

SOCIAL SERVICES LISTENING SESSION St. Mary, Mt. Vernon 8/2/25

Share your mission and success stories. What is a moment of pride?

What are the assets, strengths, and resources of your mission?

- A parish group focused on Laudato Si' - we connected with two nearby parishes and connected enough to hold an Earth Day Mass at Camp Ondessonk
- JustFaith Workshops
- Real meaning of poverty and change the perception of what poverty is
- Hispanic ministry has added Mass times and is growing
- We have a committed group of people across the diocese
- Strong bereavement committee
- Pushing evangelization
- Kindness, welcoming atmosphere, and no judgement
- Faith Alive
- Installing solar panels
- OCIA
- BDCCW
- Assist with housing and paying bills – to help people out of poverty
- Thrift Shop
- Food Distribution
- Family Outreach
- Sister Parish in Guatemala
- Society of St. Vincent de Paul
- CRS to teach social justice & global solidarity
- Water Project
- Soup Kitchen/Food Pantry
- Catholic Heart Work Camps

What areas of growth need to take place in your mission?

- Better interfaith outreach
- Closer ties to what other parishes are doing
- Better communication leads to action plans
- Take care of ourselves first
- Encourage others to take charge
- Homilies could include a more direct call to social justice and the Beatitudes
- Reach out to the Hispanic community and make them feel welcome
- Listening to others
- Growing evangelization
- The Catholic Church needs to be more comfortable with spreading the word

- Invite new people (it is usually the same people volunteering)
- Networking with other faith denominations
- Some people want to help, but may not be drawn into a congregation
- There are SVDP groups functioning, but not official members
- Getting youth involved – how do we do it? Start a Junior St. Vincent de Paul Group
- Promote team involvement
- Start building connections with Hispanic population
- Asking for money
- A structure to follow
- Resources from diocesan organizations
- Communities of Salt and Light: Reflections on the Social Mission of the Parish (1993)
- High School Senior Service Projects
- Keepers of Hope Prayer Group
- More priests in prisons
- Reducing staff burnout for extremely needy clients
- Getting people to know us

How can we work better together?

- Do a better job communicating within our own parish
- Listen more to what new people are interested in - ask for their opinion
- Recognizing opportunities and organizing around resources available today
- Reclaim our symbols and religious traditions to represent social justice issues
- Further networking – events like this
- Better education on the different ministries
- Disseminating papal documents to lay people
- Share email list from this group
- Do not limit involvement to only Catholics
- Monthly/Quarterly ZOOM meetings
- Connecting parishes within the diocese – especially rural parishes
- Increase in Catholic education – make the faith real at home
- Engaging the public
- Is the board going to have someone from each vicariate?
- We need a clearinghouse
- Church leadership – pastor and parish council could help promote better cooperation and invite new ideas