The **Social Justice Ministry (SJM)** of Sacred Heart Parish is a specific parish commission that supports and carries out acts of Social Justice in our community. We are guided by Catholic Social Teachings that are articulated by our Church. Members of our parish, via the SJM, are involved in significant volunteer work and in the support of organizations that address needs within our community. Most, but not all the work is with the organizations described below. If you are interested in any of the work of these organizations, please contact those members listed with each organization or the current president of the SJM (Nowak.1@nd.edu)

The generosity of the parishioners in our monthly blue envelopes helps in the financial needs of the work of the SJM. The work, financial support, and the prayers of our parishioners help us to follow the path that Jesus laid before us.

**Organizations Served:**

* Adopt a Family Christmas Gift Program
* Bridge of Hope (Hannah’s House)
* Bridges out of Poverty
* Catholic Worker House
* Chicago and Michiana Five for the Homeless
* Community for Peace & Nonviolence
* Dismas House
* Habitat for Humanity
* Hannah’s House
* Hope Ministries
* Logan Center
* Northeast Neighborhood Food Pantry
* Our Lady of the Road
* Refugees
* St. Vincent de Paul
* United Religious Community (URC)/Advocacy Center
* Women’s Care Center

**ADOPT-A-FAMILY CHRISTMAS GIFT PROGRAM**

**At Christmas time, Sacred Heart partners with the St. Vincent de Paul Society to bring our parish the Adopt-a-Family program.**St. Vincent de Paul identifies families with young children who are unable to afford to give their children the kind of Christmas celebration that most of us enjoy. When you adopt a family, you, receive a list with the names and ages of your adopted children along with a wish list prepared by their parents or guardians. If you have children of your own, we encourage you to involve them as much as possible in the shopping, gift-wrapping and delivery of the gifts.  What a wonderful way to share with them the spirit of giving! From funds donated by parishioners who would like to participate in the program but cannot actually adopt a family, we purchase gift certificates for the family's Christmas dinner. You include one of the gift certificates with your delivery. The parish offers assistance with delivery of the gifts, if necessary, as well as a translator should communication with our some of our Spanish speaking families be a problem.   (contact: Betsy @ betsy.mccorry@gmail.com or Marlene @ marlene\_nowak@yahoo.com )

**BRIDGE OF HOPE at HANNAH’S HOUSE**

**Bridge of Hope** is a nationally recognized and supported program housed locally within the programming of Hannah’s House, a Christian maternity home in Mishawaka, IN.  Bridge of Hope strives to end and prevent homelessness for women and children and its goal is to exemplify Christ’s love and to promote physical, emotional, social, and spiritual wholeness in its participants.  The Bridge of Hope program began in 1989 in Pennsylvania and after more than a decade of successful work, Bridge of Hope National was established in 2002 to end and prevent homelessness for women and children across the United States by calling churches into action**.**  Bridge of Hope’s program model is built on a three-way partnership between one homeless or at-risk single mother and her children, one trained church-based mentoring group of 8 to 12 people from a local church, and a professional social worker.  Bridge of Hope embraces the philosophy that homelessness is more than a housing crisis; it is also a crisis of relationship.  Thus the three-way partnership is designed to assist a single mother and her children with long-term solutions to homelessness, as well as to develop supportive friendships that will sustain her long beyond the completion of formal program services.  Financial donations are used to help support the mothers and their children through rental assistance, as well as, educational programs. Volunteers are needed to help form a church mentor group to support these families or to help with childcare or refreshment donations for monthly Hope Gathering meetings. For further information on the program, donations needed, or volunteer and mentor opportunities, please contact Kristi Kubicki at 574.256.8325 or at *bridgeofhsjc@gmail.com.*

**BRIDGES OUT OF POVERTY**

This local organization helps those who live at the edge of, or in poverty to escape this situation. This organization is aided by volunteers who assist by giving appropriate tools to minimize or escape this life situation to those in need. At various meetings, volunteers with specific skills address issues such as a proper presentation to apply for a job, balancing a checkbook, preparing nourishing but affordable meals, interpersonal interactions, etc. that are acceptable and practical practices. The volunteers who attend, interact with the people and act as mentors to understand the issues and how this can positively effect their lives. Bonnie Bazata has successfully directed this organization for years. (Contact Marlene (marlene\_nowak@yahoo.com ) for additional information)

**CATHOLIC WORKER HOUSE, SOUTH BEND**

A number of years ago we were invited to a meeting where there was a presentation regarding an attempt to open a Catholic Worker House (CWH) here in South Bend and the plans and ideals of this new (in South Bend) venture. Our response was similar; these were very nice, caring people but where did they get this fantasy and how realistic is it?

Sometimes fantasy has a way of becoming reality. After a few years, The Catholic Worker began to blossom in South Bend. As we became more involved with their ministry, we observed the CW community walking in the paths of Jesus. In the guests of the CW, we see evidence of the cross each must carry in her or his daily life. The worker community carries the cross with their guests in their homes of hospitality. It seems like a natural progression in our lives to reach out and be a part of this group. Over the years we have gotten to know many of the individuals who have come to volunteer and live at the Catholic Worker. They have all been indeed wonderful, caring, idealistic, and bright young people.

We have been blessed with being able to serve breakfast at Our Lady of the Road, share meals with the group and attend first Friday mass, dinner and contemplation. This has been part of our extended family life. We have been blessed with sharing time, effort, prayers and laughter with this wonderful group. I think this is what is meant by “extended family”. Thanks be to God.

(contact: Marlene @ Marlene­\_Nowak@yahoo.com)

***CHICAGO AND MICHIANA FIVE FOR THE HOMELESS***

Organized by John “Joe” Shafer (Sacred Heart parishioner) and Rodney Rabel a year ago, this non-profit organization has distributed new and used blankets, sleeping bags, hats, gloves, scarves, hand warmers, McDonalds food gift cards, shopping bags, and toiletries by directly meeting folks where they live on the streets of downtown Chicago and on lower Wacker Drive. John has also taken almost $2,000 in clothing donations, as well as food and personal hygiene items to homeless folks at *Broadway Christian Parish Church*, South Bend, the *Center for the Homeless* in South Bend, *Faith Mission* in Elkhart, and *Fellowship Mission* in Warsaw, Indiana.

John and Rodney began their ministry after seeing the vast numbers of homeless individuals living on the streets in downtown Chicago and decided to find a way to help where that city’s mission to end homelessness was falling short. Since that time, it has grown and helped many who are homeless or living in local shelters. ABC-57 news did a feature story back in December of 2012. Additional stories have appeared in the *Elkhart Truth* and in the *South Bend Tribune* (September 1, 2013). John and Rodney also volunteer each home football Saturday to staff our *Football Memorabilia* and *Souvenir* stand behind the Presbytery, raising money for Sacred Heart Parish.

Funds go to aid their effort to help the homeless locally and in downtown Chicago stay warm this winter. John and Rodney do great work for the poor and for Sacred Heart Parish. (contact Fr. Tom Jones @ tjones2233@aol.com)

**COMMUNITY FOR PEACE & NONVIOLENCE**

The Community for Peace and Nonviolence (CPNV) seeks to explore, practice and promote Jesus’ nonviolent way of righting wrong and promoting peace. It is an interdenominational group that includes members from the First Unitarian Church,  Crest Manor Church of the Brethren, Kern Road Mennonite Church,  Prince of Peace Church of the Brethren,  Sacred Heart Catholic Church,  South Bend Friends,  St. Augustine Catholic Church, and  Zion United Church of Christ.

Their major event is the St. Marcellus Day celebration that takes place at the end of October. As part of this event, there is a short pilgrimage to the Basilica where relics of St. Marcellus are below the main altar, followed by a prayer service. A meal is served afterwards followed by a speaker. The list of speakers contains important individuals who have strongly advocated for peace in justice in our country as well as the world. (contact Mike Griffin at Holy Cross College @ MGriffin@hcc-nd.edu )

**DISMAS HOUSE**

The Dismas House is a faith based, a nonprofit organization that provides housing and post release services to men and women recently released from incarceration. This program has been recognized nationally by the Urban Institute as an effective prisoner re-entry program. This is a unique prisoner re-entry program because former offenders share the house with area college students. The program was founded by Father Jack Hickey along with a group of Vanderbilt University students in 1974 in Nashville, TN. The South Bend Dismas House opened in 1986 through the efforts of a United Religious Community of St. Joseph County Task Force who learned about the Dismas program through a female Notre Dame student, who completed a summer internship at the Nashville Dismas House. The house holds up to 16 residents and is co-ed. The program is supported by hundreds of volunteers and a caring staff. It is funded through residents’ fees, grants, donations and fund raising activities. Dismas House recognizes that the cycle of crime can be reduced when men and women, who have been incarcerated, have assistance readjusting to society. To that end, Dismas House provides room and board, case management, transportation, job referrals, life skills training, counseling, mentoring and a variety of programs to help former offenders make successful transitions back into the community. Former offenders commit to staying a minimum of 90 days and college students one-to-two semesters. Since opening, Dismas has be home to over 700 former offenders and over 100 college students.

The mission of Dismas is to facilitate the reconciliation of former prisoners to society and society to former prisoners through development of a supportive community characterized by: students and former prisoners living together in a family setting; the active involvement of volunteers from the broader community; a spirit of open and participative decision making and sharing across the Dismas network, with an emphasis on the common good.

Some members of the SJM bring dinner to the Dismas House monthly and share dinner, discussions and interactions with the residents. If you would like to join the group for a meal and bring a dish to serve, contact: Elaine @ nicgor@yahoo.com

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**

Habitat for Humanity is a national organization that helps to provide homes for families by both constructing homes for families who assist in this building but also provides financial classes for the families so they can afford their new homes and training in home management. These educational facets through the Habitat program equip the family with the skills, abilities and confidence that is needed to be successful home -owners.

The Habitat program in St. Joseph County began in 1987 and has grown from a simple volunteer-run group that had a dream to a viable organization that continues to serve our community. Habitat attempts to partner with members of the community via local church groups, volunteers, and even with the Notre Dame women’s basketball team to provide homes for families. In 2014, homes were provided for sixteen families. Each of these families has contributed to the planning and work to bring their home to fruition.

Over the years, members of Sacred Heart Parish have volunteered their time and effort in this process. This is usually in the form of spending part of, or a full day of constructing the building, painting, gardening, or whatever is required to give the family a new home. With the volunteer work, Habitat is building homes, building hope, and building community in South Bend. (contact Gene Cavanaugh @ cavanaughg@aol.com )

**HANNAH’S HOUSE**

Hannah’s House provides a safe home, emotional support and programming to assist pregnant women of all ages. In 2013, Hannah’s House celebrated its 20th anniversary. Over the last several years, Hannah’s House has been at full capacity. Sadly too many women have had to be turned away. Each woman and each baby is important to the staff and volunteers at Hannah’s House. As a consequence and with a great deal of courage, the Board of Directors worked to open a second house. On May 10, 2013 the Killilea Home was officially opened. It is across the street from the present house in Mishawaka. The added cost of operating a second house is about $200,000 a year. Priceless is the warm welcoming and supportive environment at Hannah’s House for women facing crises pregnancies. (Contact: Elaine Nicgorski @ nicgor@yahoo.com)

**HOPE MINISTRIES**

September, 2014 Sacred Heart Parish started our 15th year of preparing and serving a monthly dinner at Hope Ministries. When we started SHP served about 40 male residents (the maximum Hope could handle) and 40 to 60 homeless people. We have witnessed dramatic change over those years...we are currently serving 140 or more men, women and children (33 children are currently residents)...the price of food has increased by at least 30%. Fifteen years ago almost every evening of every month had a church or organization on the Hope calendar that prepared and served dinner. This year November had 9 of 30 days without a provider and December has 9 of 31 days. On the evenings that are open, the staff at Hope prepares a meal with whatever donations are on their shelves.

The “Mission” of Hope Ministries is to transform hearts, minds and lives by engaging families and individuals in a Christ-centered, grace-based process of examining current realities, envisioning future possibilities, and enabling action to achieve their desired futures.

Your contributions provide support for a dozen or more great causes including Hope. More than half the funds needed to provide, prepare and serve the monthly Parish dinner at Hope come from Blue Envelope support. Our “communion” with the Lord at Mass is tied to our “communion” with the poor and the hungry. As Christ nourishes us at the table of the Lord, so we nourish others. (contact: stevefodroczi@sbcglobal.net)

**LOGAN CENTER**

Logan Center is a resource to provide assistance for individuals with disabilities. Their mission is to support people with disabilities in achieving their desired quality of life. A number of families have used this resource for obtaining service and support for members of their family. They create opportunities for these individuals to work, interact with the community, and provide resources for those who need assistance. The work of Logan can be seen throughout our community on a daily basis. Volunteers help to draw members of our community together in understanding and supporting those who have special gifts to offer. (contact: Steve Fodroczi @ stevefodroczi@sbcglobal.net )

**NORTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD FOOD PANTRY**

 In any given month, The Northeast Neighborhood Food Pantry typically serves 80 to 90 individuals and families leading to a total of approximately 300 people being served. Donations of foodstuffs are received From Sacred Heart Parish from our “blue bins” in the back of church and from other area churches and schools at no cost. This is insufficient and additional food must be purchased from the Food Bank of Northern Indiana; primarily meat, bread and produce. The monthly purchases cost between $400 to $500 per month.

Sacred Heart Parish continues to be a major source of assistance for the people in the neighborhood who are in need of food assistance. The consistent donations of packaged and canned foods to the Northeast Neighborhood Food Pantry make a significant difference in the ability to maintain a sufficient supply of food to be of service to the patrons from the neighborhood. Financial support from the blue envelope collections and special collections are critical to the effective acquisition of necessary food.

The early initiatives of people like Dorothy Kryder and many other parishioners who volunteer to staff the Pantry allow this mission to successfully continue. There are currently at least twelve parishioners who actively work at this pantry. They, along with the donated food, allow the pantry to offer adequate, meaningful and dignified assistance to the people in the neighborhood who are in need. (contact: Tom Bull @ gtb1937@comcast.net).

**OUR LADY OF THE ROAD**

Our Lady of the Road (OLR), located at 744 S. Main St., is the apostolate of the St. Peter Claver Catholic Worker Community in South Bend. It has been growing and expanding its services little by little since opening its doors in December 2006. A steady, faithful crew of volunteers and staff serve breakfast every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday mornings. Members of Sacred Heart Parish serve on the third Friday of every month. Folks come from all over South Bend to do laundry, take showers, feast on a great meal, and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere. On the south side of the property, regular volunteers have worked to create a beautiful vegetable and flower garden planted in the spring. It is part of the Unity Garden network in South Bend, designed to provide fresh, accessible, and free produce to all who stand in need.

The economic crisis has resulted in a noticeable increase in the number of people who come to OLR for food, clothing, and most importantly, friendship. Typically, around one hundred thirty people are served each time we open.

In 2009, we began taking in ten men every night from November to April as part of the Weather Amnesty program in South Bend. Over one hundred volunteers hold vigil in pairs with our guests, praying with and for them throughout the night. The hunched figure under the blanket with wet socks and holes in his shoes now has become a friend, known by name and story, a sense of humor, and hopes for the future. In a few cases, a volunteer and one of our guests have remembered old family or school connections, a reminder of the holy, fragile gift that is each human life and the strands of relationship that bind us one to another.

Because of the real need for healthy, affordable food in our neighborhood, a cooperative grocery store was started at OLR in 2011. Regional farmers help supply the co-op with locally grown produce, farm-fresh eggs, and Amish cheese. The Monroe Park Grocery Cooperative is open Friday, Noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. All are welcome!

All are welcome who would like to volunteer! Some regular tasks involve: helping prepare breakfast, staffing the laundry counter, gardening, canning and preserving food, routine maintenance (plumbing, cleaning, roof work), and simply visiting with breakfast guests over a cup of coffee or tea. We also gratefully accept donations of laundry detergent, hotel-size soap and shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shaving razors, and clothing (especially socks, underwear, towels, pants, and T-shirts). (contact: Tom Nowak @ Nowak.1@nd.edu)

**REFUGEES IN OUR MIDST**

**A CALL TO SERVE**

In 2014 a new refugee family was welcomed into our community. This family consists of parents and three lovely young girls, ages 12, 8 and 5. This family lived in Dubai since leaving Iraq where their lives have been in danger. The father had owned a shop and the mother is an MD. After leaving Iraq, they have been refugees and unable to legally work in Dubai.

A challenge for all refugees is to feel welcome and safe in their new country and have the opportunity to settle in peace. Jesus has commanded us to welcome the stranger. They begin with few material goods beyond some clothing and the clothing they have is functional for the hot climates of Dubai or Iraq but not for South Bend as fall and winter were just around the corner.

We ask members of our parish to again be generous in your time, energy and assistance. As affordable, safe housing is found, they will need many household appliances normally found in our homes such as a washer & dryer, dishes & glasses, pots, pans, blenders, etc. for the kitchen. They need beds for the parents and children along with sheets, pillows and blankets. Other needs are items such as paper towels, feminine hygiene products, towels, and dolls and toys for the girls.

Assistance is needed for doctors’ appointments, obtaining legal documents, school registration, and simply giving a friendly welcome. Eventually the parents will both be searching for jobs to support their family here in The Bend.

We ask you to assist these new families as you can. Notify Marlene Nowak (288-7490, marlene\_nowak@yahoo.com) to offer whatever assistance you are able

**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY**

Do you know WHAT God is calling you to do?

Listen to your heart as you read this. Did you get out of a warm, comfortable bed and enjoy a delicious breakfast this morning? If you answered yes, consider yourself blessed. Many of the individuals and families the St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Joseph County serves have nothing to eat, nothing to wear for an interview, no family or friends support, and are sleeping on the street, in a car if they own one, or on the hard, cold floor of a home or apartment. These people come from all walks of life. They have families and dreams like you and I. Please prayerfully consider joining the Sacred Heart Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society so that you may help someone’s basic need become more than a dream but a reality. Please help us carry out our ministry of emergency aid to the working poor and destitute.

The Society is an international lay Catholic organization that seeks to relieve suffering through person to person involvement of its members with those we serve. Vincentians make home visits to families who ask for emergency help, assess their material and spiritual needs and assist in meeting those needs. They bring Christ’s love to those losing hope. If you have career-related experience in these areas, great! If not, teams of two people make the visits so you are not alone in this endeavor.

The Sacred Heart Conference is in need of individuals to make food deliveries and assessment calls to families and individuals who call in for emergency assistance. Any member of the parish may become a Vincentian-working, retired, youth. All that is needed is the belief in what Christ asks us to do in the Book of Matthew. He said “when we feed the hungry and clothe the naked, we feed and clothe Him”. Pope Francis challenged us last year in his Easter address to put our faith into action. (contact: Patrick Cahill @ pfcahill@aol.com **.**)

**UNITED RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY (URC)/ADVOCACY CENTER**

The United Religious Community (URC) of St. Joseph County is a consortium of congregations and faith-based organizations that are joined together in interfaith partnership to help strengthen our community. The URC has served as initiator and developer of a number of important groups within our community who have been critical in serving our greater community. These include Dismas House, Habitat for Humanity, Martin Luther King, Jr. Foundation, Memorial Hospital Spiritual Care, St. Joseph Count Jail Chaplaincy Program, The Center for the Homeless, and The Food Bank of Northern Indiana. After the initiation, support and success of these programs, the URC allowed them to be independent programs.

The Advocacy Center program of the URC focuses on connecting residents in need to specific programs and services in our community that appropriately address their basic needs and issues. This program collaborates with other groups and agencies to maximize the community’s resources to provide effective and long-lasting solutions to the needs of the clients. In addition to providing moral support, information, referrals, and direction, within the guidelines of the program, the Advocacy Center may provide financial assistance to St. Joseph County residents who are challenged to meet their basic needs. (contact: Joan Loranger @ jmloranger@att.net)

**Women’s Care Center**

The Women’s Care Center is a pro-life pregnancy help center in South Bend whose mission is to help young women with crisis pregnancies look beyond the panic of the moment to choose life for their babies. Free pregnancy tests are provided at all Women’s Care Center locations, and over 97% of those who receive counseling and an ultrasound analysis, choose life for their babies!

It doesn’t stop there. The Women’s Care Center offers tangible support to these women throughout their pregnancies, during the births of their babies, and beyond. Counselors lend a listening ear and a loving heart to every woman who steps through their door facing an unexpected pregnancy or needing assistance. They provide clients with individual counseling and attention, parenting classes, advice on birth plans, adoption choices, and assistance with many other matters that arise for their clients so that women become better parents and create more nurturing and self-sufficient families. Also, by participating in ongoing goals, counseling, prenatal care, education, and parenting skills classes, young mothers are able to earn much-needed items for themselves and their babies from the Care Center’s Crib Club, an in-house “store” that provides diapers, cribs, clothing and much more.

Sacred Heart parishioners interested in helping the Women’s Care Center can do so in a variety of ways. In addition to monetary donations or donations of baby items such as **diapers** (especially sizes 4 and 5) and formula, volunteers are needed to staff the Crib Club, provide office help or babysit for clients’ children during parenting classes.  With over forty percent of the babies in St. Joseph County being born to Women’s Care Center clients, they will distribute over 125,000 diapers in St. Joseph County alone this year (2014,!!). Donations may be dropped off at the Women’s Care Center main office at 360 North Notre Dame Avenue, or at any other Women’s Care Center office in the area.

If interested in helping in any of these ways, call the Women’s Care Center at 574-234-0363 and thank you for supporting life! Learn more about the Women’s Care Center at [www.womenscarecenter.org](http://www.womenscarecenter.org). (contact: Katy Cressy @ katecressy@gmail.com)