

THE POPES CALL US TO ACT

In recent meetings, St. Pascal's Social Justice and Caring Committee reviewed Catholic Social Teaching, *Live Wisely** (a summary of encyclicals from both Pope Benedict and Pope Francis), and the recent encyclical *Dilexi Te (On Love for the Poor)* from Pope Leo. We have come to realize that all are called to extend our faith through action for charity and justice to those in need. You can find these documents at our Social Justice page on the St. Pascal's website by going to <https://www.stpascals.org/st-pascal-s-social-justice-and-caring-committee>



Through our baptism all of us are called to serve others by giving of ourselves to those we serve, just as Jesus did. Yes, we can study scripture, follow our beliefs, and receive sacraments, but as disciples we are also called to find ways to stand in solidarity with others as part of our daily lives.

We may not change the whole world, but we can impact the lives of those we meet and serve when we **See, Judge, and Act** through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching:

- We **See** the reality of human need around us;
- We **Judge** the situation to identify the appropriate response to these needs; and
- We **Act** personally and/or collectively to offer "charity" that meets immediate need and/or engage in "Social Justice" that results in permanent and systemic change.

Pope Leo has recently emphasized that all Christians must appreciate the close connection between Christ's love and his summons to care for the poor, the powerless, and the marginalized in our society. Every disciple can help spread the word of love and justice to all within our parish community, encouraging the practice of service and action as part of each person's Catholic faith.

St. Pascal's is known for its hospitality and service to the common good by working to meet the needs of our neighbors in this time and place. As we enter a new year, consider how you can answer the call to serve. Some ideas include:

- Joining a cause for change;
- Spreading the Word that shows you care;
- Writing a letter to a government official supporting issues of charity and justice in our community;
- Visiting with a neighbor who needs help and support; or
- Serving at a food shelf, like the monthly Merrick food distribution here at St. Pascal's or the weekly Fishes and Loaves program at our neighboring Progressive Baptist church.

A variety of ways the Social Justice and Caring Committee is engaged and encourages others to be involved in the work of Catholic Social Teaching can be found on the reverse side.

**Live Wisely* was written by Dr. Bernard Brady who is a professor of theology at the University of St. Thomas.

BEACON INTERFAITH HOUSING COLLABORATIVE

St. Pascal's is part of the Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative. Members of our Beacon Team advocate to create new, deeply affordable homes and champion transformative policy solutions to ensure all people have a home through visits with local government officials, legislators, and community members.

BLOODMOBILE

Each year St. Pascal's hosts 2-3 blood drives for the American Red Cross.

CARE FOR CREATION TEAM

The recently formed Care for Creation team seeks to work with parishioners to find ways to put Pope Francis' call to be "stewards of creation" into action both individually and as a parish.

DONATION CLOSET

The parish donation closet is located off the coat room. Our monthly donation closet collections support the following organizations:

Angel Tree: provides Christmas gifts for children with a parent who is incarcerated

Brittany's Place (180 Degrees): emergency shelter for girls and young women who have experienced commercial sex trafficking or are at risk for sexual exploitation

Catholic Charities Giving Tree: provides clothing and household items to families

Listening House: day shelter and community center for those who are unsheltered

Merrick Community Services Food Shelf

Options for Women East: offer services and resources to women who are unexpectedly pregnant at no-cost

Progressive Baptist "Fishes and Loaves" Food Shelf: serves 130-150 households each week

EDUCATION AND FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

From time to time the SJCC sponsors speakers or activities. At times these are in collaboration with the Adult Faith Formation Committee. Past offerings have included:

- JustFaith learning series focused on poverty, racism, the environment, and more
- Celebration of Generosity and Compassion Kit Making
- Speakers on topics including domestic violence, human sex trafficking, *Laudato Si (On Care for Our Common Home)*

FOOD DISTRIBUTION: ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY

Volunteers from St. Pascal's pack and distribute food to those in need through both the monthly distribution at St. Pascal's (in partnership with Merrick Community Services) and the weekly distribution with Fishes and Loaves at Progressive Baptist Church.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND CARING LIBRARY

The SJCC Library is located in the Gathering Space by the usher's counter. There are books, DVDs, and more for parishioners to borrow.

For more information about St. Pascal's Social Justice and Caring committee, please contact staff liaison Kim Roering at 651.432.4958 or kim.roering@stpascals.org.