras.

Climate Equity Plan: The current issue is to have Wisconsin provide more electric-car chargers in the state. Steve stated that the Pastoral Council supports the SJ Committee's interest in the Climate Equity Plan. Steve will send the 10 bullet points regarding the topic to committee members. The grass-roots movement, Interfaith Earth Network has taken the initiative on the issue.

Catholic Collaboration on Racial Equality: Pat has been in conversations with and attended meetings sponsored by this group. They would like to set up a permanent inter-parish group that would meet on a regular basis to address racism in various events and statements.

Recycling Update: Will be addressed during the October SJ meeting.

Change of Date for October SJ meeting: Due to Oktoberfest setup, Room 3 will not be available on October 12. Committee members agreed to meeting on **October 19**.

Announcements:

Eileen: the Transformational Justice Committee of MICAH has requested that we contact Governor Evers asking that a method be arranged so people can request sentence commutation. A group would be appointed to respond to prisoners' request for commutation. Members would look at the length of the requester's sentence in comparison to other sentences for a like crime as well as the person's behavior during his/her incarceration. After studying the request, the committee would send its recommendation to the governor. Currently, Governor Evers is considering adding the task to the Pardoning Board, but has not made a decision. The contact to the governor would simply ask that due to frequent sentence disparity, the governor is requested to set up a method for considering sentence commutation.

Arlene Davey has offered her artwork, entitled "Run," to the OLOL SJ committee. The main question regarding accepting the artwork was where would we put it. Pat passed around a small replica of the painting, and committee members agreed that we should accept it and ask to have it placed with the various other SJ pictures in the OLOL south hallway.

Sister Susan has requested that cloth bags be made and used in the food pantry to replace plastic bags.

Good Shepherd Parish in Menominee Falls is offering a ZOOM series titled “Reset the Table,” addressing racism. It began on Wednesday, September 13 and will continue on the following three Wednesdays until October 4. The presenter is Fessahaye Mebrahtu, former director of Black Catholic and Ethnic Ministries at the Milwaukee Archdiocese. Steve will send the registration link to everyone.

Spotlight Articles for Open Wide Our Hearts: October – Eileen, November – Kevin, December – Pat

Prayer for October 19 Meeting: John Wolfe

Adjourned 7:40 pm with the prayer for the Homebound