**Social Action Committee, what we do**

**Lenten Almsgiving**

We are responsible for the yearly Lenten Almsgiving Project. That includes selecting the charities, information hand-outs, a display in the Gathering Space, articles for the SPUR, a collection/delivery process, and getting the school involved. Typically two charities are selected each year. Donations may be financial, goods-based or both. The charities for 2022 are the Dayton Diaper Depot and Clean Water Project Africa.

**Summer Lunch Program**

The goal of the Summer Lunch Program is to provide food and positive interaction for Kettering School students living in the Trails of Oak Creek.

Food is prepared by Kettering staff at Greenmont Elementary and is funded by a grant. Members of the Social Action Committee transport & distribute breakfast and lunch bags to Trails children during one week of summer. We also donate extra fruit and snacks and work to make a good time for all. The St. Charles Youth group organizes playground games, crafts and time to hang out and talk with the kids. We served 20 - 25 individuals per day.  Numbers are down because of COVID restrictions.  Previous years it was 40 -50.

**Peace Pole**

We are responsible for maintaining the Peace Pole on our Plaza. The Peace Pole was recently refurbished, rededicated, and moved to its current location. SPUR articles are periodically provided to remind parishioners of the Peace Pole and to pray for peace. Events at the Peace Pole such as a World Day of Peace reception and Tuesday school mass prayers have taken place prior to COVID.

**Prayer Ministry**

This ministry was started by Sister Rose Martin before she passed away. Sister Rose’s intent was to give all people an opportunity to be a part of the work of the Social Action Committee through prayer. Whether physically involved in the work or not, prayers are the driving force for all good actions. Each month we provide suggested intentions that are in concert with Social Action initiatives to people who have volunteered to pray.

**Sustainability**

We have a Sustainability subcommittee that promotes the idea of Reuse, Recycle and Reduce. They provide sustainability information in the SPUR and typically organize at least one event each year, such as:

* Project Read. Nearly 8000 books were collected for a wide variety of individuals and groups. Books that are unusable are recycled.
* “Eyes of Hope.” Eye wear was collected and sent to the organization “Eyes of Hope” to be refurbished and distributed to those in need.
* Campaign to reduce plastic pollution. A display and information event was held in conjunction with the Parish Pet Blessing and St Francis Feast Day.
* Obtained Laudato SI recognition for the parish. Laudato Si recognition is granted by the Archdiocese to parishes who have demonstrated compliance with the teachings in the Pope’s encyclical Laudato Si, “On care for our common home.”
* The first Sustainability project was a book drive to support the recycle/reuse goal.  Books were donated to the One Dollar Book Swap on Webster Street.

**Weavers**

Weavers of Justice is a group of Dayton parishes and Catholic organizations that work together on social justice issues. We attend monthly meetings and participate and/or promote events such as the yearly Fair Trade Sale, Distinguished Speaker series, and other activities. The Fair Trade Sale helps artisans and growers in third world countries earn a fair price for their goods.

**Diakonia Steering Committee**

A Social Action Committee member assists in stewarding Diakonia funds. Diakonia is the parish outreach fund for individuals within parish boundaries and for area agencies which have a relationship with St. Charles parish.

**Food barrels**

We recruit and coordinate volunteers from our parish to deliver donated items to the Catholic Social Services Food Pantry on a weekly basis throughout the year.

**Thrive Together dinners**

“Thrive Together” is a program hosted by Fairhaven church to help alleviate poverty through relationships. They have weekly group meetings that include a meal. St. Charles serves six of those meals through the year. Social Action serves two meals and coordinates volunteers to serve the others. Typically 35 to 50 people are served at each meal.

**SPUR and LIGHT**

Articles are provided for the SPUR and LIGHT to educate and engage parishioners on our activities and social justice issues in general.

**Faith in Action**

Many St. Charles parishioners quietly go about putting their faith into action by performing Christ-like works in the community.  We periodically highlight these works by providing articles for the SPUR and LIGHT, not necessarily to honor these individuals, but rather to serve as inspiration to others.

**Pill bottle collection**

Social Action Committee members bring used pill bottles to each meeting. They are given to Mathew 25 Ministries for dispensing pills in Nicaragua.

**Homicide prayer vigils**

In past years we attended prayer vigils at the site of homicides in the Dayton area.

Because of COVID, there have been no onsite vigils, but notification of homicides and prayer requests continue by email.

**Outreach Commission**

Social Action Committee activities are reported to the Outreach Commission by email for sharing with the Parish Council. Prior to COVID, there were regular meetings with the other St. Charles Outreach Ministries to share information. .

**Opportunities that arise. Examples:**

* Provided a student recently paralyzing by a gunshot with meals during the summer months until he could obtain assistance arranged for him at Ohio State.
* Provided parishioners with voter information for the 2020 presidential election. This included voter deadlines, in-person voter information and absentee/mail-in information, both phone numbers and online links.
* Coordinated a special collection at the church for specific food items in a “Red Bag.” The bags were used for emergency assistance distribution from the Catholic Social Services Food Pantry.
* Assisted in the parish wide response to the Memorial Day tornadoes
* Donated a membership share in the Gem City Market