

Welcome to *POINTS Online* – The Newsletter of Parish Social Ministry

POINTS Online

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

SUMMER 2007

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Please Note: When a word is underlined in this newsletter, you may click on it (press down the Ctrl key and left click your mouse) and it will take you to the corresponding website or email address.

Thank You!

For all the wonderful work you do throughout the year.

We are truly blessed to work with you, to learn from you and serve with you.

May God bless you with a safe and happy summer!

Andy, Katch, Mary An, Mabel, Leila and Sandy

Another Great Volunteer Outreach Evening!

PSM's Annual Outreach Volunteer Mass and Dinner was held on May 9th at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish. Bishop Saltarelli recognized and celebrated 30 years of compassion and dedication by our outreach volunteers throughout the diocese.

We are grateful for the 175 plus volunteers who attended, as well as those who could not be present, for their untiring ministry to God's people in need.

Thank You -- to the Knights of Columbus who provided a wonderful pasta dinner and to IHM for hosting this event. It was a great evening filled with prayer, good food and wonderful conversation!

**In 2004, Archbishop Desmond Tutu
made the following remarks in Denmark:**

“Don’t be worried about creating debate and diversifying opinions. It will only be worrying the day we have no debate. It is never the poor and oppressed who say that you can’t interfere in politics. It is the comfortable, those on the top of the world, who say that you can’t be political. Jesus was also controversial, because he advocated for the poor. If he hadn’t been controversial they wouldn’t have killed him.”

Summer Institute Registration Now Open!

It’s not too late to register for The Summer Institute held **July 15-20, 2007**, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI. For more details and to register [click here](#). The Summer Institute is sponsored by The Roundtable Association of Diocesan Social Action Directors, USCCB/Social Development and World Peace, Catholic Campaign for Human Development, Catholic Charities USA, and Catholic Relief Services. Don’t miss this great educational opportunity for those involved in social ministry!

Congratulations to Mary An Love!

Congratulations to our own Mary An Love who has been given the *2007 CHAMPION* award from the Social Concerns Committee of St. Dismas Catholic Community at the Smyrna Correctional Center. The Committee defines a champion as a valiant fighter; a person who fights, defends, protects and supports for another or another’s cause.

Mary An has assisted, attended, supported, led, guided, provided and loved those she came in contact with at the prison. Mary An has been a bright light for these inmates and helped many of them on their faith journey.

Reflection by Katch Reynolds

I had only been working at Parish Social Ministry for a few weeks when I attended the annual Mass for Social Justice. Prior to the Mass, I had telephoned the various groups who would be receiving grants from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) to confirm that they would be present at the Mass. However, I had little idea what it was all about.

I arrived at Holy Family Church (the location for the Mass that year) early to help the representatives of each group set up their display tables for the reception after the Mass. Although I was busy helping to get everyone organized and in their pew on time, I was aware that these were very special people. That awareness grew as I sat behind the grant recipients and felt the energy and commitment and compassion that emanated from each of them.

Since that initial encounter with the CCHD funded groups, I have had the privilege to meet with each group and to learn more about the work they do. Each group is different but they share a hope and a desire to change the structures that keep so many of God's people oppressed and below the poverty line. Some work to create affordable housing in communities that have been ravaged by poverty. Others work for economic justice through passage of just and fair utility legislation and others through education and alternatives to costly loans.

Witnessing the perseverance of the members of these groups in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles strengthens my commitment to listen for God's call in my life and to follow wherever that call may lead.

Social Justice Action – Mentors Wanted!

Here is an opportunity to share your gifts and talents in a civic engagement initiative taking place in the West Center City/Hilltop area of Wilmington. The Interfaith Coalition Building Blocks for Wilmington (ICBBW) was organized as a response to the wave of violence that swept through the city during the years of 2003 and 2004. It began, simply, as a Caring Community Alliance which, now, has grown to a coalition of faith-based organizations. It is an ideal opportunity for individuals and groups interested in social justice to live out the gospel message.

Mentors are needed for children in the after-school programs at the William Hicks Anderson Community Center to develop positive relationships and provide encouragement and to enhance the life of the children and their families.

The Interfaith Coalition has formed a Community Leadership Guidance Group which meets monthly to provide insight and collaboration in determining actions that will mobilize community resources to have a greater impact on enabling people and the culture of neighborhoods to realize the higher potential of life. As they focus their work with children, their families and the neighborhood, the Leadership Guidance Group plans to address other critical needs related to affordable housing, criminal justice, education and other issues necessary for a safe community.

For more information on the Interfaith Coalition Building Blocks for Wilmington go to www.interfaithcoalition.net or call 302-656-8326.

*In the drama of the Family of Nazareth we perceive
the sorrowful plight of so many migrants...*

*The human person must always be the focal point in
the vast field of international migration.*

*Pope Benedict XVI
World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2007*

We Pray for Just Immigration Reform

For immigration policies that respect the rights and dignity of all migrants and their families. . .

God who is just, hear us.

For policies that acknowledge the right of persons to fulfill their basic needs abroad when they cannot be fulfilled at home. . .

God who is just, hear us.

For policies that welcome refugees and asylum seekers who flee danger in their countries. . .

God who is just, hear us.

For immigration reform that respects national sovereignty and security, but not at the expense of the common good. . .

God who is just, hear us.

For reform that seeks to address the causes of the poverty in developing countries from which many migrants flee. . .

God who is just, hear us.

Just God, guide our leaders as they consider immigration reform proposals. Help us to raise our voices for the vulnerable, that just solutions may be found. Amen.

Jill Raub, Education for Justice

Mark Your Calendar – Mass for Social Justice is Saturday, October 13th

We will gather at 5:30 p.m. for Mass celebrated by Msgr. John Barres at Holy Cross Parish in Dover. The Msgr. Schierse Award for Social Justice will be presented and we will recognize the community groups receiving grants from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD). Call Parish Social Ministry for more information at 302-655-9624.

VOICES for Justice

VOICES for Justice is a parish-based network of people who advocate for the Catholic Church's teachings on social and economic justice issues. Often the people most affected adversely by legislation are those who live on the margins of society, those whose voices are seldom heard. The members of the VOICES for Justice Network raise their voices on behalf of these "least ones."

The types of issues that were priorities this year have been immigration reform, the minimum wage, embryonic stem cell research, the federal budget, and the Darfur Crisis. Advocacy can take different forms: letter writing, telephone calls, e-mails, personal visits to legislators, and personal testimony at legislative hearings.

As Church we are called to conversion and action by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, "...As a Church, we must be people after God's own heart, bonded by the Spirit, sustaining one another in love, setting our hearts on God's kingdom, committing ourselves to solidarity with those who suffer, working for peace and justice, acting as a sign of Christ's love and justice in the world...We ask you to become more informed and active citizens, using your voices and votes to speak for the voiceless, to defend the poor and the vulnerable, and to advance the common good. We are called to shape a constituency of conscience, measuring every policy by how it touches the least, the lost, and the left out among us..." --excerpts from Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter of Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, 1986

If you are interested in joining the VOICES for Justice Advocacy Network, please email the following information to sclark@ccwilm.org: Name, Address, Phone No., Email, and Parish

Helping the Babies! *Pat DeVol, St. Edmonds Parish*

St. Edmond's Salt & Light Ministry is like many social concerns ministries in our Diocese. We have our ear to the ground to select issues that impact the community and we try to touch the lives of our neighbors and make a difference.

The infant mortality rate in Delaware is high! In a nation that already ranks 27th among industrialized countries in infant mortality, Delaware is the sixth worse of all the states. In the US, 6.8 out of 1000 babies born do not make it to their first birthday. In Delaware the number is 10.7. Could things be worse? We actually ranked dead last in 1995 at which time Governor Carper called the Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium to explore the problem and recommend solutions.

The Resource Mothers Project was founded at that time. At-risk pregnant women are referred to the agency and a small miracle happens. They receive obstetric care, pre-natal vitamins, childbirth classes, parenting classes, and whatever else they need in the way of support. Resource Mothers are a surrogate family who are on call 24/7 and stay with the mom until the baby is 2 years old. We were touched by the dedication of this group who, in 2003, served 437 moms and proudly had an infant mortality rate of 1%.

Another agency also caught our attention. Back in 2000, an extraordinary man, Philip Brown, attended a yearlong Bible study that ended with a challenge to the class to follow their heart. Believing the talent would be given as God had done for so many in the Bible; he answered the call and began to help babies born in poverty. Philip Brown founded Bear Hugs for Babies in 2001. Upon receiving a referral, he prepares a basket of items to supply the mother with what she needs for the newborn to tide her over until she can receive more permanent help. Since its inception, Phil has helped over 600 mothers and babies. So we decided to have a baby shower and split the gifts between the two agencies.

The third and fourth grade religious education classes asked if they could help and made it their service project. Phil Brown from Bear Hugs and Robin Murphy from Resource Mothers spoke briefly before all the masses the day it was launched and the kids helped as 500 handouts were distributed. We spoke to the kids and said that a parish family could do so much more than any one family could. We were right. Over the next month gifts came pouring in. We moved bags of gifts from around a bassinet placed in the sanctuary to a storage area and catalogued them. The final tally was amazing.

The Baby Shower was a huge success! We collected 2607 diapers, 37 packs of wipes, 190 onesies, 84 outfits, 53 sleepers, 14 layettes, 40 crib blankets, 66 receiving blankets, 57 stuffed animals, 111 pair of socks, 34 bottles, 2 high chairs, 1 stroller, 1 monitor, 3 diaper bags, 64 books, and \$945 in cash donations. God bless the babies, moms and you! Phil placed a cash value of \$2000.00 for his half of the gifts. We are so proud that we could help those who are touching the precious lives of these babies.

PSM Staff

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Visit us on the web: www.cdow.org/socialministry.html