

# St. Irenaeus Christian Service Commission

Who We Are and What We Did This Fiscal Year (2016/2017)

**Christian Service Commission** – *to act 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. The Commission creates and promotes programs which strive to address human needs and achieve justice. Leader – Eileen Ross; members – Rich Bosler, Leigh Ann Grubbs, Kathleen Larkin, Ron Melnik, Florie Mojica, Cindy Monaghan, Chris Wogan, Pat Palouljian, Robert Skubic, Terry Statz, Colleen Steyer, Marilyn St. James, Nan St. Peter, Dee Valade, Deacon John Wright, Andrea Yamarino*

## **CHRISTIAN SERVICE PROGRAMS:**

**Baldwin Soup Kitchen Lunches** – Carmen Bonnani organized parishioners on a rotating basis to serve eight lunches during the past year to approximately 200 homeless and low-income men, women, and children at the Baldwin Center.

**Blood Drives** – Nan St. Peter and Joanne Schantz organized 3 blood drives for the non-profit blood bank MI Blood; 92 pints were collected and donors were very satisfied with the drive experience.

**Christmas Adopt-a-Family** – Jackie Lepore and CS staff coordinated the adoption of 46 low-income families through South Oakland Shelter, Power Company Kids Club, Jail and Outreach Ministry, Leaders Become Readers, Mary's Mantle, Danish Village, and St. Irenaeus families in need by St. Irenaeus parishioners.

**Christmas Roses in December** – Jackie Lepore and CS and Catechetical staff coordinated the donation and delivery of over 600 gifts to local agencies for the poor.

**Clean Out Your Desk Campaign** – Dana Gale and Ellen Stuart (with the help of Neil Endres) led the collection, sorting, and donation of used school and office supplies to Rogers and Owen Elementary Schools in Pontiac.

**Focus Hope Drivers** – A dozen parishioners volunteered to help OPC deliver monthly food boxes to homebound residents of Avon Tower and Danish Village.

**Habitat for Humanity** – Bill Grubbs led several parishioners in a work day at Habitat headquarters in Pontiac; Leigh Ann Grubbs led the lunch-making crew.

**HOPE Adult Shelter** – Food, clothing, and monetary donations were collected; Colleen Steyer and our HOPE Team coordinated over 40 volunteers who prepared gifts and served dinner to 70 homeless guests at the Pontiac shelter.

**Knit-Wits** – Goldie Stoops led a group of knitters to create prayer blankets for those in the hospital; Baptismal bibs for our youngest church members; and winter accessories, blankets, baby clothing, and other items for those in need.

**Manna Meal** – Larry Gatt led teams in the preparation and serving of hot soup and sandwiches at this soup kitchen in Detroit once a month.

**New Year's Day Meals on Wheels for OPC** – Susan Fougousse coordinated eight drivers who delivered meals to 65 homebound seniors.

**Re-use, Recycle** – Parishioners donated hundreds of card fronts, prescription bottles, postage stamps, eyeglasses, religious items, and other recyclables to benefit charities.

**Rochester Area Neighborhood House** – Andrea Yamarino coordinated the collection of new backpacks for school-readiness outreach.

**Rosary Makers for the Missions** – Rosary makers created and distributed over 4500 mission rosaries, and helped teach students at the Academy of the Sacred Heart to make mission rosaries.

**SOS Week of Hospitality** – Jewel Messina coordinated dozens of volunteers as St. Irenaeus hosted 30+ homeless people from the South Oakland Shelter at our parish in November; provided dinner, hospitality, showers, bedrooms, breakfast, sack lunches, rides, games and prizes, entertainment, and fellowship.

**St. Pat's Senior Center dinner** – Karen Robinson coordinated dinner in October and March at St. Pat's in Detroit; over 30 parishioners made desserts and a dozen confirmation students and parents helped serve.

**Works of Mercy Events** – Hundreds of parishioners engaged in works of mercy and acts of love during five separate events. We packed 657 SnackPax for hungry children in Detroit, 100 bags with after school snacks and activities for children in Pontiac, and 490 lunches for the hungry served through Jail & Outreach Ministry, Matchan, and HOPE Adult Shelter; created 50 Loving Care Kits for cancer patients; made 70 scarves for the homeless; wrote 26 letters to prisoners; made 76 care packages for our homebound (including hand-tied blankets, flowers in decorated pots, homemade cookies, sock cupcakes, bracelets); and made hundreds of hand-made 'thinking of you' and 'get well' cards.

## **CHRISTIAN SERVICE COMMITTEE SUMMARIES FOR 2016/2017:**

***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

- Planned and helped implement the new landscaping around the church
- Led a 4-week study group on the Pope’s encyclical “*Laudato Si’*, On Care for Our Common Home” to help parishioners better understand our responsibility as stewards of God’s creation
- Planted and maintained parish flower and vegetable gardens... shared fresh vegetables with parishioners
- Published several bulletin articles with practical tips on good creation care including information about how we can respond to the Pope’s encyclical and care for creation in our own everyday lives; an article about Meatless Mondays; and NOHAZ collection event reminders

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

- Planned a “Mass for Life” and reception for 190 members of our community on anniversary of Roe V. Wade
- Incorporated ‘Respect Life’ theme into liturgy for Respect Life Sunday in October
- Participated in “40 Days for Life” Prayer Vigils in Sterling Heights, where team members prayed and sang outside an abortion clinic for an hour each week (6 weeks in the Fall and during Lent)
- Supported weekly Adoration during Lent; developed a prayer and reflection booklet for attendees (including 23 children from Catechism during Holy Week)
- Supported the Crossroads Care Center, Grace Centers of Hope Women and Children’s Center, Right to Life/Lifespan, and Birthchoice Mobile Ultrasound Unit through various collections and donations (including nearly \$10,000 in cash and checks)
- Coordinated our 5<sup>th</sup> annual May crowning to honor our spiritual mother, Mary
- Individual members participated in the “No One Dies Alone” program at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital; helped coordinate the Michigan Nurses for Life Fall Conference; and attended numerous pro-life advocacy events

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

- Maintained strong relationship with Faith Community Nursing
- Updated first aid kits in the parish hall
- Provided fall risk assessment, and blood pressure and stroke screenings during Sunday Socials (sent two parishioners to hospital with dangerously high BP)
- Hosted a fall Flu Clinic, and spring seminars on ‘Men’s Health’ and ‘Raising Teenagers’
- Arranged annual AED refresher course for our ushers, and a Friends and Family CPR renewal
- Wrote monthly health education articles for the bulletin—including articles on mental health
- Created prayer blankets with SOS guests; prepared get well/cheer basket for parishioner after surgery; provided Thanksgiving dinner for parish family
- Supported Mercy Place Clinic (a local health care agency serving low and no-income clients)
- Members attended educational offerings at St. Joe’s Network meetings (including “Active Shooter” in church setting, and the very real problem of “Sex Trafficking” in our community)

***Parish Services*** – to facilitate the parish response of support, hospitality, resource, and/or condolence for people in need. Staff leader – Cindy Monaghan, Christian Service Coordinator

- Bereavement Ministry – 5 active ministers reached out to dozens of families whose loved one passed this year; hosted “Grieving with Great Hope” workshop in the fall, and “Through Death to Life” in the spring
- Funeral Lunches – Jewel Messina and Diane Martin along with Pennie Folk worked with volunteers (some helped set-up, cook, serve, clean-up, and wash linens) on a rotating basis to prepare beautiful, delicious luncheons for parishioners’ funeral guests
- Good Samaritans – met for quarterly training meetings; provided numerous home visits, phone calls, and transportation assistance to parishioners in need—including meals and errands for parishioners recovering from surgery; prepared and hand-delivered gifts to homebound parishioners, as well as 150 Danish Village and 100 Medilodge residents around the major holidays; continued outreach to Danish Village with monthly Communion services including refreshments and fellowship; hosted a summer cookout at Danish Village
- Prayer Warriors – intercede on behalf of our parishioners; lifting specific concerns up to our Lord in prayer via an email prayer chain and occasional intercessory prayer group meetings; we cover requests that are called into the office or submitted via our website prayer link
- Social Services – Helped parishioners and local families in need with: rent (4); car-related expenses (6); security deposits (5); utility and medical bills (7); and gas and grocery cards (68)

## **CHRISTIAN SERVICE COMMITTEE SUMMARIES CNTD:**

**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 – Ron Melnik

- Membership increased to 167 members
- Hosted five dinner events that included inspirational and informational speakers and entertainment
- Hosted four Lunch, Cards and Games events including December Christmas Fun Bingo
- Coordinated a Lunch Bunch group that 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 for CCRT—gathering toiletries, caps, scarves, gloves, and school uniforms
- Coordinated a 'Grandma/Grandpa Project' to collect items for mothers and new babies
- Took a field trip to Sweetest Heart of Mary Church for a tour and Mass, followed by lunch

**Special Needs Prayer Group** – to promote fellowship and spirituality through creative expression, prayer, skits, and crafts. Leaders – Deacon John and Annette Wright

- Special Needs Disciples met monthly for prayer and activities; had an off-site bowling party; finished the year with a cookout

After reviewing these opportunities, please consider how you would like to engage your gifts in our ministries.... Contact Cindy at 248-656-8720, or [cmonaghan@stirenaeus.org](mailto:cmonaghan@stirenaeus.org)

**Many thanks to all the St. Irenaeus parishioners who serve with us!**