

***St. Pius X Church
Social Action Ministry***



Parishioner Handbook

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Our Contribution to the Parish Mission Statement

We, the Social Action Ministry of Saint Pius X Church, dedicate ourselves to answering the Lord's call to justice and peace. Guided by Catholic Social Teaching, we challenge one another to proclaim Christ's gospel message through charity, service, education, activism, and prayer.

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St. Pius X Church
Social Action Ministry
Seven Key Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Modern Catholic social teaching has been articulated through a tradition of papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents. The depth and richness of this tradition can be understood best through a direct reading of these documents. In these brief reflections, we wish to highlight several of the key themes that are at the heart of our Catholic social tradition.

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. Our belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching. In our society, human life is under direct attack from abortion and assisted suicide. The value of human life is being threatened by increasing use of the death penalty. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

Call to Family, Community, and Participation

The person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society in economics and politics, in law and policy directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. The family is the central social institution that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

Rights and Responsibilities

The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected: the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.

Solidarity

We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that "loving our neighbor" has global dimensions in an interdependent world.

Care for God's Creation

We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan; it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.

This summary should only be a starting point for those interested in Catholic social teaching. A full understanding can only be achieved by reading the papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents that make up this rich tradition

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United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
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*St. Pius X Church
Social Action Ministry
Program Description*

Social Action Ministry Steering Committee

Contribution to the Parish Mission Statement

As the leadership of the Social Action Ministry of St. Pius X Church, we facilitate the work of the various programs that seek to proclaim Christ's gospel message through charity, service, education, activism, and prayer.

Description

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to provide a vision and plan for the Social Action Ministry and oversee coordination of all of the Social Ministry programs. The membership consists of a Chair, a Secretary, program leaders, and possibly additional members.

Responsibilities

- To determine the direction of the Social Action Ministry in accordance with its mission.
- To establish an annual budget for the Social Action Ministry.
- To coordinate the communication of Social Action Ministry activities and events to parishioners, including the ministry fair presentations.
- To develop fund raising and volunteer recruitment strategies for the Social Action Ministry and continuously monitor their effectiveness.
- To communicate with the parish leadership and solicit feedback on the performance of the Ministry.

Time and Length of Commitment

Monthly meetings from September through June, approximately two to three hours in length. Most of the members are involved with individual program projects with their own requirements.

Training

Members of the Steering Committee are expected to become knowledgeable about Catholic Social Teaching and to continually educate themselves on peace and justice issues relevant to the activities of the committee.

Contact

Mary Toler, mtoler@cc-md.org, 410-372-0266

*St. Pius X Church
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Program Description*

Parish Charitable Giving

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

“In a world characterized by growing prosperity for some and pervasive poverty for others, Catholic teaching proclaims that a basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.”

Description

The purpose of this activity?? is to provide parishioners an outlet to help, monetarily and through collections of material goods, the needy and poor of our world, particularly those in the Baltimore area.

Responsibilities

- To organize a Poor Box Schedule for the year.
- To carry out the special in-kind collections throughout the year, e.g., Christmas and Easter Sharing Trees, food collection, school supplies, hats/gloves, disaster relief.
- To communicate the schedule and collections to the parish community.
- To coordinate any collections and deliver or arrange for the delivery of materials to the appropriate parties.

Contact

Margaret Bauer, mbauer@stellamarisinc.com, 410-823-1728

St. Pius X Church
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Program Description

Our Daily Bread Food Program

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

“In a world characterized by growing prosperity for some and pervasive poverty for others, Catholic teaching proclaims that a basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.”

Description

The purpose of this program is to facilitate and coordinate casserole and food collections and volunteers for Our Daily Bread Employment Center (Catholic Charities) once a month. By our commitment to provide food (about 75 casseroles) and volunteers to the guests at ODB on the first Wednesday of each month, we assist people who are struggling to improve their lives and perhaps even to survive.

Responsibilities

- Members of this program inform parish families through liturgy of the needs at ODBEC, the casserole recipes, and the date/time/place of casserole and food item collections. They also recruit volunteers and coordinate collection and volunteer activities on the first Wednesday of the month.
- The members will be responsible for providing information about the ODB projects and opportunities through the bulletin and the Ministry’s web page. This information will include current events relevant to the task force’s mission and legislative advocacy opportunities.

Qualifications

To volunteer to serve at the soup kitchen, you must be at least 14 years old, with proper supervision. No walk-in volunteers. To prepare a casserole, you just need the ability to follow a recipe. Members should possess a desire to help people who need assistance and should demonstrate through their conduct respect for the dignity of all people that are served at ODB regardless of their circumstances in life.

Time and Length of Commitment

A few hours a month (9 am to 1 pm), hopefully ongoing.

Contact

Carol Wallace, wewallace@cavtel.net, 410-377-4084

St. Pius X Church
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Program Description

Justice for Immigrants

Solidarity

“We are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, wherever they live. We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that “loving our neighbor” has global dimensions in an interdependent world.”

Description

- **Membership in the Archdiocesan Immigration Coalition** - This coalition is made up of pastors and pastoral leaders from Western Maryland to Baltimore City. CASA of Maryland and representatives from the Episcopal Church are also in the Coalition. The purpose of this Coalition is threefold: 1) to assist Catholic parish leaders in their understanding of immigrant issues; 2) to provide information regarding immigration concerns to your parish; and 3) to share information from the American Bishops regarding Comprehensive Immigration Reform.
- **Tutoring with Local Hispanic Adults** - The team intends to organize volunteer tutors to work with the adults on a regular schedule to teach them English as a Second Language (ESL). The team hopes to give the students language access so they might better their chances for successful work, education and resources. Classes will be held in the parish offices.

Responsibilities

- Members will tutor and teach English to local immigrants at St. Pius X Church.
- Members will share in the solidarity-enhancing efforts of other churches in the community
- Members will dialogue with people of various socio-economic and racial/ethnic groups to discuss legal advocacy

Qualifications

A human interest in equality and justice

Time and Length of Commitment

Tutoring is a weekly commitment; the Immigration Coalition meets monthly with occasional workshops and conferences.

Training

Depends on Archdiocese requirements for programs of the Archdiocese/Catholic Charities

Contact

Andrea Vespoint, lazingara@verizon.net, 410-377-0750

**St. Pius X Church
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Environmental Stewardship

Care for God's Creation

“We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan: it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.” – *Social Development and World Peace*

Responsibilities

- Members of this program decide the activities which will focus on promoting care for God's creation. Activities may involve all active members of parish life, including parish school students and staff, as well as members of the external community. Examples are Community Supported Agriculture (drop takes place at SPX Church from One Straw Farm) and recycling for parish events.
- The members will be responsible for researching and writing about environmental information and current events for inclusion in the bulletin and the Ministry's web page. This information will include legislative advocacy opportunities.

Qualifications

Each member should have an interest in environmental stewardship, a desire to be educated accordingly, and the initiative to work with parishioners and the external community to take steps to better care for our Earth.

Time Commitment

Approximately two hours per month for a monthly meeting. Additional time depends on program decisions and the projects undertaken.

Contact

Jenny Michalak, jenny.karl@verizon.net, 410-372-0704

*St. Pius X Church
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International Solidarity

Solidarity

"We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that 'loving our neighbor' has global dimensions in an interdependent world."

Description

The purpose of this program is to educate the parish about issues and events in third world countries to which we, as Catholics, have a duty to respond. The program will choose a country or issue on which to focus and put forth outreach and legislative advocacy opportunities to the parishioners.

Responsibilities

- Coordinate suitable activities and charity/outreach opportunities to raise awareness of the challenges in developing countries;
- Provide information for the bulletin on the needs of developing countries and related legislative advocacy opportunities for parishioners;
- Provide mass petitions related to the above.

Qualifications

Each member should understand the global dimensions of love for our neighbors. He/she should desire to be knowledgeable about world events and the problems faced by people in developing countries.

Contact

Dan Griffin, dgriffin@crs.org, 410-825-2480

St. Pius X Church
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Program Description

Respect Life

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

”The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. Our belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching. In our society, human life is under direct attack from abortion and assisted suicide. The value of human life is being threatened by increasing use of the death penalty. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.”

Description

The Respect Life Committee is dedicated to educating and informing parishioners of St. Pius X about issues relating to and promoting the sanctity of human life from conception until natural death. We embrace the Gospel of Life as set forth by John Paul II and the teachings of the Catholic Church, which tell us that all human life is sacred because we have been created in the image and likeness of God.

Responsibilities

- Choose suitable activities to raise awareness of Catholic teaching on respect-life issues. These may include providing respect-life pamphlets, organizing a Spiritual Adoption Program, or hosting a respect-life speaker.
- Provide RL bulletin briefs and mass petitions as suggested by the Archdiocese.
- Keep parishioners informed of upcoming legislation and assist with letter and e-mail campaigns to legislators concerning Catholic and RL issues.

- Support and promote agencies that help women in crisis pregnancies as well as post-abortion counseling and reconciliation programs.

Qualifications

Members should be willing to educate themselves on the Church’s teaching with respect to abortion, capital punishment, embryonic stem cell research, euthanasia, and other related issues. In turn, they should be committed to assisting in the education of St. Pius X parishioners on these same issues. They should also be willing to devote time to support respect-life agencies and programs in the community.

Time and Length of Commitment

Varies depending on selected task.

Contact

There is currently no chairperson for this program. If you would be interested in being the chairperson, please contact Mary Toler, mtoler@cc-md.org, 410-372-0266.

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Peace And Justice Education

This ministry is inclusive of all Seven Key Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

Responsibilities

- Help plan education/formation activities for the parish on Catholic social teaching and peace and justice issues.
- Explore ways to help parishioners understand that they are called by God to work for peace and justice.
- Regularly provide information for the bulletin on relevant issues.
- Contribute mass petitions related to peace and justice.
- Work with other parish ministries to include messages of peace and justice in other aspects of parish life.

Qualifications

Only a desire to learn about Catholic social teaching and peace and justice issues and to share that education with others.

Time Commitment

Varies – there is also the option to just commit to working on a particular project or event.

Length of Commitment

Optional

Training

May be required to attend workshops on Catholic social teaching or various peace and justice issues, depending on the projects in which one is involved.

Contact

Mary Toler 410-372-0266; mtoler@cc-md.org, 410-372-0266

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Summary of Contact Information

Social Action Steering Committee Members

Social Action Steering Committee

Mary Toler, Chair, mtoler@cc-md.org, 410-372-0266

Parish Charitable Giving

Margaret Bauer, mbauer@stellamarisinc.com, 410-823-1728

Our Daily Bread

Carol Wallace, wewallace@cavtel.net, 410-377-4084

Justice for Immigrants

Andrea Vespoint, lazingara@verizon.net, 410-377-0750

Environmental Stewardship

Jenny Michalak, jenny.karl@verizon.net, 410-372-0704

International Solidarity

Dan Griffin, dgriffin@crs.org, 410-825-2480

Other Members

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Sue Elias, selias@vincentbaltimore.org, 410-372-0802

Jessica Fields, jbfields4@msn.com, 410-769-9110

Mission & Planning Board Liaison with Social Action Ministry

Jeanne Leonard, jmkk1@verizon.net, 410-583-1960