

Notes from Our Lady of Fatima Social Ministry Committee Meeting  
which took place on March 3, 2010 in the Gathering Space at St. Catherine's

Those present were: Father Tom Jennings, Bill Deutsch, Sue Buffington, Virginia Gerken, Connie Wieneke, Bernadine Merrill, Sue Linebeck, Becky Ranchau, Tillie Clark and Mary Lou Mulligan.

Father Tom opened the meeting with the Operation Rice Bowl Prayer Service. He had Sue Linebeck read a story about a family in Ethiopia who had received help from CRS through the Rice Bowl collections.

Sue Linebeck introduced Luann Bosma of Volunteers in Mercy. Luann gave a short talk about the work in which her group is involved. She also had handouts explaining their ministries. Their main focus is Pipestone, Rock, Nobles and Murray counties. They are affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church but they generally attempt to connect clients with churches of their own denomination. VIM is a Christian community assistance ministry that connects people within our local communities who are in need with volunteers from area churches who are able to assist. They get referrals from HHS, Public Safety Depts., Crisis Centers and many other offices who may encounter folks in need of help. They are supported by many businesses, churches, individuals and community organizations including the United Way. They are welcoming to volunteers and will accept donations of money and also clothing, furniture and other household items in Pipestone at their Thrift Store Ministry.

Tillie Clark will make sure that we have coffee and treats at the Mary Jane Brown Home when we have our monthly Mass there.

We scheduled people to sell Fair Trade Coffee the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weekends of each month through May. A copy of the schedule will be kept in the box with the items for sale. The box is in the sacristy or on the Gathering Space kitchen counter.

Students from Faith Formation walked over to the Methodist church today for a tour of the Rock County Emergency Food Shelf. They were very well behaved and it seemed to be a learning experience. Dorothy Dorn was the guide. She is retiring as coordinator this month and will be replaced by Mary Gehrke. Last year they dispensed 32,000 lbs. of food.

Father spoke about his interest in starting a Parish Nurse program. He said it will be more important as our parishes demographics change in the future and introduced it for our prayerful discernment over the next couple of years. He passed out some reading materials on the subject. He sees it as a volunteer position but the nurse would have to be certified and educated for the job.

Father also talked about the GAMC program which will not be funded as of April 1. That will drop 77,000 of the very poorest people in our state from getting medical assistance. The state's bishops have been among the leading proponents of getting that program funded before that date arrives. The legislature funded it but Governor Pawlenty vetoed it. Then the House failed to override it. Now they are trying to figure out how they can fund it. The Bishops want all of us to lobby the legislature to get the job done.

March 14<sup>th</sup> at Mass we will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Eddie Deutsch being in a wheelchair. His family will serve fellowship and we will present him with gifts from both parishes.

Father also remembered that last year we sent Easter baskets to the shut-ins of our parishes. After some discussion, Connie Wieneke said she would chair the activity. Mary Lou will email Norma Stewart to solicit funds from the LCCW since they have paid for this in the past. Norma will talk to Connie and they will set up a day for doing the baskets in the Gathering Space. They will be delivered by the Ministry of Care when they

make their rounds the week just prior to Palm Sunday. St. Mary's parish will do their own.

Mary Lou Mulligan will forward all NETWORK and USCCB action alerts to members who have given her their email addresses. She had postcards from the USCCB for each attendee. They can be sent to our legislator and senators to ask them to work for a just immigration program. She also said that we would be getting information soon on the Bread For the World Offering of Letters Sunday. The topic this year is making the tax system more fair for poor people.

Sue Buffington reported that there will be a bake sale with the March 19 Fish Fry and the proceeds will be for the Relay for Life team from our parish. Relay for Life will be June 18 and 19.

Next meeting will be April 7 at 600PM in the Gathering Space.

Mary Lou closed the meeting with a prayer.

Becky Ranchau sold tickets for the quilt to be raffled at the Hospice fund raiser.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Lou Mulligan, Coordinator