

St. Irenaeus Christian Service Commission

Who We Are and What We Did this Fiscal Year (2018/2019)

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. Members – Leigh Ann Grubbs, Kathleen Larkin, Ron Melnik, Florie Mojica, Cindy Monaghan, Pat Palouljian, Dale Proulx, Debbie Pruent, Eileen Ross, Terry Statz, Colleen Steyer, Marilyn St. James, Nan St. Peter, Chris Wogan, Deacon John Wright*

CHRISTIAN SERVICE COMMITTEE SUMMARIES FOR 2018/2019:

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*

- Planted and maintained flower gardens to provide an inviting and beautiful place for prayer; the bounty of the vegetable patch was shared with parishioners; kitchen scraps and garden clippings were turned into compost which was added to the parking lot sign bed and vegetable patch; lilies of the valley and hostas were removed from the rectory beds
- Completed a second energy audit of all church buildings, with the goal of being environmentally responsible and reducing energy consumption; several good practices are already in place, and recommendations for further savings were presented to the Finance Council
- Educated parishioners on care of creation through bulletin articles—topics included plastic pollution, ideas for family Earth Day and Lent activities, and how to obtain a home energy efficiency kit
- Helped research and select a reusable grocery bag to give parishioners at Easter

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

Leader – Nan St. Peter

- Planned a "Mass for Life" and reception for members of our community on anniversary of Roe v. Wade
- Incorporated 'Respect Life' theme (*Cherished, Chosen, Sent*) 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 and Advent
- Hosted baby bottle drive for ICU Birth Choice; attended a benefit for Crossroads Care Center; and supported Right to Life/Lifespan through a candy bar sale on Father's Day and a donation for carnations on Mother's Day

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*

- Hosted a Flu/Pneumonia Clinic; and a 'Fall Risk Assessment' with one-on-one attention from physical therapists
- Donated fleece and prayed with SOS guests while tying blankets together; also offered personalized laundry bags
- Arranged the annual AED refresher course for our ushers; and a Friends and Family CPR class for parishioners
- Provided free radon test kits to parishioners; provided a Thanksgiving dinner for a parish family in need
- Updated first aid kits and AEDs; hosted LifeLine Screening for parishioners and community members
- Offered blood pressure and stroke screenings at monthly Sunday Socials, making referrals when needed
- Wrote monthly physical and mental health education articles for the bulletin
- Maintained strong relationship with Faith Community Nursing Department at St. Joe's—attended quarterly meetings, obtained health-related resources for our parish, and received the latest info from Oakland County Health Department

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: 168 strong
- 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

Special Needs Disciples – *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 including crafts and acting out stories in Scripture according to the liturgical calendar; had an off-site bowling party; finished the year with a cookout
- Twenty team members planned; 35-50 disciples from 10-15 group homes and parishes participated each month

St. Irenaeus Christian Service Programs

Our Outreach and Service this Fiscal Year (2018/2019)

Back to School Blessings – Toni Allen, Nancy Berrigan, and Leigh Ann Grubbs led the collection and distribution of back to school necessities for CCRT (Pontiac), John Paul Secondary School (Uganda), and Neighborhood House (Rochester).

Baldwin Soup Kitchen – Carmen Bonanni organized parishioners on a rotating basis to serve several 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 two blood drives (and NDP student Lily coordinated the summer drive) for the non-profit MI Blood.

Catholic Community Response Team – Toni Allen & Margaret Melnik helped with the collection of full-sized toiletries, winter accessories, and school uniforms; Colleen Steyer sat on Board; Denise Petitjean helped with 15th Anniversary Gala.

Christmas Gifts – Jackie Lepore, Pat Palouljian, and Debbie Pruent coordinated the adoption of 100 individuals through Grace Centers of Hope, Lighthouse, Jail & Outreach, Readers Become Leaders, Samaritas, and St. Irenaeus (Adopt-a-Family); and helped with the collection and delivery of 700 gifts to local agencies for those in need (Roses in December).

Clean Out Your Desk Campaign – Dana Gale and Ellen Stuart led the collection, sorting, and donation of used school and office supplies to Rogers Elementary School in Pontiac.

Focus Hope Drivers – Several parishioners helped OPC deliver monthly food boxes to homebound residents of Avon Tower and Samaritas.

HOPE Shelter – Janice Dalfovo-Dawson led our HOPE Team in coordinating food, clothing, monetary donations and gifts; and led 40+ volunteers to serve 560 meals to 80 homeless guests at the Pontiac Hope Adult Shelter and Hope Recuperative Center for a week. We also hosted two summer cookouts for the shelter guests.

Manna Meal – Dale Proulx scheduled 23 rotating volunteers for this ministry, and Larry Gatt led them in teams of 7-8 in the preparation and serving of hot soup, sandwiches, and fruit at this soup kitchen in Detroit once a month.

Mercy in Action Day Host Site – Hosted a prayer breakfast and coordinated a dozen service/outreach activities at church and in the community for parishioners and community members.

Needlework Ministry – 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; they also made great progress on a cross-stitched Madonna which will be framed in our worship space later this year.

New Year's Day Meals on Wheels for OPC – Chris Wogan coordinated parishioners to deliver meals to homebound.

Outreach to Seniors – Ministered to residents of Medilodge, Pomeroy, and Samaritas throughout the year; led monthly communion services with hospitality; delivered Christmas and Easter greetings; hosted summer cookout and fall fun day.

Parish Services – The Christian Service Office facilitated the parish response of support, hospitality, resource, and condolence for people in need... we continued our Bereavement Ministry, Funeral Luncheons, Good Samaritan Ministry, Prayer Warriors, and Social Service help. This year we helped parishioners and local families in need with: car repairs (2); car payments (2); security deposits or rent help (12); hotel during homeless transition (1); burial (1); preventing parishioner's utility shut-off (1); preventing parish family's eviction (1); emergency food, diapers, and necessities (dozens).

Prison Ministry – Deacon John led prison Communion services, visited parishioners' incarcerated loved ones, and ministered to other inmates (including helping one begin RCIA classes).

Refugee Resettlement – Pat Palouljian represented St. Irenaeus on the North Oakland Catholic Parish Board, which adopted two Congolese refugee families.

Recycling Program – Parishioners donated hundreds of postage stamps, eyeglasses, hearing aids, cell phones, religious items, and other recyclables to benefit charities.

Rosary Makers for the Missions – Rosary makers created and distributed over 4300 mission rosaries—most went to missionaries overseas, but a few were given to local evangelization efforts.

SOS Week of Hospitality – Jackie Lepore coordinated dozens of volunteers as St. Irenaeus hosted 33 homeless guests from the South Oakland Shelter at our parish in November; providing dinner, hospitality, showers, bedrooms, breakfast, sack lunches, rides, games and prizes, entertainment, and fellowship.

St. Pat's Senior Center – Karen Cook 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 four separate events. Our projects reached hundreds of recipients served through Song and Spirit, Jail & Outreach Ministry, CCRT, HOPE Adult Shelter, Baldwin Center, Karmanos, St. Joe's Hospital, Rosary Makers for the Missions, South Oakland Shelter, Ionia State Prison, Samaritas, Sister Judie's Outreach, and our own homebound.