

## **Parish of the Holy Eucharist – Social Justice & Peace Commission Report of Activity for Fiscal Year 2021**

### **General Assistance and Charity Through the Needy Fund:**

The Parish is committed to helping people within our church community and throughout the towns of our area. The Commission has focused on maintaining contact, monitoring the needs of different organizations and helping out. They include: local food pantries, Habitat for Humanity in the Greater Portland area, the assistance offices of town governments (Opportunity Alliance and others), St. Vincent de Paul soup kitchen at the Portland Cathedral. There are also other emergency requests received by the Parish and assigned to Social Justice.

Mode of support has different forms. Donations by check are made by the Parish to different charitable organizations with money given by parishioners to an “Assistance Fund.” Clothing and food are donated at each church and transferred to local programs for the poor or distributed by responsible parishioners. Special collection efforts are organized for major holidays.

The Parish is committed to helping people within our church community and throughout the towns of our area. When assistance is sought out by a member of one of our communities, the request is looked into and support is given if appropriate and approved by Fr. Peter, our priest on the commission. Some examples of types of assistance we have helped with this year include help paying for utilities, heat, food, gas, repairs, clothing, and short-term housing.

The Commission also focuses on maintaining contact and monitoring the needs of different organizations. Assistance is given to local food pantries and other organizations, Habitat for Humanity in the Greater Portland area, St. Vincent de Paul soup kitchen at the Portland Cathedral, and in conjunction with efforts by Opportunity Alliance, Catholic Charities, and the assistance offices of town governments.

### **Haiti Assistance Through the Haiti Fund:**

Our Parish continues to provide support to the Haitian churches in the communities of Meyer and Marbial. We maintain contact with Father Bertrand Dieuville of Sacre-Coeur de Meyer and Father Pierre Herold Joseph of Sainte Therese de l'Enfant Jesus in Marbial. These parishes are located in the Jacmel Diocese on the south coast of the island nation. There is also contact with a group of religious Sisters in the Meyer Parish.

It is our hope that our sister parishes will get through the political and civil disruption caused by assassination of the Haitian President in July 2021. The political turmoil added suffering to the deep poverty burdening the people. In recent months, Holy Eucharist Parish has supported the Haiti groups with funding in June, with plans for additional support in September and money for food deliveries through the Florida-based Food for the Poor program. As of mid-August, Haiti was being governed by an interim administration led by designated Prime Minister Ariel Henry. Plans were being discussed for elections. Crime and disruptions were ongoing and were serious problems, according to the Haitian press. Our contact with the two churches is made

through emails, but we also gain some insight through press coverage and Facebook pages by the two parishes.

Part of the Haiti commitment has been four religious Sisters residing at Meyer. They have limited their program for security reasons. In early August, the Sisters' traveled to the Dominican Republic to make an annual retreat at their motherhouse for the Congregation Our Lady of Perpetual Help. It was particularly interesting to learn that they made the trip by crossing the international border in the southeast and entered the DR in the border area of Perdenales. Previously - the Sisters had to take an international flight from one country to the other.

Support to both Haiti parishes and the sisters are transferred quarterly.

If you have any questions about the charitable works of the parish, please don't hesitate to reach out to us via email at [pothe@portlanddiocese.org](mailto:pothe@portlanddiocese.org) or by calling the parish office at 207-847-6890 and asking for Melissa or Fr. Phil.