

**THE PARISH OF MARY, MOTHER OF MERCY**  
**WITNESS COMMITTEE**  
September 2023

The Witness Committee of our parish is currently involved in various areas throughout the year. Listed below are many of the projects undertaken within our parish. The parish of Mary, Mother of Mercy incorporates three churches in two counties. While many of the projects that the committee undertakes are similar in both time and nature some are limited to the county where the church or churches are located. Both Holy Cross and Saint Francis Solanus Churches are located in Seneca County and Saint James the Apostle Church is located in Tompkins County.

**Food Pantries**

Food for the local pantries is always appreciated and accepted. At both HCC and SFS food donations may be left in the back of the church at any time. At SJA donations are collected monthly. All the donations collected are delivered to the local pantry in the village where our churches are located. Monetary donations can be made to the pantries by dropping the donation in the Sunday collection indicating on the check or envelope, is paying cash, that the donation is for the food pantry. At this time donations to the food pantries cannot be made on line however work is being done to allow on-line donations.

**Christmas Programs**

SJA has done a Hat, Goves and Scarves for donations of those items that remains local. They also coordinate with a county wide program (but I am not sure what or how it works).

HCC and SFS works with the Seneca County Community Christmas Project. This program identifies children from families in need and provides an avenue for the community to come together to help ensure that those who are less able provide for their children at Christmas. Families are also provided with food certificates for the Big M grocery store for those living in the southern half of Seneca County.

Senior adults are also eligible to receive the food certificates. This program is income based currently at 200% of the poverty level. The gift distribution is scheduled for December 13.

SJA has collected baby items in the past at Christmas for Birthright.

**Coat Distribution**

In conjunction with the Seneca County Community Christmas Project a coat distribution takes place in the early fall, once in the north of Seneca County and once in the south. The date for the distribution in Ovid is scheduled for October 14.

A collection box has been placed on the porch of the SJA rectory by Catholic Charities for winter coats.

**Crop Walk / Walk for Food**

These programs are used for raising funds that go to the local food pantries. Crop Walk in Tompkins County and Walk for Food in southern Seneca County.

**Birthright**

Mother's Day Flowers have been sold after all the Masses at all three churches with in our parish.

**Postal Outreach**

We are currently sending notes, cards and / or letters to our parishioners who are Homebound and in Assisted Care facilities. There are currently twenty (20) cards being sent on a monthly basis. Volunteers are needed to continue this program, currently two of our parishioners who have sent cards out have moved from our parish.

**Word Committee**

The Word Committee met with Fr. Bernard via Zoom in August to discuss the committee's goals for the next year.

1. It was established that Susan Guydosh is coordinating our Parish's religious education efforts: family work-at-home sessions and the second Sunday of every month meeting with parents and children.
2. Communication has taken place with Pat Miller who is our point person for our Parish Eucharistic Revival which is an event occurring nationally. Launched on the feast of Corpus Christi in 2022, the National Eucharistic Revival is a three-year initiative by the U.S. bishops that aims to inspire, educate, and unite the faithful in a more intimate relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist. A meeting is being planned between Pat and the Word Committee to make this effort part of our committee agenda.

Submitted by Scott Hamula, Word Committee Chair, on behalf of our other committee members, Leo Kawczenski, William Connor, and Kevin Oefelein.



9/11/2023

## **Fellowship Committee Notes**

The past three months have seen a great deal of activity:

### **Game night**

- Game night is held on the first Wednesday of each month. It rotated between the three churches. Average attendance is 10 to 12.
- August game night was also an ice cream social. This was a great success. There were a number of families with children that came. There were approximately 25 people attending.
- The next game night is Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at Holy Cross

### **Picnic**

- The annual picnic was a success.
- There are two events that seem to take place; the set up the day before and the actual picnic.
  - The set up had a cast of volunteers moving chairs and tables. Parking was set up and all was prepared. The volunteers were extraordinary and greatly appreciated.
  - The day of the picnic came off without a hitch. There was plenty of food, the space was set up and everyone had a great time.

### **Upcoming events:**

- We have Game night scheduled for Oct / November / December. We are going to introduce an option of working on a jigsaw puzzle along with the classic games.
- Holiday fest: Last year we spent an afternoon making paper decorations for the trees decorating the churches. We also had an event where people dedicated an ornament (by writing the name of a loved one) that was subsequently placed on the tree. A small prize was given away as well. Beverages included coffee, tea, and hot chocolate. A small mountain of Christmas Cookies was consumed as well. Attendance was around 30 people from all three churches.

## **Worship Committee Meeting , August 30, 2023**

Attendance:

Fr Bernard

Marc Albanese

Duane Porterfield

Richard Pell

Barbara Willers

Worship Committee met at St Francis Solanas August 30, 2023. The agenda for the meeting was the review and discussion of the Parish Council Committees' Areas of Responsibility. Each item of the Worship Committee responsibility was reviewed for: information, status, and need for action. Most of the items reviewed were found to be functioning without concern. Most are handled by local parishioners, self-recruiting, self-regulating, and are greatly appreciated for the initiatives taken on behalf of the parish.

Areas where some action is recommended:

Eucharistic Ministers

Lectors

Ushers

Altar Servers

The Worship Committee recommends a regular call for more volunteers in these areas, as well as continued times for the training, re-training, and or certifying all such ministers.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Albanese, Chair