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**2017Day Three - Monday, 6/26 - Holy Family Retreat Center, West Hartford to Hartford to St. Margaret Mary Parish, South Windsor to Holy Family Retreat Center, West Hartford**

Mass on Monday morning at 7:00 am with Fr. John.

When we stay at Holy Family we all look forward to morning mass with Fr. John and his homilies.

The theme of this day's gospel was "Don't Be Afraid".  A perfect gospel for us today.

I dropped off a few "Left Behind Cards" at the entrance to the chapel.  Maybe some attendants of mass will take one with them to their home parish and invite us in the future.

After mass we went over to the Retreat dining area for breakfast. Cereal, yogurt, little muffins. Great coffee.

After breakfast we got ready to cycle into Hartford.  We pumped up our tires.  We gathered for prayer.  Each day we would be lead in prayer by a different team member.  I love this part of the day.  A special beginning.

Gary's wife, Lynne and her friends Carolyn & Deb would be helping with Support today.  Also, this would be Tom Breen's first day.

We first cycled over to Senator Chris Murphy's new Office.  On the way we rode on Park street to experience that feeling of cycling through a less than perfect area.  I stopped along the ride to pass out some of those Free Summer Meal Cards to moms and some store merchants.  This is something I value very much in our mission. Each person who takes these cards seems so grateful.

Our visit to Murphy's Office was very good.  Fourteen of us went up to talk with Kenny Curran. Our topics this year were: Healthcare (Lou); SNAP/Nutrition (Claire); Immigration (Tom); Federal Budget (Johnnie); God's Creation (John). The discussion went well.  Still this was again "preaching to the choir". Somehow we have got to do more.

We posed for a photo.  Some of the new members came up to the office for the experience and were very pleased with the process.

It was now close to lunch time and we cycled over to Bushnell Park for lunch.  We had sandwiches from Holy Family.  always a special part of our stay.  Yummy!  We hung out in Bushnell for a while.  A nice rest on a beautiful day.

After we were done and the cars re-packed, we cycled over to Blumenthal's Office to talk to Rich Kehoe.

Again most of us went up to his office and again we share our topics with our "asks".  It again appeared to be a good exchange and it again was preaching to the choir.

In both offices we heard that the "problem" was that the democrats were in the minority and "couldn't" do much but would keep trying.  We just have to stay in touch and on top of this.

Next on our itinerary for the day was End Hunger CT.  We were running a bit late and the Cue Sheet was messed. up. That was my fault as I just did not have time to actually drive the CUE Sheet route.  If I had, I would have seen how goofy it was.  I felt a bit guilty as I heard the Support folks seeming confused and having to make changes on the fly.  Lesson learned;   You must always drive your Cue Sheet!!!

Well, we did get to End Hunger and met with Shannon.  Lucy Nolan was out and would not make it back in time for us.  A couple of us ask some questions about how you get SNAP and also about the 211 process for the Free Summer Meals.  They were just finishing up their Summer Blitz campaign.  This is where volunteers canvas a neighborhood with flyers and cards about the Free Summer Meals program. It is a great program.  We conveyed to Shannon that we were passing out the cards and she asked if we wanted brochures, flyers and more cards. Since we would be going to a shelter and two soup kitchens in Waterbury I said definitely we would.

Now we headed for St. Margaret Mary parish in South Windsor. This parish was being merged with St. Francis Assisi and would be called St. Junipero Serra beginning on Thursday, June 29 the last day of this year's ride.

Fr. Dolan would be gone already.  Our contact at St. Margaret Mary's was Elizabeth.  She was a dynamo and pretty much promised a good number of attendants.

Unfortunately, the Cue Sheet was messed up for this leg of the trip too.  We made adjustments on the fly for both cyclists ans Support.  We finally all got to the Bissell Bridge.  Pa. Claire, and I were the last three cyclists to begin crossing the bridge.  The we noticed that Claire has another flat tire.

I got out my tools and began to fix her flat.  She did not carry an extra tube.  Luckily I had another spare.

I fixed her flat but could not get the new tube to set into the tire properly.  I tried three separate times to no avail.

We had to call for Help.  We walked the bikes back to the parking area and waited for Support.  If they got there quick enough Claire would get in the car with her bike mounted on a bike rack and Pam and I would cycle to the church.  We were a little more than 6.5 miles from the church.

John Ryan came but we ha decided it best to all get in the van and drive over to the church. We would fix Claire's tire in the morning.

When we got to the church I thought all the other bikes would be on racks but they were not.

Supper was being served. A chicken leg/breast supper with salads, bread, and good looking dessert, ice cream!!!

We intermingled with parishioners.  There were 35 people in attendance which would be our largest attendance on this year's ride.

As many were getting dessert, we began the presentation.  Maureen approached me and indicated she would like to speak to the Matthew 25 slide.  I was pleased.

The presentation went smoothly.  Gary, with his touching reflection about Ben.  Jim spoke and was totally impressive. John Ryan was as passionate as ever.  It went great.  We were getting used to the incorporation of the 7 themes of Catholic Social Teaching. However, the highlight of the presentation was Maureen and her "interpretation" of Matthew 25.  She indicated how this was her faith, our faith, and then added what Matthew 25 "does not say".  It was so moving and so powerful.  We were all blown away.  Thank you Maureen!!

We got quite a few questions after and we had several good discussions.  I talked to Mike and his wife afterwards and they were totally engaged in our mission.  Mike is a Doctor and gets it. His wife teaches and she was very understanding of our issues.

We were pumped from the great response we got to our presentation.  That is always a good thing. Many took home our letters and all signed our banner.

One of the tenants of CST is Solidarity.  This was very appropriate since the merging of these two parishes calls for Solidarity among its members.  You have got to move forward.  You have to get over it!

So, we packed up the bikes, got them on the racks and drove over to Holy Family for the night.

We would do the word of the day a little later than usual as we all had to shower before doing so.

The word/phrase of the day:

**Joan:**  Confusion (Cue Sheet)

**Lauren:** Follower

**Tom:** Long/Frustrating (the ride)

**Jim:** personal

**Johnnie:** groundlessness

**Gary:** Deaf Ears (our legislators)

**Lynne:** Grateful

**Deb:** Educate (perfect)

**Fr. Terry:** Dialogue/Seeking the Truth

**John:** Excited (he was)

**Wendy:** Mustard Seed - One person can do something

**Maureen:** Privilege

**Claire:** caseload ( again from our legislators)

**Pam:** Just Breath

**Lou:** Chill

Done by Lou