

Notes from the Our Lady of Fatima Social Ministry Committee Meeting
which took place on November 3, 2010 in Redder Hall at St. Mary's

Those in attendance were: Father Tom Jennings, Lisa Kremer from Catholic Charities, Connie Wieneke, Bernadine Merrill, Sue Buffington, Sue Linebeck, Tillie Clark, Virginia Gerken, Becky Ranschau, Bill Deutsch Mary Lou Mulligan.

The meeting was opened with a prayer from a social ministry workshop and retreat that Mary Lou and Lisa attended.

Mary Lou gave a report on the workshop which took place at Lake Koronis Camp Grounds near Paynesville. People from social ministry committees across the state were invited. The opening prayer was a study of an illumination from the new St. John's Bible by one of the professors. It was the story from Ezekiel 37:1-14 concerning the Valley of Dry bones. We listened and then meditated on it. Then we broke into small groups to discuss what we had learned. The gospel calls us to love God and neighbor. How do we ground our social ministry efforts in our relationship to God and others? A short reception followed. The next day there were two presenters by authors of books concerning social ministry. They were Jeff Korgan who wrote MY LORD AND MY GOD: ENGAGING CATHOLICS IN SOCIAL MINISTRY and Tom Ulrich author of PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS. Their presentations were very interesting and encouraging to those who attended. The main ideas were three: prayer, education and action which meant direct charity, legislative work and global solidarity.

Father Tom introduced a publication from the USCCB called COMMUNITIES OF SALT AND LIGHT. It is a reflection on the social mission of the parish. We decided that we would use a short discussion of a few pages at a time at each of our meetings. In February we will talk about the first 5 pages of the book.

Lisa prepared a hand out report for each of us. She has been very busy. She wrote a report on the same workshop as well as a trip to Luverne to present an Immigration Information Session which was very interesting. She also had an Immigration Retreat in Worthington which was very well attended and included prayer, shared stories, Mass and a meal. We will put her report on the website.

Father Tom suggested that we have some refreshments prepared by SM and discuss the history of St. Mary's. The 125th anniversary is going to be celebrated on November 7 and all year. Also, the KC's will celebrate their 100th anniversary. Father gave an interesting story of the parish including their school. St. Mary's school, under the leadership of the Franciscan Sisters and the pastor, always had a strong sense of social mission of the Church. SM has given the church 5 priests and 25 sisters. 144 Franciscan sisters served at St. Mary's school. There were a lot of artifacts including old vestments that have been saved over the years.

We talked about Christmas plans to help with a reach out to shut ins. We will also do the poinsettias for families who have lost loved ones this year. Sue Buffington said that LCCW would again collect new baby things for the Christmas meeting which she will deliver to Helping Hands in Worthington. She is also bringing a load of things collected by Virginia Gerken at the rummage sale last week to the same place. Sue will also head up the Baby Bottle collection in January on the weekend of the 22/23 with the proceeds for Helping Hands. She said that the teens from our parish may help with the collection again this year.

We passed the Fair Trade Sales Volunteers form and people signed up to help on the Fair Trade Sundays.

Our next meeting will be on Feb. 2, 2010. Father Tom will be on retreat at the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai in Egypt.

Mary Lou sang the OUR LADY OF FATIMA hymn, a song she learned in Our Lady of Good Counsel School in Wilmont. We said the Hail Mary together and went around the room enjoying many of the interesting things from St. Mary's parish attic for the anniversary displays.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Lou Mulligan, Coordinator