

SOCIAL JUSTICE OUTREACH Ministries 2017. Chair: Kathi Stolte. 223-6133
Pastoral Team liaison: Deni Mack 388-0040 x1314), Secretary: Maribeth Szilagyi.

Anti Racism: Deni Mack & Bill & Sandy Wynne 388-9608 **Education for Action:**
Building Coalitions Black and White Churches Against Racism and Sacred
Conversations on Race Anne Kriz 315 986 2209

Baked Food and Healthy Sisters Soup mix Sale (Bob and Sheila Emmert 425-3074)
benefits self-help anti-poverty projects (Lent each year).

Bethany House – A Catholic Worker House provides shelter, meals and clothes for homeless women and children. The Bethany staff advocates for these women & children & puts them in touch with employment opportunities and social services. One of our parish *JustFAITH* groups of volunteers prepare meals monthly; they dine in solidarity with Bethany residents.

Blessed Sacrament Supper Deacon Ron Tocci and 5 teams of Assumption volunteers serve every month with great care providing a hot, nourishing, sustaining meal for the hungry and homeless in the Southeast area of Rochester.

Catholic Relief Services Fair Trade Sale: (Kathi Stolte). In late Fall or Advent we usually hold a fair trade sale of lovely gifts made by impoverished people. Proceeds from the sale go directly to the craftsman.

Children's Sabbath: (Deni Mack) is generally held in mid Oct throughout the nation's faith communities. Marion Wright Edelman's Children's National Defense Fund & Brigit Hurley's local Children's Agenda research and advocacy for children in poverty inform our educational materials and worship aides.

Consistent Life Ethic: Social Justice Outreach ministers address the wide spectrum of life issues by presenting with our parish Adult Faith Enrichment team & *JustFAITH* groups study sessions, displays, service projects and advocacy on human trafficking, the environment, poverty, Muslim-Catholic dialogue and more.

Crop Hunger Walk – Barbara Green (585 330-2708) Perinton Community Ecumenical activity sponsored by Church World Service and organized by local volunteers to raise funds to alleviate hunger near and far.

Deaconess Maggie's summer camp, High School service group, women's shelter breakfast team, back to school assistance. Project Urge, Eastern Service Workers & Habitat for Humanity are ecumenical charitable outreaches (Deacon Ron Tocci)

Education and Advocacy: Our Diocesan Public Policy committee researches and advises on issues needing legislation, i.e. child care subsidies for children of low income working parents. Informative hand-outs, liturgy ideas, homily hints, prayers of the faithful, and petitions for parishioners to consider signing to our legislators are offered to parishes in early February each year.

Fairport Good Neighbor Fund: Dr. Deni Mack (388-0040 x1314) and Frank DeChalais (425-8746) and most local pastors & their delegates carry out the same ministry as Mercy Fund. The difference is FGNF is supported by and shared with most local faith communities. Recipients must be local or a member of one of the participating faith communities.

Food Distribution at Pines of Perinton with Foodlink - Barbara Green

Furniture and Household needs. Rosemary Adamo & Carol Stilwell connect donated items to people in need and update the Needs column in the church bulletin weekly.

GRCC Faith in Action – (Deni alerts pastoral team to this event and asks for nominees & offers recommendations) Each year we honor a parishioner at the annual Greater Rochester Community of Churches Faith in Action banquet. The honoree puts his or her faith into action through spiritual and corporal works of mercy. SJOM also actively supports other GRCC initiatives, i.e. burial ministry for people with no family nor resources, prayer at vigils in the city for victims of homicides and more.

Green Team. (Bill Maier & Lynn Allen) A new project building upon Justfaith's God's Creation Cries for Justice series led by Steve Linder. Steve is a member of the climate coalition. The GREEN team was initiated by parish pastoral council in 2016

Haiti. Gerry Straub, a modern day St Francis is an expert on St Francis of Assisi. Gerry, a TV and Hollywood producer and film maker turned award winning author and film maker with a passion for the poor. He showed film clips and spoke here in 2011 and 2016 and many parishioners support his work among children in Haiti

Holiday Dinners – (Maureen Nupp 377-1237) Ingredients for a holiday dinner are provided by parish volunteers for families or individuals for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Most of the recipients have been referred to us by local school nurses, social workers, our own mercy fund team and Pines of Perinton. This is individual to individual or family to family so the dinner ingredients are specific to the specific needs of the recipient. Coordinating is done with Perinton Food Shelf and nearby churches. And **Angel tree** (Michelle Goodrich) puts a tree in the foyer each advent season for gift ideas for specific needy children.

Housing & financial advice Tom Maddelena was assisting Frank, Rosemary and Deni on the Mercy team along with a few accountants in our parish who advise people who request help on budgeting. Tom until taken ill was researching housing availability and advising people in need of affordable housing & doing interviews. Now Frank is doing most of that.

JUSTFAITH (Deni Mack 388-0040 x1314) is a 30 week immersion in Catholic Social teaching through retreats, prayer, scripture, reading, listening to people in poverty, film clips, etc. in order to learn & live foundational principles for the life of faith and the mission of the church. *JustFAITH* began @ Assumption in 2005. 4 groups of 12 in a

group completed the series. Some continue to meet years later; among their many & varied ministries some prepare dinner and dine with residents of Bethany house. Some facilitate new JF offerings and serve as parish liaison to Rochester ACTS and other needs. Participants say that the *JustFAITH* 30 week course in Catholic Social Teaching is foundational for faith. The *JustFAITH* modules are enriching and provide timely info on ways to apply faith in today's world. *JustFAITH* modules @ Assumption are:

- **Caring for God's Creation** is the name our parish gave JF's environment course. Catholic Social Teaching calls us to act as stewards of what God has and is creating. It teaches us that everything that God creates is important and we are to show God's creation utmost respect. It is our responsibility to care for all that sustains life. The 40 people who completed the 8 wk. series in 2006 & 2015-16 studied materials from which bulletin articles on practical ways to protect our environment were written; some created and staffed the recycling of bottle caps. A member chairs our Social Justice Outreach Committee and served as liaison on JJJAR (our neighboring Catholic churches) collaborative social outreach presenting a well-attended Caring for God's Creation panel of experts. Our parish hosts consciousness raising forums on Caring for God's Creation; i.e. Pachamama conferences. On April 12 2016 Ruth Marchetti presented current info on Energy Stewardship for faith based facilities; Dr. Susan Spencer, US Ambassador for Solar Aid on March 25, 2015. In Fall 2015 four groups studied **Laudato Si** and some used JFs God's Creation Cries for Justice course materials as well. One facilitator of a group is a local rabbi. One of the Laudato Si study groups put energy saving ideas in our church bulletin weekly for over one year. And a different quote from Pope Francis related to social justice themes is put in our church bulletin weekly since he became pope. (Steve Linder 223-9452, Monica Sozio and Deni)
- **Engaging Spirituality**: Another 30 people completed 23 weeks listening, reflecting and reading of contemporary faith leader's spiritual practices, struggles and assessments of the challenges facing people of faith today in the light of sacred scripture. Engaging Spirituality invites us to live our lives in creative tension with 2 powerful Spirit impulses: to take time from the bustle and complexities of life with the contemplative tradition and to immerse our lives in the Gospel tasks of serving others, caring for the vulnerable and working for justice in the social dimensions of the apostolic tradition. 3 groups met for 23 weeks. Several members continue offering to the general public fine films and offer discussions of edifying books. (Marilyn Thaler 425 1943, Anne Kriz & Deni)
- **Crossing Borders: Immigration reform 8 week module attracted another dozen people about 7 yrs. ago** to listen to immigrants and their advocates as the issue reshapes the cultural, economic and political landscape of the planet. This module offered the opportunity for prayer, reading and reflection as well as discussion and discovery. This group continued to meet to offer to the general public opportunities to view excellent documentary films on immigration and hear expert speakers on immigration and on human trafficking. (Sandi Burke) **New Immigration group of 16 members met May 2, 9, 16, 30 June 13, 20, 27, July 11, and 18, 2017 @ 5:30 – 8 pm in room 2. They attended an immigration**

and law conference in June and worshipped with Our Lady of Guadalupe migrants community and their pastor, Fr Jesus Flores came to our session here and told us of the need for Immigration lawyers and said deportations have increased in the last few months leaving their American born children! Facilitator is Ginny Maier

- **Prison reform:** Another dozen people studied prison reform for 8 weeks facilitated by a founder of Step by Step Prison Ministry. This module was written by Jens Soering who does not try to soften the gritty truth of prison reality. Soering advocates the Christian principle of restorative justice, points out the critical need for comprehensive prison reform. At the same time, he focuses on the power of centering prayer and the Christian messages of reconciliation and redemption. Our parish has presented to the public a forum featuring Ms. Warth, on alternatives to incarceration. (Nancy Bellini 421 9722; 631 334 9306)
- **Exploring Our Conflicts: Non Violent Peacemaking:** 16 people enjoyed this 8 week study reflecting deeply and acting locally in the interests of peace; several of them researched the fracking question and spoke against it at public forums to wide acclaim. (Anne Kriz, Jeanne Durant, Barbara Green, Marilyn Thaler)
- **Living Solidarity: Federal Budget as Moral Document** Another 25 people met for 8 weeks for the formal study of national priorities and the common good in the light of church teaching and scripture. Several continue to meet to discuss how best to apply their learnings. They wrote a series of approx. 10 Tax Talk articles for the church bulletin and presented guest speakers for the public i.e. Pulitzer Prize winning economic analyst, David Cay Johnston, moral theologian Marv Mich, policy analyst for Children's Agenda, Brigit Hurley, diocesan social justice ministry resource, Ruth Marchetti and Catholic Family Center staffer, Lisa Lewis. One participant is an active critic of COMIDA and keeps us updated on actions & statements needed. We have our own parish saint Bob Warth, deceased member of all of our Justfaith courses brought suit against corporations misusing tax dollars about 30 years ago. That case is studied in college courses to this day.
- **NEW Peace Initiatives** was held in 2013 – 14 with 12 enthusiastic participants. (Monica Sozio 388-0762 & Deni)
- **Good News People Bringing Hope in Hard Times” Building Disciples** met in 6 small groups of 10 each for 14 weeks in Fall, 2014 & Spring 2015 (Marita Vanderveer, Maureen Nupp, Jean Murphy, the Wilsons, Monica Sozio, Margaret Osler, Sue Brekovsky & Deni Mack 388-0040 x1314 dmack@dor.org)
- **The Saint and the Sultan Christian-Muslim dialogues are proposed for Fall 2017**
- **Hunger series is proposed for Lent 2018**

Kenyan education mission, HEALING HEARTS AND HANDS was founded and is directed by parishioners, Joanne and Bill Cala 377 8298 who held information sessions here. Our parishioners, the Congdons gathered family and Stephanie Zielinski and Deni Mack to go with the Calas to Kenya in January, 2009 to bless the school built with the memorial fund raised in honor of Marilyn and Terry's daughter, Hannah Congdon. Many parishioners support scholarship students, eye clinics, orphanages, schools and small

independent start up self-help businesses in Kenya that the Calas inspire, generate and empower. Our parish Tithing benefits this mission along with many others.

Martin Luther King, Jr & Week of Prayer for Unity lecture: In 2014 we presented Rev. Dr. Martin McMickle, pres. of CRCDS; 2015 Rev. Dr. William Wilkinson, 2016 Rev Marilyn Cunningham. The latter 2 speakers pastor congregations in the Shelter Street, Flint St neighborhood, Rochester and are active members of RocACTS. In 2017 LaShondra from Connected Communities in the Beechwood area spoke of Leonard Brock's Anti Poverty Initiative.

Mercy Fund. Dr. Deni Mack 388-0040 x1314 and Frank De Chalais 425 8746 daily administer donations and responses to emergency financial crisis. People who request assistance are interviewed and their situation is carefully assessed. When possible, referrals are made to RAIHN & other agencies. The fund assists with emergency rent, prescriptions, food, necessities and transportation to medical appointments and work. Professional accountants in our parish volunteer their time to guide recipients in budgeting.

NAMI Walk – (Kathi Stolte 223-6133 and Deni Mack 388-0040 x1314) Usually, the first Saturday in May starting at Village Gate, Rochester walk for research and advocacy for people who are mentally ill.

Perinton Food Shelf – emergency food relief serving Fairport and Perinton. Food is donated by churches, schools, & civic organizations along with \$\$ for fresh food. Bins in the church foyer are for food collection and each month a parish volunteer delivers food to the food shelf. Food is delivered to Eastern Service Workers in Nov. and Dec.

RAIHN – Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network with homeless families - Sue Owens 585-734-5085– this not for profit, interfaith, culturally competent network of many faith communities assists homeless families to achieve sustainable independence by supporting them with tailored services including shelter, food, personalized case management and a diverse network of caring volunteers. Assumption hosts families for one week every three months. We were among the first to open our arms and church in hospitality in 2005 and we have continued to be hospitable to 5 families every 3 mos. with 50 volunteers.

Refugee Resettlement: (Kathi Stolte 223-6133 and Barbara Green 330 2708, Maribeth & Sandi Burke) provide services and resources to ensure that newly arrived refugees have basic needs met and receive employment assistance necessary to achieve self-reliance in the Rochester area. In 2012-13 a team from Assumption worked with a Burmese/Myanmar family for 6 months and remain dear friends. Sandy Burke continues to work with an Iraqi family. Bill and Sandy Wynne, Nancy Hessler, Kim Bautista, Melissa and Alen Kreso, Kathi Stolte, Maribeth Szilagy and Deni Mack were trained Dec., 2016 to sponsor a family from Eretria starting Jan 22, 2017 & that ministry continues successfully..

Right to Life (Maria and Dan Mruzek 377 3234)

- **Baby Shower** (Monica Sherony 223-7353) In September a giving tree in the church foyer holds paper cut out “booties” listing gift ideas for us to take & purchase and bring to church. Gifts are delivered to the Women’s Care Center and Focus Pregnancy for pregnant women and their babies.
- **Compass Care Walk** (Mruzeks) for Life. Typically in May Assumptions sponsors a team to participate in this pledge gathering walk to raise funds for Compass Care Pregnancy Center which assists abortion vulnerable women choose life. The walk is a family festival that is held at the bowl at Highland Park with music food and games
- **Rosary for Life** - Respect Life Ministry and the Knights of Columbus lead a Rosary with intention of promoting the dignity of all human life from womb to tomb every first Saturday of the month at 3:20 pm in our Assumption chapel.

Rochester Alliance of Communities Transforming Society (RocACTS) (Marilyn Thaler 425 1943, Bill Wynne, Barbara Green, Fr. Ed Palumbos, Anne Kriz, Kathi Stolte, Maribeth S. and Deni) addresses systemic change in inner city via collaborative empowerment through part of the Gamaliel network of community organizations in 54 cities in the USA including the Cathedral parish, St Joseph’s Penfield, St. Mary’s (downtown) and Peace of Christ parishes as well as our own Church of the Assumption and Blessed Sacrament parish in Buffalo whose pastor is a long-time leader in effective faith based community organization. Other members include pastors of black churches and a labor union. Task Forces on Criminal Justice, Education and Poverty and Jobs include people in poverty, the authentic witnesses to the injustice and plight of our world and locale as well as people of faith and those with connections. One on one listening sessions on what this community and the wider community can & must do to address the crisis of poverty is one tool in the RocACTS kit to address system analysis and transformation. Our SJOM is Assumption’s RocACTS core team along with Bill Wynne and Marylyn Thaler. Kathi Stolte, chair of our SJOM designed the postcards re needed child care that were presented to all candidates for Monroe County Exec. in 2015. 35 Assumption parishioners attended the public action at which the candidates were presented the postcards and asked to respect & support families with low incomes who need child care in order to work. Several of us canvassed neighborhoods seeking supportive signatures. Several of us petitioned in front of the county office building for child care and quality early childhood ed. RocACTS is working with PLEX in 2016 helping senior citizens hold onto their homes in this period of increasing gentrification as these residents have been in their homes around 50 years and cannot afford to nor should they be forced to move as their assessments rise. RocACTs in 2016 promulgated Sacred Conversations on Race (written by interfaith clergy in Ferguson, Missouri) seeking participants and facilitators for trainings to conduct the conversations with wisdom and grace. In January 2017 RocACTS mounted an effective postcard and letter writing campaign to raise the age of incarceration ensuring youth are sent to juvenile facilities rather than adult prisons. In 2017 RocACTs Clergy Caucus creates support and safety in for individuals in targeted groups.

Sunshine couriers (Debby Smith 377 5039) sends greeting cards to over 100 shut-ins

Way of the Cross We walk with our neighbors through the village of Fairport @ noon Good Friday praying at places where suffering is alleviated. And some of us participate also in the inner city Cross walk @ 9 am praying at places of violence and of healing. Both walks are ecumenical.

Working Boy's Center: Family of Families Assumption hosted information sessions and updates with a woman religious who works with the Jesuit inspired catechetical, industrial, skill building, school & health center in Quito, Ecuador. Our parishioners, Thalers, De Souzas, Costigans, Adamo and Deni Mack have brought school supplies donated by our parishioners to the Centers and 3 Costigan daughters have served there for between 9 mos. and 2 yrs. Pray for WBC and all Ecuador as it tries to cope with the devastation of April 2016.