

**Saint Thomas Aquinas Social Justice Committee  
Minutes, January 5, 2021 (via Zoom)**

Present: Chris Rehmann (Chair,) Tom Budnik (Staff,) Fr. John Herzog, Mary Ellen Wishart, Chuck Glatz, Francis Todey, Felicity Douglas, Paula Friederich

Prayer: Chris

O God, make our year a happy one!  
Not by shielding us from all sorrows and pain,  
But by strengthening us to bear it, as it comes;  
Not by making our path easy,  
But by making us sturdy to travel any path;  
Not by taking hardships from us,  
But by taking fear from our heart;  
Not by granting us unbroken sunshine,  
But by keeping our face bright, even in the shadows;  
Not by making our life always pleasant,  
But by showing us when people and their causes need us most,  
and by making us anxious to be there to help.  
Grant us love, peace, hope and joy for the year ahead.

**Minutes of December 1, 2020:** Approved

**Business:**

**Content and publication of the SJC minutes on the STA website:**

Discussion: There was some discussion about the formatting of the minutes and how much detail of these meetings is useful and appropriate for inclusion on the website. It was generally agreed that, since one of SJC's goals is to be more visible to our parish community, salient details about our conduct and discussions should continue to be published and available on the website.

**Welcoming of the LBGQT community to STA;**

Continuing discussion: Deacon Frank Montabon, on his own behalf and that of Fr. Kyle approached the SJC at its December meeting about the possibility of sponsoring a well known speaker, Mr. Hudson Byblow to present at STA and/or jointly with ISU.

Since December, some of the SJC committee have reviewed some of Mr. Byblow's presentations. There are questions and concerns remaining not of his credentials to speak about homosexuality as it relates to the church, but of the pastoral value in repeating the Roman Catholic teaching to this community. It was agreed that SJC would seek further advice from Deacon Frank and Fr. Kyle. Chris will invite them to join us at a future meeting so that we may gather more information and direction.

**COVID-19 Emergency Fund:**

Approximately \$204K has been donated and approximately \$184K has been distributed.

There is a concern that STA's support and contributions to this effort has not been well reported and is not well known.

**MICA food collection:**

Tom reports that the recent drive at STA yielded approximately 2300 pounds of donated goods. Tom has suggested that, due to increased community need, STA commit to a regular, monthly collection for MICA. He will discuss with staff to determine which weekend of the month is most feasible.

**STA/SJC website**

It was agreed that information about AMOS should be included since it is an interfaith, community based organization which addresses various social justice issues, which is supported by STA/SJC, and in which many members are active.

Chuck volunteered to investigate what enhancements to the website may be made.

**Next meeting: February 2, 2021 @ 6:30 pm**

Respectfully submitted by Paula Friederich