

Meeting Minutes  
**St. Sebastian/St. Vincent Social Justice Ministry**  
Sunday, August 18, 2019

Members Present: Annie Burris, Bernie Rochford, Rita Rochford, Greg Sain, Harry Skeen, Linda Skeen, Dave Tschantz, Mary Tschantz, Carolyn Varner, Mary Yanko.

Prayer: Bernie offered the prayer focused on Labor Day

General Session:

Bernie led the discussion involving Part III of *Mater et Magistra*, John XXIII, The Teaching of *Rerum Novarum*, paragraphs 122-211 “New Aspects of the Social Question”. Items discussed included:

- ! The reading, published in 1961, addressed many issues relating to globalization, government responsibility, social pressures, etc. In many ways, the majority of issues raised remain unresolved and are still sources of tension in society. It states that international cooperation, United Nations organizations, and similar, seemed to be moving forward toward improving conditions for less developed countries. That optimism was, in some ways, premature.
- ! The document calls for the advanced countries to come to the aid of those countries that have been left behind. The aid needs to lift and enable the people to improve their situation as well as share the goods that may not be available to them within their countries. This aid must be given without attempting to gain control. If control is gained, it is simply another form of colonialism. Colonialism is not Christian and must be avoided.
- ! The reading speaks to the need of providing equivalent access to modern facilities for all citizens regardless of locale. The realities of this must be tempered because there are trade-offs in “quality-of-life” preferences for individuals. Some folks prefer country life and others city. However, mobility, water, education, food, and other essential needs should be equalized. This is the role of good government within countries. It is also the duty of more developed countries toward poorer nations.
- ! As the modern era has progressed, a general farm-to-city migration of people within various countries has taken place. The pattern has continued to repeat itself in many countries of the world. The migration was powered by the modern convenience and access to services as well as the opportunity for work in the new jobs created by the modernization. The other trend pressuring the migration has been the industrialization of agriculture. Today, particularly in the U.S., the momentum of the migration has continued, but the opportunities for employment have diminished significantly. This results in increased unemployment, under-employment, and minimum wage (or worse) job opportunities.
- ! Government plays an important role in this migration trend. It was noted that the structure of farm subsidies provided by our government is skewed toward larger farm operations. This bias pressurizes the consolidation of smaller farms into larger operations. This, again, is an example where governance incentivizes large scale societal reactions. Some incentives, while well intended, have unanticipated outcomes. Others start out well-intended and can be quietly “engineered” during the crafting to result in a bias toward the powerful.
- ! The idea of “immigration” vs. “migration” was discussed. The immigration debate currently underway may pale in comparison to the possible larger relentless migrations when issues of access to water and food are considered. Peoples will move to simply survive regardless of country boundaries and economic conditions. This reality must be recognized and actions taken where possible to avert the humanitarian crisis. The United

Nations is uniquely positioned to discuss these issues. The U.S. must participate with the U.N. in the work. However, there does not seem to be much appetite for this type of cooperation within our leadership at this time.

- ! A documentary is currently on Netflix called "*The Family*". It highlights the influence of a Christian organization that has quietly involved itself in the upper political circles of many countries around the world. Its impact appears to have been far reaching.
- ! In the document, we are called to our role as Catholic Citizens. This item segued into some discussion of the voter registration efforts noted below.
- ! The document closes with some discussion on the topic of population growth, particularly in the poorer countries. It notes that many studies cite the reduction in infant and adult mortality rates provided by modern methods and facilities paired with the continued relatively high birth rates in the same societies. These conditions will result in population growth. The reading stresses the teaching that contraception violates the dignity of mankind and is counter to God's plan.

Minutes: No Minutes for May as we had the field trip to Northside Marketplace.

Catholic Commission Update: Greg reported on the following items discussed at recent meeting:

- ! The Bishop Cosgrove Dinner and Silent Auction will be earlier this year – Friday, November 15, 2019 at Tangier, starting at 6PM with Cash Bar/7PM Dinner. Tickets available at Eventbrite.com, keyword: Bishop Cosgrove Dinner. For more information, contact Jeff Campbell, CC Director, 330-535-2787
- ! Service Day Saturday August 24, 2019 9-12:30PM – Care for God's Creation – either at Camp Christopher, 1930 N. Hametown Road, Bath 44333 or Crown Point Ecology Center, 3220 Ira Rd, Bath 44333. Registration RSVP required. Select site choice when registering. Register at [www.ccdocle.org/camp-christopher](http://www.ccdocle.org/camp-christopher)
- ! St. Hilary Knights of Columbus are sponsoring a program on Human Trafficking Wed, September 25 from 7-9PM in the parish center.
- ! The Catholic Commission retreat held recently focused on the USCCB document *Sacraments and Social Mission: Living the Gospel, Being Disciples* which we used a few years ago for our Lenten Program. Carolyn has copies of the document for anyone interested.
- ! As a follow-up to our Earth Day presentation, Greg recommended the article in today's BJ "Unwanted Plastics Turning to Fuel" as something to pay attention to. No current changes to the county's recycling program – but perhaps in the future.

St. Vincent Report:

- ! Friendship Weekend at St V will be Sept 7-8; SJ Ministry is hosting.
- ! Voter registration, supported by the League of Women Voters will take place that weekend. They will offer training to our members at the Sat Vigil Mass Sept 7.

St. Sebastian Report:

- ! Possibly Voter Registration will occur the weekend of Sept 14-15
- ! Gun Violence Program held at St V earlier this year could be scheduled later in the Fall at St Seb

Announcements:

1. Sharon Connor is looking for volunteers to help administer a grant to clean up Reservoir Park next Sat and Sun.
2. Mary T reported Education for Justice website, a project of Center for Concern, has become a part of ISN: Ignatian Solidarity Network. [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org) will continue to host existing EFJ resources, and ISN will continue to add content. Rita reminded us that our group has a membership – contact her to access resources.
3. First Friday Club Sept 6, 2019 @ Tangier. Christina Hannon Luehring. “Keep the Baby, Change the Bathwater: The Gifts that Young People Bring to Our Church”. Doors open 11AM.

Next meeting: **Sunday, September 15 at St. Sebastian Byrider Hall following 9:00AM Mass.**

**Discussion Leader, Prayer and Treat:** Rob Brooks

Minutes prepared by Mary Tschantz