

**Saint Thomas Aquinas Social Justice Committee  
Minutes, May 4, 2021 6:00 p.m. (via Zoom)**

**Present:** Chris Rehmann, Fr. John Herzog, Chuck Glatz, Francis Todey, Felicity Douglas, Kathy Trahanovsky, Dave Dirks

**Excused:** Mary Ellen Wishart, Tom Budnik, Paula Friedrich

**Prayer:** Chris

Loving Creator,

We asked for strength, and you gave us difficulties to make us strong.

We asked for wisdom, and you gave us problems to solve.

We asked for prosperity, and you gave us purpose and brains to use.

We asked for courage, and you gave us fears to overcome.

We asked for patience, and you gave us situations where we were forced to wait.

We asked for love, and you gave us troubled people to help.

We asked for justice, and you called us to be just and lead with integrity.

Lord, we have received nothing that we asked for or wanted.

And yet, we receive everything that we needed.

For this we give thanks.

- By Colleen Hanycz, PhD incoming President at Xavier University

**Minutes of April 6:** Approved

**Business**

**COVID-19 Fund:**

Approximately \$43,000 are currently in balance after the largest fundraising month ever - \$41,000. This included \$10,000 from Sisters of St. Francis (Note added after meeting: Collegiate United Methodist is allocating \$10,000 and requesting matching funds from another Fund they can apply to) and \$2500 from Faith Baptist and a few stimulus checks. 691 payments have been made to 115 households since inception totaling \$272,175.14. There is an emerging problem that some of the cooperating agencies may not be able to help because of previous aid offered. Some landlords are now not willing to provide rental verifications.

**“Linda” and Pastoral Council consideration—Francis**

Francis gave the Council a brief report with promise to provide details at the May meeting. He didn't sense any resistance though just what help could be offered is not clear. Certainly the list of individual tasks listed as needed would be fine. Mary Ellen has asked to attend the May meeting to answer questions if she is available.

**Honduras Committee**

Tom's report: Perhaps one other thing is that I think we are coming closer to resolving the donation issue, in that Bobby has secured the assistance of an attorney to draw up an appropriate policy. You may also want to keep in mind that John Donaghy will be visiting the Ames area, on his own this time without STA assistance. He will be here beginning May 19th.

**Love Your Neighbor (LYN) fund:**

Dave reported that Tom, Bobby and Fr. Kyle conferred on who would handle LYN affairs with Don's retirement. It is expected that the new person wouldn't have the same time allotted and Dave will convene the LYN Subcommittee to plan how to cover the gap with volunteers. The new person will not have Don's historical memory and Net may also have less time with what she has done as she is now working with the new data system.

**Social Justice Grants:**

Chris, Felicity, Francis and 3 students plus Paula if she is available will meet 5:30 May 5 by Zoom. Dave reported that Matt Mitchell failed to apply on behalf of Romero House. Felicity suggested some funds could be left unallocated to consider Romero House needs later. They are generally housing 9-10 men and hosting Saturday dinners. Given the rules, Dave feels it is probably too late to consider them.

**Care of Creation Celebration:**

Via email Tom Budnik reports that John Wilson from St. Cecilia Church and he have met to talk about the 2021 Season of Creation Service, which is now set for Sunday October 3, 2021 at St. Cecilia Church. Chuck Glatz and Mary Ellen Wishart have agreed to work on the planning, and representatives from both churches will have an initial planning meeting on this Thursday May 6, 2021 via Zoom from 3:00 to 4:00 PM. SS Peter and Paul will also join in the collaboration and invitations to participate in the service will be sent to other denominations in the Ames area.

Chris and an email from Jackie Comito urging involving more ISU students than last year. Lynne Franco hopes for more children able to attend this year.

The Comito comments that Mary Ellen forwarded to us provoked discussion of proposing involving STA in supporting purchase of solar panels for the City array. Dave agreed to research STA energy use and availability of solar panels IF Parish Council and Fr. Kyle are open to the idea of STA purchasing panels directly or having parishioners make purchases on behalf of STA. At one point installing panels at STA was briefly looked at. Francis suggested bringing it to Finance Council (Chair is John Moss) first – Dave will do so. Fr. John suggested making the case for reducing future energy costs and the Church by-laws referencing investing for the long haul. Suggestions could be communicated as to other actions parishioners could take.

**Adjournment at 6:54 p.m.**

**Next meeting: June 1, 2021 @ 6:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Chuck Glatz