

“Cover the Uninsured Week 2005”

“Today, 45 million Americans have no health insurance, including more than 8 million children.

Eight out of ten uninsured Americans either work or are in working families. Being uninsured means going without needed care. It means minor illnesses become major ones because care is delayed. Tragically, it also means that one significant medical expense can wipe out a family’s life savings.

The problem is getting worse. As the price of health care continues to rise, fewer individuals and families can afford to pay for coverage. Fewer small businesses are able to provide coverage for their employees, and those that do are struggling to hold on to the coverage they offer. It is a problem that affects all of us.

That’s why Americans are coming together for “Cover the Uninsured Week 2005.” From May 1-8, individuals and organizations from every sector of society will join together to tell our leaders that health care coverage for all Americans must be their top priority. The Week will mobilize thousands of business owners, union members, educators, students, patients, hospital staff, physicians, nurses, faith leaders and their congregants, and many others.

In hundreds of communities across the country, events will spotlight the fact that too many of us are living without health care coverage.

We can let millions of Americans live without health care coverage, or we can do something about it. Speak up for an America where everyone has health care coverage.”

—<http://covertheuninsuredweek.org>

Here on the local level, St. Thomas More is involved in this effort. Our Parish is an Associate Member of “Congregations for Civic Action.” CCA is a network of Christian Churches of a variety of denominations who have come together to create solutions to problems affecting the wider community. CCA is non-partisan, ecumenical, multi-cultural, and provides an opportunity for people and congregations to translate their faith into action.

The Catholic Parishes presently involved in this effort are Mission San Luis Rey (Oceanside), St. Peter (Fallbrook), and the Church of St. Thomas More.

CCA is involved in a number of issues, but the most recent effort is in helping to pass California legislation that will make sure that the one million children in California who are presently not insured with health care coverage will indeed be covered.

Recently, a rally was held in Sacramento attended by over 4,200 people with many legislators present along with a representative from the Governor’s Office encouraging the passage of the necessary legislation. A number of CCA representatives were there including six representatives from St. Thomas More.

The “Californians for Healthy Kids” campaign – which includes health care, religious, labor, and business groups – seeks to build on enrollment gains in state programs and local innovations in 10 counties.

Nearly 90% of children in the state have health care coverage; but up to a million children do not according to various studies.

Because of the wide-spread representation from communities across California, including our own, the passage of this legislation looks very favorable.

I share this with you as one example of our Parish’s involvement in helping to better society and in making a difference by putting our faith into action.

Sr. Maureen Brown, our Pastoral Associate, is the Parish liaison for “Congregations for Civic Action.”

If you would like any more information about “Congregations for Civic Action” or about the “Californians for Healthy Kids” Campaign, please feel free to give Sr. Maureen or myself a call.