

## **Our Lady of Lourdes Social Justice Meeting Minutes May 14, 2026**

**Present:** Karen Streich, Mary Botsford, Patti Sereno, Emily Kane, Kevin Kane, Sr. Dianna DeBruin, Cherie Esposito, Sr. Margaret Kruse, Mary Conarchy, Terry Falk, Margaret Kelly, Jim Gill, Pat McKay, Eileen O'Connor, (Newcomers/Visitors) Kathy Sojkowski, Mary Ruffolo, Donna Hutter, Jim Hutter, Mary Matestic, Fred Matestic

### **The Meeting opened with a prayer led by Mary Conarchy**

**Archdiocesan Website:** Archbishop Grob provides two inspiring features on the Archdiocesan website: *The Good News* and *The Branches*.

### **Riverkeeper Cleanup:**

The event went well; however, not everyone who participated in the park cleanup came for the pizza provided by the OLOL SJ committee following the cleanup. The number who came for the cleanup was estimated by the number of plates and cups used: 46. Kevin shared some statistics provided by Steve Szymanski: 2,082 volunteers participated in the Riverkeeper county-wide event and a total of 55 tons of trash was collected.

### **Archdiocesan Event for Immigrants and Refugees:**

Sister Dianna shared information about a service to be held at Cathedral Square on June 15<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-7:30 pm. Bishop James T. Schuerman, Auxiliary Bishop of the Milwaukee Archdiocese, will preside. Catholic Charities will have a table with information explaining how people can support immigrants. Bulletin inserts announcing the event are available.

### **All Saints News:**

Mary Conarchy and Pat McKay developed a flyer describing OLOL's participation in the All Saints meal program during the months of July and August. Information regarding how to sign up to serve at the meal program is included on the flyer which will be in the bulletin on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Plans for Native Heritage Month (November)**

Kevin has been in contact with Richard who is a member of the Oneida Tribe which is a member of the League of Iroquois. Richard has agreed to give a presentation in November. He will describe how the Iroquois League's manner of government contributed in a major way to the content of the US Constitution. Kevin has also spoken with Father Ed, pastor of the Congregation of the Great Spirit. Father Ed knows of someone who can do drumming and dancing for groups. Pat will check the calendar for possible dates. If the dates can be arranged with both the talk and the dancing/drumming, we hope to sponsor the event in early November. Fees for the event will be paid from the fund bequeathed to the committee.

### **Nonviolence Group Report:**

The group had a good meeting in May. New content will be added monthly to the Active Nonviolence Corner with suggestions for activities that promote nonviolence. Members of the group read and discussed *Dandelion Insurrection* and are planning to find a new book to read and discuss on the topic of nonviolence. In the OLOL garden area on August 6 at 7 pm, there will be a prayer service in memory of the Hiroshima bombing. Since the prayer services held during the *Season of Nonviolence* were well received and attended, the group is planning a series of nonviolence prayer services during the *Season of Creation* in September and October. The nonviolence group meetings are held the first Monday of the month at 9:30 am. All are welcome.

**Report on Cutbacks in Funds Supporting Immigrants and Refugees:**

In June, immigrants attempting to gain green cards will be receiving letters stating, “If you do not currently have a green card, starting in October, you will no longer be eligible for medical care or food share.” Lack of ability to purchase food will have a serious impact on all immigrants without green cards, and an even greater negative impact on Muslim immigrants because they are forbidden to eat food that is not Halal. Forbidden foods include canned foods and meat that is not slaughtered according to Quran regulations. Four thousand five hundred people attempting to obtain green cards live in the Milwaukee area. Catholic Charities is working with immigrant families. Emily is the contact person at Catholic Charities. She works with organizations who want to help immigrant families with various services including individuals who go into homes to teach English.

The committee members agreed to sponsor a fundraiser/drive to support immigrants who will be losing medical and food benefits. Ideas should be sent to Pat McKay or brought to the June SJ meeting. Those wishing to support food pantries that provide Halal food can purchase fruits and vegetables at Pete’s Market on 16<sup>th</sup> and Greenfield for \$2.00 a bucket.

**Refreshing the Social Justice Bulletin Board and SJ Website information:**

Pat would like to put on a new face to our bulletin board. This can probably be done in a few hours in a morning or afternoon. Anyone willing to help should contact Pat. She requested that committee members keep an eye on the SJ information on the website to be sure that outdated information is removed. Please contact Pat if you would be willing to keep watch on a regular basis.

**Requesting Senators to Ask the US to speak out against Human-Rights Abuses in El Salvador:**

Mary Conarchy and Mary Botsford asked committee members to sign a letter addressed to Senators Ron Johnson and Tammy Baldwin requesting the United States to intercede on behalf of El Salvadoran citizens who are being detained without a trial and others who are among the disappeared. The letter and form for signatures were passed around for committee members to read and sign if choosing to do so. The information regarding the situation in El Salvador was aired on *Frontline*.

**Announcements:**

A plant sale will be held at the Motherhouse, 3221 South Lake Drive, on Saturday May 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:00 am-3:00 pm.

**Common Ground** informational meeting will be held on May 17<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-4:00 pm.

The **Amazing Faith Dinner Dialogue** will take place at Our Lady of Lourdes on June 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Open Wide Articles:** June – Mary Conarchy, July – Pat McKay, August – Jim Gill

**June Meeting Prayer** – Sr. Dianna

**Next Meeting:** June 11 at 6:30 pm

**The meeting closed with the Prayer for the Homebound at 7:45.**