

St. Basil's Mission and Social Justice Committee

“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8). The mandate of the Mission and Social Justice Committee is to discern how the parish can best fulfill the command to do justice and to provide resources and activities for parishioners on social justice issues.

Join Us!

For 2016 the Committee has decided to focus on environmental issues, especially climate change, and the call to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Committee meets monthly (time announced in the parish bulletin). The meetings are open to all parishioners. **New members are always welcome.** For further information please contact either of the Committee co-chairs: Sr. Jean Goulet (613-225-9814, m.j.goulet@sympatico.ca) and Kathy Czerny (613-728-3850, kczerny@sympatico.ca).

Background

The Committee interprets the command to do justice according to Catholic social teaching as expressed in the documents of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and the encyclical letters of recent popes, especially Pope Francis. Catholics are called to combat injustices of all types wherever they occur. The Committee's role in promoting justice is fourfold:

1. Raising awareness of St. Basil's parishioners by providing relevant information on justice issues and promoting the importance of sharing with others.
2. Working with other similar organizations in Canada and abroad.
3. Organizing educational opportunities for parishioners.
4. Involving parishioners of all ages in these activities.

In recent years the Committee has organized parish events with guest speakers on the following topics: Catholic social teaching, the environmental crisis, food security, mental health issues, the criminal justice system, and solidarity with indigenous Canadians. Committee members have been active participants in other organizations including the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, Multifaith Housing Initiative of Ottawa, Ancoura (which provides supportive housing for people with mental health issues), the Carlington Community Chaplaincy and the O.K. Clean Water project in Cameroon.

One of the Committee's main functions is to disburse funds from the monthly parish collection for charitable works. The criteria for choosing recipients of these funds are:

1. Personal contact with the receiving party.
2. Eligibility of groups and individuals locally, nationally and internationally.
3. Openness to contributions in emergency situations.
4. Consideration of requests from individual parishioners and visiting missionaries.

Detailed lists of recipients of funds over last 5 years

International Recipients	Indigenous Recipients	Local Donations
Basilian Fathers Missions (in honour of Fr. John Ruth, C.S.B., a long-time pastor)	Kairos (a Canadian ecumenical social justice initiative)	Multifaith Housing Initiative
HIV/AIDS support program of St. Mary's Parish in Matero, Zambia (recommended by Fr. Michael Czerny, S.J., brother of parishioner Bob Czerny)	First Nations Child and Family Caring Society	Ancoura
O.K. Clean Water Project in Cameroon	Kateri Native Ministry of Ottawa	Elizabeth Fry Society
Expansion of a Sisters of Holy Cross school in Haiti	Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health	John Howard Society
Various disaster relief organizations relating to emergencies (hurricanes, earthquakes)	Odawa Native Friendship Centre of Ottawa	



None of us can think we are exempt from concerns for the poor and for social justice.

— *Pope Francis* —

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