



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH *All of God's Creation*

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, January 21, 2024

Social Justice Committee: Who We Are, What We Do, and Why We Do It

Since 2017, the Social Justice Committee (SJC) has been meeting to address urgent and timely issues facing our communities and our planet. As we begin a new year and welcome new members, we want to share with the whole parish what we are about.

The SJC is a vehicle through which parishioners can take the Word of God and bring it to life through the action of serving Jesus in others. And so, it begins with the Gospels.

In Matthew 5, we find the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes. In verse 6, Jesus says: "**Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice**," also translated as "righteousness." This means to see right and wrong as God has revealed it.

In Matthew 25:31-40, Matthew writes about the last judgement where we are held accountable as individuals and nations as to how we treat our brothers and sisters. Jesus identifies the "least" with His very self. **Whatever we do to the least, we do to Him.** Jesus identifies with those on the margins.

In John 13:34-35, Jesus says: "I give you a new commandment: Love one another; **as I have loved you, so also you should love one another**. This is how all will know you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." This describes a mutuality which is different from and deeper than the Golden Rule.

These gospel passages (and others) call for a response on our part: a priority to see as God sees as has been revealed to us. This includes a primary focus on reaching out to those on the margins in society and to do so with a love that can grow to mutuality.

The structure of the SJC subcommittees is based on the themes of Catholic Social Teaching developed by the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#). The seven themes are:

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

Call to Family, Community, and Participation

Rights and Responsibilities (which protect human dignity and a healthy community)

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Solidarity

Care for God's Creation

The work of the subcommittees in the areas of Environment, Immigration, Justice – Basic Needs of the Person, Justice – Inequity, Justice – Protection of All Human Life, Training/Education/Outreach, and Communications (our weekly Stewards of Our Earth column in the church bulletin) **puts these themes into action.**

The SJC meets on the last Monday of the month at 7 p.m. If you have topics you would like to see addressed, please contact us at the email below.

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at socialjustice@holycrossphl.org.