

# St. Irenaeus Christian Service Commission

## Who We Are and What We Did this Fiscal Year (2019/2020)

**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, Carol Pennington, 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 2019/2020:**

**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

- Maintained flower gardens to provide an inviting and beautiful place for prayer; purchased new royal blue planters for annuals on church patio by the statue of St. Irenaeus; scaled back flower gardens in spring 2020 due to Covid-19
- Shared the bounty of the 2019 vegetable patch with parishioners; turned kitchen scraps and garden clippings into compost which was added to the parking lot sign bed and vegetable patch
- Educated parishioners on care of creation through bulletin articles—some topics included ideas for easy and effective ‘greener’ homemade cleaning products/techniques, and a recommendation of National Geographic Photo Ark books which highlight endangered species
- A long term plan for updating and maintaining the parish landscaping is being prepared...

**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 breakfast reception for members of our community on anniversary of Roe v. Wade
- Incorporated ‘Respect Life’ theme (*Christ our Hope in Every Season of Life*) into liturgy for Respect Life Sunday in Oct.
- Coordinated a petition drive and collected 800 signatures to stop dismemberment abortions
- 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; attended a benefit for Crossroads Care Center

**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; provided free radon test kits to parishioners
- Donated fleece and made prayer blankets with SOS guests; provided Thanksgiving dinner for a parish family in need
- Updated first aid kits and AEDs; arranged the annual AED refresher course for our ushers
- 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 Dept at St. Joe’s—attended quarterly meetings, obtained health-related resources for our parish, and received the latest info from Oakland County Health Dept
- Planned a “pre-diabetes” educ program, but due to covid, this will be rescheduled as a virtual opportunity in the fall

**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: 174 strong; led by seven incredibly dedicated Board Members
- Hosted three dinner events that included inspirational and informational speakers and entertainment; turned the fourth pre-planned dinner into a take-out event as it occurred the week that covid cases were discovered locally
- Hosted an Oct. card party and lunch, a Christmas lunch “fun” bingo, and a Mardi Gras cards, games and lunch in Feb.
- Coordinated a Lunch Bunch group that met every other month at local restaurants to allow for socialization for those who might not get out to the evening events
- Sponsored collections for CCRT July 2019 and Jan 2020—gathering toiletries, caps, scarves, gloves, 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
- Twenty team members planned; 35-50 disciples from a dozen group homes and parishes participated each month

# St. Irenaeus Christian Service Programs

Our Outreach and Service this Fiscal Year (2019/2020)

**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 passed the reigns to Melanie Heaphy in organizing parishioners on a rotating basis to serve lunch to approximately 200 homeless and low-income men, women, and children at the Baldwin Center.

**Blood Drives** – Nan St. Peter and Joanne Schantz organized three blood drives (including one last-minute drive in May!).

**Christmas Gifts** – Pat Paloulian and Debbie Pruent coordinated the adoption of 110 individuals through Grace Centers of Hope, Lighthouse, Jail & Outreach, Readers Become Leaders, and St. Irenaeus (Adopt-a-Family); and helped with the collection and delivery of 600 gifts to local agencies for those in need (Roses in December); we also filled and wrapped over 100 shoeboxes with gifts and snacks for children in Pontiac elementary schools!

**Focus Hope Drivers** – Parishioners helped OPC deliver monthly food boxes to 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 cook and 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 2 dozen 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.

**Mission Possible** – We sponsored youth and prepared a dinner for Faith in Action's week-long summer service camp, matching at-risk youth with skilled contractors to help low-income seniors with home improvement safety projects.

**Needlework Ministry** – Goldie Stoops led a group of knitters to create prayer blankets for those in the hospital; Baptismal bibs for our newest church members; and winter accessories, blankets, baby clothing, and other items for those in need; they also presented a cross-stitched "Knitting Madonna" to our parish on the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**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; hosted fall fun day; delivered Christmas greetings and gifts.

**Parish Services** – The Christian Service Office facilitated the parish response of support, hospitality, resource, and condolence for people in need through our Bereavement Ministry, Funeral Luncheons, Good Samaritan Ministry, Prayer Warriors, and Social Service help. We helped parishioners and local families in need with: car repairs/insurance help (3); security deposits/rent help (2); medical bills (2); preventing shut-offs/utility help (9); groceries/other needs (several).

**Prison Ministry** – Deacon John ministered to inmates (including helping a couple who were interested in RCIA).

**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 1500 mission rosaries before covid hit—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 35 homeless guests from the Lighthouse rotating shelter at our parish in November; providing dinner, hospitality, showers, bedrooms, breakfast, sack lunches, rides, games and prizes, entertainment, prayer, and fellowship.

**St. Pat's Senior Center** – Karen Cook coordinated dinner in October for St. Pat's in Detroit; over 30 parishioners made desserts and a dozen confirmation students and parents helped serve (March's dinner was cancelled due to covid).

**Works of Mercy Events** – Parishioners engaged in works of mercy and acts of love during two separate events. Our projects reached hundreds of recipients served through Song and Spirit, Jail & Outreach Ministry, CCRT, HOPE Adult Shelter, Baldwin Center, St. Joe's Hospital, Samaritas, Rosary Makers for the Missions, Lighthouse (rotating shelter), and Sister Judie's Outreach. Our spring event with West Middle School Students was scheduled the day schools cancelled after school activities due to covid, so a small group put in a big effort; and our spring triple-header was also cancelled.

**Covid Projects** – Parishioners helped pack and deliver 4,460 lunch bags for Baldwin Soup Kitchen, HOPE Adult Shelter, and Manna Meal; had a successful baby supply drive for Baldwin and cleaning product drive for HOPE; grocery shopped/cooked for homebound parishioners; set up phone call check-ins and pen-pals during quarantine; helped families in need.

# **St. Irenaeus Christian Service Outreach**

## **Who We Supported this Fiscal Year (2019/2020)**

*As responsible stewards of God's gifts, our parish partners with other organizations through prayer, participation, and generosity to help further God's kingdom on earth, work for social justice, protect life, and meet the needs of His children.*

### **Organizations we supported financially this fiscal year include:**

Abigayle Ministries, Agape Retreat Scholarships, Angel's Place, The Baldwin Center, Bread for the World, CCRT, Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan, Catholics Confront Global Poverty, Catholic Relief Services, Clinton River Watershed Council, Corner Shower and Laundry, Crossroads Care Center (general), Crossroads Care Center (SHARE program), Day House, Detroit Catholic Pastoral Alliance, Faith in Action, Forgotten Harvest, Friends of John Paul School, Gary Bernstein Community Health Clinic, Gianna House, Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan, Grace Centers of Hope, Habitat for Humanity Oakland County, HOPE Adult Shelter, HOPE Recuperative Care Center, Interchurch Women of Rochester Area, Inter-Faith Volunteer Caregivers, Jail and Outreach Ministry, Lighthouse of Michigan (general), Lighthouse of Michigan (rotating shelter—formerly SOS), Manna Community Meal, Mary's Children Family Center, Mary's Mantle, Neighborhood House (general), Neighborhood House (food pantry), Network, OCIMA, PAX Christi USA, Pope Francis Center, The Power Company Kids' Club, Samaritas (Refugee Resettlement), St. Dominic's Outreach Center, St. Patrick Senior Center, Vista Maria, and Witness to Innocence.