

Notes from Our Lady of Fatima Social Ministry Projects Meeting
November 2, 2011 at 6:30 PM in the Gathering Space of St. Catherine's Church

Those present were: Father Tom Jennings, Connie Wieneke, Sue Linebeck, Tillie Clark, Bill Deutsch and Mary Lou Mulligan.

Father Tom opened the meeting with a prayerful remembrance of members from both parishes who had passed away this year. We passed around the Fair Trade Volunteer sheets and we have covered the first month and some for the following months. Mary Lou Mulligan will contact some people who have volunteered in the past and have said they would do it again to cover some future weeks.

Connie Wieneke and Sue Linebeck reported that the Hunger Free Rock county meetings have been very poorly attended and they are just waiting now to see if they can get things moving again. No meetings are scheduled in the near future. Mary Lou reported that the September Cropwalk was the most poorly attended ever. The committee is trying to come up with some new ideas to spur interest. We do not have an end total for dollars collected.

Our Offering of Letters in October was accepted better this year. More people took the materials and said they would read it and write from home. The last Anointing Mass for this fall will be at MJB and Poplar Creek on November 29. Vets Home Bingo will be on November 19 and again on December 17.

The wrap up meeting for the successful Fall festival will be on November 3. The Advent Festival at SC will be on November 30 with a Soup Supper starting at 5 PM SC will host the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, November 20 at 7 PM. LCCW will serve fellowship following the service. SHARE collection will be all day at Sharkee's on November 30 and distribution will be there on Dec. 2. Pat Scheidt will once again chair the Winterfest Cookie sale on December 3. The MJB Birthday Party will take place on Dec. 8 at 2:15 PM. Mary Lou will chair and is happy that she has several people to assist her. Neva Clausen will bring the Kitchen Kutups for entertainment. Sue Linebeck will chair the Christmas Shutins project as she has in the past. Mary Lou will see to getting a Poinsettia to each of the families of those who passed away this year. LCCW pays for both of those projects. Father asked for a report on the Elizabeth Ministry. Sharon Deutsch is chairing that project and she is sending out a beautiful card to each family of a newborn thanking them for new life in our parish. They also receive a \$20 gift certificate to the Pizza Ranch enclosed in the card. This is another LCCW project. The Carmelites have invited the Bethlehem Olivewood Workers to sell their wares again this year on December 4. Father said that the Bishop would like us to invite a group called Blessed Art to sell their products here during Lent. They are a group of Palestinian carvers, too. Mary Lou reported that their have been some applications filed now for the Habitat house to be built on Marie Wiegel's lot. SWMNHFH has not chosen a Partner family as yet but hope that groundbreaking will take place next spring. Mary Lou has been receiving many alerts from MNCC, JRLC, CRS and Network asking us to contact our legislators regarding the spending cuts and the ways in which they are planning to balance the budget. They all stress the Catholic Social teachings regarding a preference for the poor and that there is a huge gap right now between haves and have nots and it is widening very quickly. Father suggested and it was agreed that Mary Lou should write a letter in the name of the group to our state legislators asking them to consider all of the cuts that they have made in our important infrastructure before they decide to fund a stadium. The CRS has a department called CATHOLIC CONFRONT GLOBAL POVERTY and they are working in several areas: helping people in poor countries to improve their water supply, reducing the amount of human trafficking in the world and promoting comprehensive immigration reform. These last two items are connected in so many ways. Father Tom thought that it might be a good idea to supply the whole parish with a good book again like was done last winter. We agreed and he thought MY LIFE WITH THE SAINTS would be an excellent choice. He will order for them so that they are ready before Christmas.

Father is very concerned about the low Mass attendance of late. Our group tonight was smaller than usual, too. Volunteers are hard to come by and none of us had any answers but it is a definite problem.

We discussed the idea that in May we might award a plaque to a person or family in our rural area who exemplify stewardship, faith and family values that all could admire. This idea came from a magazine called RURAL FAMILY, which is published by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. They also sent a piece by mail to Mary Lou about the Ethics of Eating, which Father thinks we might make available to all at our Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service. Father explained that this year as a part of each meeting beginning in January we will use a study guide called FOOD SECURITY & ECONOMIC JUSTICE. It is published by the NCRLC. In January we will talk about pages 1 through 10. Our next meeting will be on January 4 at 6:00 PM in the Gathering Space. All are invited to attend. Mary Lou closed the meeting with a prayer of gratitude for New Life and another remembering our deceased brethren around the world.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Lou Mulligan, Coordinator