

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE REPORT 2019

SOCIAL JUSTICE WEEK

In September 2018 we again had a focus in Social Justice week. Two of us prepared and gave the homilies at the 3 parish Masses. We used some slides from the Caritas power-point to enhance the message. We also organised some differently abled young people and their friends to present the gifts at the offertory and to give out the Caritas leaflets after Mass. This was a small attempt to show in practical terms that everyone has a part to play.

In Social Justice week we also held a group meeting in a bid to invite more people to become involved. 12 people attended and indicated that they were eager to begin meeting on a more regular basis and examine some issues that we can act on. This was encouraging because our Social Justice group had shrunk drastically over the last year.

CARITAS LENTEN PROGRAMME 2019

This Lent we again organised the Caritas Lenten programme where parishioners met each week in Lent and focused on the Sunday readings.

OTHER INITIATIVES

The Committee expressed concern that groups exist in our parish that many of the community are unaware of. We wrote to the Parish Council requesting that various groups be invited to address the people at Mass – maybe dedicating one Sunday a month to this initiative and allowing some time to do it.

The Bishops' pastoral letter on the housing crisis was read at one of our Parish Masses and the request to provide housing has been included in the Parish newsletter several times. We will continue to explore possibilities around this important issue and are working with the Diocesan Committee on housing who are looking at the possibilities around using vacant church land to relieve the critical shortage of emergency housing.

We continue to be involved with the Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission and have taken part in some of the meetings and retreats organised by them.

On the feast of St Francis of Assisi, we are looking to undertake an initiative to highlight the need for care of the earth. There will be more on this once we have consulted with the Parish Council.

We also wrote to the Liturgy Committee requesting that some Maori hymns be used at Mass on a reasonably regular basis to reflect our bi cultural heritage.

We feel that our major task is to assist the parish in reflection on justice issues

The related issues for us are the key principles of Catholic social teaching: -

Human dignity- we are made in God's image

Solidarity- walking together

Preferential option for the poor and vulnerable – protecting those in need

Common good -the good of each and all

Subsidiarity – empowering communities

Stewardship and participation -everyone with a part to play

Catherine Birt