

Social Concerns Focus

OUR FOCUS THIS ISSUE: SOLIDARITY



Catholic Social Teaching

"We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world."

— Catholic Social Teaching on Solidarity

"Every perspective on economic life that is human, moral, and Christian must be shaped by three questions: What does the economy do for people?

What does it do to people?

And how do people participate in it?"

— Economic Justice for All

Call to Action Suggestions:

- Buy Fair Trade coffee, chocolates, cocoa, and home goods
- Use Fair Trade Coffee at parish meetings and events
- Look at the Catholic Relief Services Website listed on this page and also the Minnesota Fair Trade Coalition Website (www.mnftc.org) for information.
- Make soup, bake bread, or clean-up after Lenten Soup Suppers
- Attend the Fair Trade Taste Testing Pre-Lenten Party on February 13
- Give food or money during the weekly March Food Drive Collection

Reminder:

March is Food Shelf Month!

There will be a weekly collection of food and money every weekend in March to honor March as Food Shelf Month.

Fair Trade – What is it?

Fair Trade is a Market Based Development System that helps small-scale producers, such as farmers, craft producers, and women, receive a fair price for their goods. There is no middleman in this system.

The following principles of justice are evident in Fair Trade:

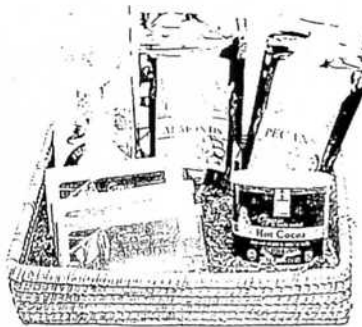
- (1) The producers are offered a fair wage;
- (2) The producers have access to financial and technical assistance;
- (3) The working conditions are safe; and
- (4) A sustainable product is encouraged.

As Yvette Anderson says on the Catholic Relief Services Fair Trade Website (www.crs-fairtrade.org), "By advocating for a fair

Fair Trade Taste Testing Invitation!

Pre-Lenten Party Feb. 13 "Morning Awakening"

The Social Concerns Committee invites you to a Fair Trade Taste Testing Party on Saturday, February 13 from 9:30 a.m. to noon in the Hispanic Center, St. Joseph's Parish.



Valentine gift suggestions!

Door Prize!

Refreshments!

Come and have your taste buds stimulated by sampling Fair Trade coffee, chocolate, and cocoa. Learn about Fair Trade and Fair Trade Products at the 10 a.m. presentation. Have fun winning a door prize, purchasing Valentine Gift Packages, and enjoying the refreshments.

Mark your calendar for Saturday morning, Feb. 13. You will truly experience a "Morning Awakening!"

trade economic system, we cannot only better respect the human dignity of smaller-scale producers. but we can act in solidarity with those around the world in need. We can ensure that those making our coffee, our chocolate, our home goods, etc. are receiving just compensation, and that our system of profit making doesn't supersede the worth of a human being."

Many organizations that are proponents of Fair Trade are Oxfam, Catholic Relief Services, SERRV International, Caritas International, and Christian Aid.

You can buy Fair Trade Products such as coffee, chocolates, and cocoa at the St. Joseph Parish Office or at the downtown St. Cloud Diocese Mission Office.

You are invited to join the Social Concerns Committee! Contact one of the following members:

Sister Gloria Haider • Peggy Imholte • Patti Keeling • Kathy Peterson • Maria Lahr • Mike Monnens • Louise Echola

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OUR FOCUS THIS ISSUE: Food Share Month

Catholic Social Teaching

"A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt. 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first."

– Themes from Catholic Social Teaching

Call to Action Suggestions:

March is typically considered "Food Shelf" month, when we are asked to consider giving food and/or money for the food shelf.

St. Joseph's Church provides weekly and weekend ways to give. Feel free to bring your donation up to the altar area and place in the Sharing Tree area by the choir, or place at the main entrance at the back of church in the designated area.

If you choose to give money, please place your donation in a plain white envelope and put in the collection basket one week of March.

Make it a family project and assemble a meal around a theme or bring a collection of food items.

Monetary donations can be stretched farther through "Second Harvest", an organization which purchases food for much less than the average consumer pays at the grocery store. As a special bonus, during the month of March, incentives funds from a variety of companies match a portion of both cash and the weight of food donations.

Thank you for your generosity in this time of great need.

"Need Fund" of our parish helps others to help themselves

When you donate to the "Need Fund" of St. Joseph's Church (also known as the "Poor Fund" in the church envelope collection) you help your fellow parishioners in many ways.

The financial assistance offered through this fund is mainly for parishioners who seek support. If a non-parishioner makes a financial request, other resources are offered as suggestions.

The goal is to empower people through relationships. We encourage connections which facilitate many positive outcomes for individuals or families in need. It is important that we help folks so they can help themselves, to empower and not enable.

We build relationships that also help to direct families into deeper involvement with the parish through programs such as Sacramental Preparation, Faith Formation, Hispanic Ministry, Liturgies, St. Joseph School, Youth Minister, and other activities of the parish.

Our funds help to supplement other agencies such as county services, Catholic Charities, Salvation Army.

We also try to build networks which help parishioners find employment.

The "Need Fund" helps financially in many areas such as a utility payment, rent, vehicle repair, and medical needs.

However, the majority of the re-



Food for Thought

Have you ever said, "Oooh, I'm starving!"?

Most of us have.

But you weren't; not really. But for all too many people right here in our communities, hunger is real and it hurts.

Tough economic times mean even more Minnesotans are struggling to provide food for their families.

One in 10 Minnesotans will struggle to find enough food *this week*.

You can make a big difference in the lives of working families, children and seniors.

– Minn. Foodshare newsletter

sources we connect folks with do not involve a monetary donation to the families. It also helps with clothing, furniture, baby supplies, beds, food – but especially spiritual support.

Fair Trade Open House was a delicious success

On February 13, the Social Concerns Committee hosted a Fair Trade Open House. Samples of coffee, hot chocolate, baking cocoa and chocolate bars were enjoyed, as well as purchased. Delicious deserts using these items were shared. Presenters showed a DVD describing the process and the work the Catholic Church is doing to promote fair wages. Our thanks to all who participated in this event.

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