

Our St. Irenaeus Christian Service Commission...

exists as a model and resource of Catholic Social Teaching to enable the entire parish community to put the social teaching of the Church into action. Our Commission creates and promotes programs which strive to address human needs and achieve justice. During this Jubilee Year of Mercy, we worked extra hard to provide opportunities for parishioners to live the Gospel in their everyday lives through Corporal (and Spiritual) Works of Mercy, and acts of social justice within and beyond our committee programs. Leader – Eileen Ross, members – Rich Bosler, Leigh Ann Grubbs, Ron Melnik, Florie Mojica, Barbara O'Brien, Pat Paloulian, Bob Skubic, Terry Statz, Colleen Steyer, Marilyn St. James, Nan St. Peter, Dee Valade, and Andrea Yamarino

Fiscal Year End Report 2015/2016: Seeds Planted and Fruit Born out of our Labor of Love

Works of Mercy in Review

Feed the hungry... Give drink to the thirsty...

- **Baldwin Soup Kitchen Lunches** – Carmen Bonanni organized 25 parishioners on a rotating basis to serve lunch 10 months out of the year, feeding approximately 200 homeless men, women, and children each meal
- **Flint Water Collection** – Rachel Aiello coordinated the collection of a pick-up truck full of water for our brothers and sisters in Flint
- **Focus Hope Food Boxes** – A dozen parishioners volunteered to help OPC deliver monthly food boxes to homebound residents of Avon Tower and Danish Village
- **HOPE Adult Shelter Dinners** – Denise Armstrong, Brian Gallagher, Christina Jeanguenat, Dee O'Leary, Deb Stefanek and Colleen Steyer coordinated our Week of Hospitality serving 70 homeless guests a delectable feast; 74 parishioners helped prep and serve; nearly all of the ingredients were donated by parishioners
- **Lighthouse Food Pantry** – Brian Gallagher coordinated delivery of the abundance of food that was collected beyond what was needed for our OPC food baskets
- **Lunch Bag Packing** – Sue Hund, Mary Ann Crawford and Works of Mercy Team coordinated events during which parishioners packed 871 lunches for Matchan Nutrition Center, Abide Ministries, HOPE, Baldwin Center, and Jail & Outreach Ministry
- **Manna Meal** – Larry Gatt coordinated two eight person teams to prepare and serve lunch at the soup kitchen in Detroit, feeding approximately 200 people each month
- **OPC Christmas Baskets** – Jackie Lepore coordinated collection, packing, and delivery of 30 boxes and bags with Christmas foods, gift card for ham, and Christmas gifts blessing 15 low-income, homebound seniors (ten through OPC, five at Danish Village)
- **OPC Meals on Wheels** – Susan Fougousse organized eight drivers to deliver meals to homebound seniors on New Year's Day
- **Panera 'Day-End Dough-nations'** – Mike Tahy organized day-old food pick-ups at two Panera locations 363 days out of the year; food was delivered to OPC, St. Patrick's Church in Detroit, and the RANH Food Pantry
- **St. Pat's Senior Center Dinners** – Karen Robinson coordinated two dinners at St. Pat's in Detroit; 30 parishioners made desserts and 24 confirmation students and parents helped serve the meal to over 50 seniors in need
- **St. Vincent de Paul Food Drives** – Mike Tahy coordinated monthly food drives to support the SVdP Food Depot in Madison Hts
- **Thanksgiving and Christmas Food gift cards** – We made sure several parish families in need were able to celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinners

Clothe the naked...

- **Abigayle Ministries Baby Clothing Collection** – sponsored by Advent by Candlelight
- **HOPE Adult Shelter** – Parishioners donated underwear, t-shirts, and socks for guests at the shelter in February
- **CCRT Lenten Project** – Parishioners donated underwear, t-shirts, socks, and steel-toed boots for those served through Catholic Community Response Team
- **Monday Morning Mittens** – Our St. Irenaeus Knit-Wits helped create new winter sets by matching up stray mittens and combining them with new hand-made items; Baldwin Center, CCRT, and parish families in need benefited from the hats, scarves and mittens
- **Roses in December** – Jackie Lepore coordinated our Christmas giving program; we collected dozens of coats for Capuchin Soup Kitchen's CAPS Coats and Kids; more coats, scarves, hats, and mittens for Rochester Area Neighborhood House; a variety of sweat suits, thermal underwear, socks, and clothing for Jail and Outreach Ministry, the Ss. Peter and Paul Warming Center, Franciscan Ministries, and Covenant House; families in need within our parish received clothing as well
- **School Uniforms** – Gift cards that were donated for backpacks after the collection had ended helped purchase new school uniforms for 16 children in Pontiac through CCRT
- **SOS Week of Hospitality** – Generous parishioners provided socks, boots, sweaters, undergarments, and coats for our guests to 'win' as prizes
- **St. Vincent de Paul Clothing Drive** – Mike Tahy coordinated two drives, collecting clothing (and small appliances) that filled a total of four PODS

Shelter the homeless...

- **Covenant House** – Jackie Lepore coordinated the collection of purses, wallets, perfume, cologne, watches and socks as Christmas gifts for homeless youth
- **Habitat for Humanity** – Bill Grubbs organized several parishioners to participate in a Faith BlitzBuild working on a home in Pontiac; Leigh Ann Grubbs made lunch preparations
- **SOS Week of Hospitality** – Jewel Messina and Team Captains Melanie and Vince Avila, Aaron and Lynn Coburn, Carl and Laura Davis, Bill and Leigh Ann Grubbs, Michele LaPorte, Mike Mordarski, Lori Renno, Bob Skubic, and Grayson Smith coordinated teams of volunteers to turn our St. Irenaeus Parish Hall and classrooms into ‘home’ for 37 homeless people from the South Oakland Shelter for a week; we provided dinner, hospitality, showers, bedrooms, breakfast, sack lunches, rides, games and prizes, entertainment, a trip to the Laundromat, fellowship, and a ‘stay-in Saturday’ complete with crafts, activities, and tail gate; 2,100 volunteer hours made this happen
- **Over the Hump from Homelessness to Homes** – We helped eleven former SOS guests overcome obstacles to help them get settled into new homes (security deposits, past-due utility bills, kitchen supplies, initial insurance payments, beds, refrigerators....)
- **Blankets for the homeless** – Parishioners at Works of Mercy events hand-tied 47 blankets for the homeless served through Matchan in Pontiac; Knit Wits and Bible Babes contributed with scissor time
- **Mary’s Mantle Purse Drive** – Lynn Coburn coordinated the collection and delivery of three car loads of purses, helping to raise over \$1,200 to benefit a Catholic residential program for homeless expectant mothers
- **Kitchen in a Box** – We packed 26 boxes with everything a family moving into an empty house would need in order to cook a meal as part of our CCRT Lenten Project

Visit the sick...

- **Get Well Cards for Community** – Janice Dalfovo-Dawson, Annmarie Kamman, Eileen Ross, and Works of Mercy Team led parishioners in making get well cards for patients at Ronald McDonald House, Crittenton, and St. Joseph Mercy
- **Bracelets for Sick Children** – Parishioners at Works of Mercy events made 120 bracelets which were delivered Ronald McDonald House
- **Blankets for Sick Children** – Parishioners at Works of Mercy events tied a dozen fun fleece blankets for sick children served through Project Linus
- **Blood Drives** – Nan St. Peter and Joanne Schantz organized 3 blood drives (assisting a student in the summer) for the non-profit blood bank MI Blood; 84 pints were collected including whole blood, double reds, and plasma—which was sent to Beaumont to help burn patients

Visit the prisoners...

- **Letters to prisoners** – Parishioners at Works of Mercy events wrote 39 letters to prisoners in the Thumb Correctional Facility in Lapeer County

Bury the dead

- **Funeral luncheons** – Jewel Messina coordinated 13 funeral luncheons serving nearly 850 family members and guests with help from two shoppers, 40 servers, and 100 dessert makers; added new team leaders; Kate Kerlin was our lead tablecloth washer and ironer

Comfort the sorrowful

- **Bereavement Ministry** – four new people joined our team; five active ministers made 31 phone calls to family members of deceased parishioners and sent remembrance cards at one year anniversary of death and before Christmas; greeted families at our All Soul’s Mass

Pray for the living and the dead

- **Prayer chain** – Our Prayer Warriors lifted up requests sent via email when emergency prayer was requested by parishioners (new this year)
- **Monthly prayer booklets** – Susan Kowalski prepared a collection of prayer requests including parishioner intentions, names of our sick, military, and recently bereaved parishioners, parish events, and the Pope’s monthly prayer intentions; booklets were made available to our Danish Village First Friday attendees, our homebound, and anyone else interested (new this year)
- **Rosaries for Missions** – Our 19 Rosary Makers for the Missions hand-made and mailed 6,930 rosaries for the missions (1,540 more than last year!); 28 were made by Works of Mercy participants
- **Rosary Prayer Service** – Florence Dacpano answered the call to lead residents of the new Oakmont Rochester Assisted Living facility in praying the Rosary every 2nd Friday (new this year)

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You something to drink? When did we see You a stranger and invite You in, or needing clothes and clothe You? When did we see You sick or in prison and go to visit You?’ ‘The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, you did for Me.’ Matthew 25:37-40

We also cared for our children and the disadvantaged...

- **Christmas Adopt-a-Family program** – Jackie Lepore and CS staff helped St. Irenaeus families ‘adopt’ 45 low-income families through South Oakland Shelter, Lighthouse, Jail Outreach Ministry, Common Ground, and our own parishioners-in-need
- **Clean out your Desk Campaign** – Dana Gale and Ellen Stuart led the collection, sorting, and delivery of used school and office supplies benefiting Rogers Elementary School in Pontiac
- **Crossroads Pregnancy Center** – Advent by Candlelight sponsored a collection of diapers and wipes that filled a pick-up truck
- **God’s Little One’s Nursery (GLO)** – Leigh Ann Grubbs supervised rotation of adult and student sitters for the nursery during 10 am Mass (September through May); approximately 15 parish families participated; average of 7 children per week
- **Hygiene item collections** – several drives benefitting individuals and families through HOPE Adult Shelter, Catholic Community Response Team, Jail and Outreach Ministry, and South Oakland Shelter
- **Gifts for displaced children** – Parishioners at Works of Mercy events made 264 bracelets for children entering the Foster Care system through the Judson Center in Royal Oak
- **Mary’s Children Family Center** – Jackie Lepore coordinated the collection of specific Christmas gifts for adults with brain injuries
- **Neighborhood House** – Andrea Yamarino coordinated the collection of gift cards, purchasing 61 new backpacks to help local children in need get ready for school; parishioners also donated hundreds of dollars worth of gift cards to help the needy served by R ANH through our Roses in December program
- **Recycling for a Reason** – Parishioners donated thousands of prescription bottles benefiting World Medical Relief (delivered by John Paul Belanger); card fronts benefitting St. Jude’s Ranch for Children (coordinated by Dorothy English); postage stamps benefitting Emmaus House (delivered by Marilyn Walker—also our super-sorter!); used eyeglasses benefiting the Lions Club (picked up by Leo Schaeffer); pens, pencils, and new greeting cards, stationery, calendars, gift wrap, and religious items benefiting both St. Matthew’s Church in Timau, Kenya and Jail and Outreach Ministry (coordinated by Nancy Exner)

*Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you,
“Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.” Deuteronomy 15:11*

Christian Service Ministry Summaries 2015-2016

Earth Ministry – *to call the parish to a deeper respect for God’s creation and engage the parish community, through education and activities, in practices which better care for and celebrate God’s creation, with particular attention to those practices which help the world’s poor. Leader— Susan Cesiel*

- 15 active committee members
- Planted and maintained parish flower and vegetable gardens; shared fresh vegetables with parishioners
- Published several bulletin articles with practical tips on good creation care
- Researched variety, pricing, availability, spacing, and deer-resistance as they selected specimen plants and designed the landscaping around the new church entrance

Good Samaritan Ministry – *to express God’s love through attention to the emotional, spiritual and physical needs of our parishioners; offering help especially to those who are homebound temporarily or long-term due to illness or age.*

- Members met for quarterly training meetings
- Provided numerous home visits, phone calls, and transportation assistance to many parishioners in need—including meals, chores, and errands for parishioners recovering from surgery; and friendly visits and calls to our homebound
- Member with counseling background contacted parents of newly-baptized babies offering to counsel and support the new parents
- Began a mail-ministry sending get well, thinking of you, and cards of encouragement to parishioners who are ill, new to the area, homebound, or experiencing struggles
- Coordinated the delivery of baskets to our homebound on our Parish Mercy in Action Day (including home-baked muffins and cookies, small religious gifts, and over 200 ‘thinking of you’ cards and 60 marigolds in painted pots produced during our Works of Mercy Marathon under the leadership of Janice Dalfovo-Dawson and Works of Mercy Team)
- Prepared and delivered small gifts and cards for homebound parishioners for Fourth of July, Christmas, and Easter
- Continued outreach to Danish Village with First Friday Communion services including refreshments and fellowship; Easter gifts delivered personally to each resident; and a summer cookout complete with food, a sing-along, prizes, and take home goodybags

Senior Fellowship – *to promote fellowship and spirituality among parishioners 55 years and over through social activities, outreach projects, and a sharing of common interests. Leader – Nancy Knitter*

- Membership increased to 153 members
- Five dinner events (averaging 100+ attendees) were held that included inspirational and informational speakers, and entertainment
- Four Lunch, Cards and Games events (averaging 35-45 people)—the largest being the Christmas Fun Bingo event
- The Lunch Bunch group (averaging 20-25 people) met every other month at local restaurants to allow for socialization for those who may not get out to the evening events
- Sponsored a July and January collection of toiletries, caps, scarves and gloves for CCRT
- Planned an off-site activity to visit the Divine Mercy Center in Clinton Twp, including a Mass, lunch and tour

Gospel of Life – *to enliven the parish response to the universal respect and dignity appropriate to all human life.*

Leader– Patrick Barkey

- Hosted a community 'Mass for Life' and reception on the 43rd Anniversary of Roe v. Wade; 180 attended
- Organized and hosted an educational event on "End of Life Medical Decisions & Ethics" with guest speaker Jason Negri of the Patients Rights Council; 75 attended; very positive feedback
- Participated in "40 Days for Life" Prayer Vigils in Sterling Heights where team members prayed outside of an abortion clinic for an hour a week (6 weeks in the fall and 6 weeks during Lent)
- Coordinated multiple activities in honor of Respect Life Sunday in October; published weekly bulletin articles during Respect Life Month highlighting various "life" issues
- Member went through training and orientation for the "No One Dies Alone" program at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, becoming volunteer companion to those who are actively dying, while providing comfort to families who cannot always be with their loved ones
- Supported weekly Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during Lent
- Five members attended the Michigan Nurses for Life Conference; learned about assisted suicide, advanced medical directives, and recent legislative developments in Michigan
- Supported the Crossroads Pregnancy Center and Birth Choice mobile ultrasound unit ministries with St. Irenaeus Parish donations; became a table sponsor for the Crossroads Annual Benefit Banquet which Gospel of Life team members attended; attended numerous other events to support and advocate for the dignity of life
- Coordinated 4th Annual May Crowning ceremony for parish, honoring our Blessed Mother.
- Raised approximately \$2,400 for Right to Life-LIFESPAN through Christmas card and Mother's Day carnation sales; (Father's Day candy sale coming!)
- Supported/encouraged pro-life youth, including both high school and college students

Parish Health Ministry – *to enhance the quality of life for parishioners by integrating our Catholic faith with healing through health education, counseling, and promotion programs.* *Leader– Denise Munaco*

- Maintained strong relationship with Faith Community Nursing sponsored by St. Joseph Mercy Oakland
- Provided Blood Pressure Screenings, Stroke, and Risk/Fall Assessments at all Sunday Socials; as a result of the 157 blood pressure screenings—four people with dangerously high BP's were sent to the hospital; one was admitted to cardiac care, others were prescribed medication by their doctors; one dog bite was also diagnosed as infected and successful treatment was sought as a result
- Hosted Flu Clinic—38 people participated
- Hosted Lifeline Screening—90 participants took advantage of cardiovascular disease prevention health screenings here in our Parish Hall
- Updated all First Aid kits in Parish Hall, church, and 15+ kits for Youth Group
- Provided ushers with an AED Refresher Class from Life Support Services
- Provided a parish family with a Thanksgiving Dinner (with all of the trimmings plus a fresh fall flower)
- Member gave a presentation on Mental Health issues to Christian Service Commission
- Purchased fleece and made blankets with SOS guests; talked/prayed with them and offered B/P screenings and medication counseling from a pharmacist
- Presented an educational seminar on "When Stress turns to Distress" including two speakers, healthy refreshments and door prizes
- Hosted a Sunday Social inviting Oakland County Health Dept to demonstrate Safe Sleep for newborn babies; provided info on ways to determine the best medical venue to contact based on one's needs, as well as information about affordable health care resources in our area
- Provided 50 Radon Test kits to parishioners
- Continued to support Friends of John Paul Secondary School in Uganda (founded by one of our nurses) with donations of specific clothing items (baseball hats, bras, and t-shirts)—parish-wide collection on the horizon!
- Two members have begun the "Active Shooters" training to help prepare our church for future emergencies
- Published monthly articles on medical and health-related topics in our church bulletin
- Our Faith Community Nurse also covers B/P screenings during a Senior Fit program at St. Anastasia's in Troy six times a year

Thank you to our Christian Service Commission members, committee chairs and members, project and ministry coordinators, and all parishioners who offered their hearts, prayers, hands, talents, and financial gifts this year! We are the hands and feet of Christ building the Kingdom of Heaven on earth! Yea God!