

**Saint Thomas Aquinas Social Justice Committee
Meeting Notes, May 3, 2022 6:00 p.m. (via Zoom)**

Present: Chris Rehmann, Chuck Glatz, Francis Todey, Marianne Todey, Felicity Douglas, Mary Ellen Wishart, Paula Friedrich, Dave Dirks, Fr. John Herzog, Ann Gansemer-Topf
Action Items Highlighted

Opening Prayer: Chris

Minutes of April 5: Approved

Business

Recommendations from STA Visioning Group – Actions:

Social Justice Speakers – No report. Chuck will contact Rebecca Crawford to see if any Service and Justice Team members have indicated interest in helping develop a list of potential speakers.

Education for Justice – The National Catholic Reporter magazine provides a resource library of social justice information called Education for Justice. Chuck suggested this may be a good source of information for social justice issues. A subscription fee of \$138 provides access for 2 to 6 individuals. Chuck moved and Marianne seconded that we purchase a subscription. The motion passed. Chuck will follow up and complete a subscription.

Catholic Social Teaching Information – Bobby LeBlanc and Marianne have developed a plan for placing information on Catholic Social Teaching in the bulletin. There will be a series that will cover the Seven Principles of Catholic Social Teaching over the next several weeks. Bobby was also able to order brochures that can be placed in the Lounge.

Laudato Si' and STA Facilities Planning

Dave met with Brad Powers, Chair of the Finance Council, to discuss how the STA carbon footprint can be reduced with future capital improvements. Next fiscal year's budget will include \$14,000 for the additional purchase of solar power. This would add to the solar power shares that were purchased earlier this year. Two other upcoming projects are replacement of the boiler and window replacement. Funding has been designated for this work. However, picking high efficiency replacements will likely drive up the cost of the work. Brad suggested the Finance Council would like help in covering the cost difference to purchase more efficient equipment. The Buildings and Grounds Committee and the Social Justice Committee should coordinate efforts to develop a fund-raising strategy to cover added costs. Some assistance from the Development Coordinator would be helpful in this effort. This will be discussed further in the Fall.

They also discussed how improved communication could benefit STA's mission. There is no single communication method that will meet the expectations of all parishioners and that all

parishioners will use. Also, print bulletins and email have benefits and limitations. There have also been some self-imposed limitations on the use of these communication methods that may need to be reviewed. Laying out the Pastoral Council's vision for St. Thomas, providing educational resources, and finding ways to show appreciation to parishioners are all needed. At the All Parish Meeting Fr. Kyle discussed the need for better communication with the parish, so there will likely be further discussion on this issue.

Social Justice Grant Review:

Social Justice Grant applications will be reviewed as soon as a meeting can be scheduled. A student reviewer's name was offered, and Chris will contact her to find a meeting time that may work for the review team. Felicity, Paula, Marianne, and Francis are the other members of the review group.

AMOS Core Team:

Courtney Dufford from AMOS, Mary Ellen, and Chris met with two individuals who have shown interest in being part of the STA Core Team for AMOS. One discussion item was how to reach out to those parishioners who have not come back to mass since pandemic restrictions have been lifted. On May 18, Mary Ellen, Chris, and the 2 new members will meet with Fr. Kyle to discuss STA's relationship with AMOS.

Joint Care for Creation Team:

Chuck provided an update on the Care for Creation Team partnership with St. Cecilia. The team has decided to use Catholic Climate Covenant as a resource for developing this team. Since Pastoral Councils from both churches have approved this partnership, organization of the team will move forward.

Coordination with the Pastoral Council:

Ann Gansemer-Topf attended the meeting to review two items. The first was to discuss progress on the recommendations from the STA Vision group. The second was to discuss what may be needed help the Social Justice Committee be more effective. Much of this discussion centered around how better coordination/interaction with STA staff would be helpful. The staff turnover in the last couple years has resulted in some unclear definition of staff responsibilities. More work in defining responsibilities and providing better communication would be helpful. The visit and conversation with Ann is appreciated.

Next Meeting:

June 7, 2022, 6 p.m. by Zoom

Respectfully submitted by Francis Today.

Minutes approved June 7, 2022