

## **Marianist Family Council of Dayton Day of Discernment**

Over 60 lay and religious members of the Marianist Family from the greater Dayton area gathered on November 3<sup>rd</sup> for a Day of Discernment at the Madeleine Room in the Chaminade Center at Mount St. John's. The purpose of the Day of Discernment was to determine if there was a Shared Social Justice Initiative that could be undertaken by the Marianist Family. The Shared Social Justice Initiative would be a collaborative effort with an existing organization or group already involved in alleviating poverty in the Dayton Community. The Day of Discernment provided an informed and prayerful process of discernment. The morning started with Morning Prayer on the theme of Poverty and Justice prepared by the Zeal Committee of the Family Council. Next, Amaha Sellassie presented an overview of the hyper-segregation and the lack of opportunity in distressed neighborhoods of Dayton. Amaha is a faculty member from Sinclair Community College and a community organizer who is spearheading the creation of the Gem City Market in the midst of the food desert in the inner Westside of Dayton. Next, the Planning Committee present four options for the Shared Social Justice Initiative.

After a break for lunch, table conversations evaluate the pros and cons of each four options. At the conclusion of the conversations, the facilitators posted these evaluations on the walls of the Madeleine Room. Participants were then ask quietly to take time to ponder which of the options the Holy Spirit was calling the Marianist Family to implement. This was followed by a period of personal reflection by the participants on their willingness to be part of a leadership team or serve as a volunteer for a particular initiative. Summarizing this information provided the basis of a large group conversation on which of the Initiatives the Family had the committed leadership and resources to implement. The two Initiatives discerned were a Marianist presence at the Corpus Christi site in the Five Oaks neighborhood, and collaboration with the Dakota Center in inner West Dayton. Next, the leadership team for each Initiative organized a meeting to begin planning the exploration with partner organizations and to set their next meeting. The Day of Discernment concluded with the Mass of the Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time with fitting Gospel what is the greatest commandment "Love God with your all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength and your neighbor as yourself."

The Temporalities Committee of the Family Council will serve as a liaison with the two Leadership Teams. In the spring, there will be an event to update and engage the Family in these initiatives.