

Holy Spirit Parish  
Christian Service Commission (CSCS)  
Minutes of Meeting 2/12/08

Attending: Gordon Whirry, Chair  
Sr. Catherine Kinsella  
Cindy O'Connell  
Barry O'Connell  
Mary Matelich  
John Culliton  
Bill Ramsey  
Jerry Clark  
Ron Mathsen (guest)

The meeting opened with a prayer. Barry gave an update on the JustFaith groups, noting several JF participants will speak at Soup and Bread on March 12. They will talk about their experience in the program thus far; the goal is to begin recruiting for a new group next fall. A DVD about the program will also be shown.

Sister Catherine reported January contributions to the Parish Relief Fund totaled \$1352.00 while \$974.57 was disbursed with a balance of \$2551.90 on hand January 31. February Equal Exchange sales brought \$290 and after paying for the latest order, there is \$421.45 on hand. After some discussion on disbursement of these funds, the group recommended adding a scholarship for another Guatemalan student (\$250). Randy Glick has requested the parish to sell Equal Exchange goods at the upcoming weaver's event.

Cindy and Jerry have been talking with Marietta Lane about speaking to the JustFaith groups in April on the topic of "nonviolent living" and they asked if the session should be opened to the whole Parish. Having spoken with the rest of the Parish staff, Sr. Catherine suggested this would be good idea as Marietta is one of the Nation's leading advocates for abolishing the death penalty. This topic is in line with the initiative of the Montana Catholic Conference to abolish the death penalty in our state. The group recommended having Marietta speak at the Parish on April 8, 7:00 p.m. The other Great Falls parishes will be invited via invitations in their church bulletins. Jerry and Cindy will make arrangements with Marietta and Sr. Catherine will get information to the other parishes.

The next item of new business was a presentation by Ron Mathsen of First English Lutheran Church on a proposed fair trade event. Ron spent 10 days in Nicaragua on a study tour of a fair trade coffee program where he picked coffee and was introduced to the workings of growers' cooperatives. He shared some interesting stories about the success of the cooperatives in competing with the big companies and garnering a fair price for small growers. These efforts are effective in lifting many small farmers out of poverty. Ron is proposing a fair trade event to encourage other churches to get involved in selling fair trade products because more consumers are needed to sustain the programs adequately. The event would also encourage church members to make maximum use of fair trade products. It would be an opportunity for the churches that have fair trade programs to learn what others are doing. Some in the group wondered if Benefis, UGF and others could be encouraged to use fair trade products. After some discussion, Ron noted he will take the issue to the Ministerial Association; Sister Catherine and John will work with Ron on this issue. The target date for the event is Saturday, April

12 at Holy Spirit Parish with a possible guest speaker, the Rev. George Baldwin, who has many years of experience in Nicaragua. Equal Exchange coffee will be served and fair trade items will be available for sale. Mary will handle publicity for TV and radio stations. Cindy will check on getting posters. John will distribute the posters. Ron, Sister and John will meet at a later date to discuss progress. A copy Ron's preliminary proposal is attached.

Gordon reported on a CSC initiative to explore the possibility of a sister parish on the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation. The goals are to get to know parishioners personally, do projects together and establish a long-term relationship. Fr. Dick is receptive to the idea and the Parish Council does not object. In group discussion, several ideas were presented that should be pursued including: (1) How do we make the relationship meaningful to both parishes; (2) We must have preliminary talks with Fr. Peter Guthneck and Sisters Kathleen Kane and Margaret O'Doherty; (3) Think about how to get both adult parishioners and youth groups involved. As a next step, Sr. Catherine will begin discussions with the two sisters from Rocky Boy and Fr. Pete and the CSC will discuss the issue further at its next meeting.

John introduced the group to a new interfaith initiative called "Communities of Faith Raising Voice and Vision, Health Care: Election 2008 and Beyond". It is a four session adult education series focused on creating a "shared vision and strong voice for a health care future that respects the dignity of each person and the well being of all." See the web site [www.visionandvoice.org](http://www.visionandvoice.org). He will get more information on this issue to share with the CSC and Larry.

Mary relayed some information from Chris Hueth regarding an event at UGF on February 26. David Casey and Doug Tooke will speak on "An Invitation to Service" and all youth from the parish are invited. Also, the Boy Scout food drive is Saturday March 15. On March 8, the scouts will distribute collection bags and fliers to homes.

Finally, the latest information from Bread for the World urged parishes to again participate in their national letter-writing initiative to seek congressional support for increasing U.S. funding to reduce world hunger and poverty. Having participated in the letter-writing initiative last year, the CSC decided to do this again on Sunday, April 6. Sister Catherine will order the 2008 Bread for the World letter-writing kit and Bill will take the lead in organizing the event; CSC members will help. This issue will be discussed again at the next CSC meeting.

The next meeting will be St. Patrick's Day, March 17, same place same time.

The meeting was adjourned after the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jerry Clark for  
Annette Cereck

