Introduction and Overview
Building Intercultural Competence Ministries for the pastoral care of migrants, refugees and travelers.

- Mrs. Mar del Mar Munoz-visoso, the executive director of the Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, gave an overview and the background information for this meeting indicating that in 2008, the Bishops of the United States, aware of the growing diversity in the Church identified the multicultural model as the fastest growing model for parishes across the United States.
- Concerned that our parishes may not be aware of this new reality and the critical need for adaptation, the Bishops called for the training of parish leaders and our parishes in general to help them adopt pastoral practices that can help build these diverse communities into an integrated Church where they can be both who they are and also part of the larger Church.
- Such an inter-cultural competence, she noted, requires (a) the capacity to frame the question of cultural diversity as a theological issue, (b) the ability to develop inter-cultural communication skills, (c) the wisdom and knowledge to identify obstacles that can get in the way of integration and (d) the courage to foster ecclesial integration, inclusion, and stewardship.

Based on this information, discussions focused on two groups under the PCMRT.

a. People on the move—Migrant farm workers, Sea farers, Airport and Airline workers and travelers, Circus and Carnival workers, truckers, etc.

b. Immigrants and resettled refugees.

People on the Move
Background Information
Most Rev. Rutilio Juan del Reigo Janez, Chair of the USCCB Sub-committee on Pastoral Care for Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers and Sr. Myrna Tordillo, the Assistant Director on the Secretariat on Cultural Diversity in the Church gave the background information that informed the discussion on the pastoral care for People on the Move. Sr. Myrna sensitized the group to the huge number of people who fall into this category and who are potentially in need of pastoral care and outreach.

- Statistics show that we have about three million farm workers; one and half million sea farers; over 184 million people air-traffic passengers travelling to and from the United States; 300,000 people traveling unto our sea shores with over 125 different foreign-flag vessels calling at U.S. seaports; fifty to sixty circuses; and 300 to 400 carnivals all over the United States.
• These people, just like any other group, desire a deeper relationship with God, have spiritual and sacramental needs and are in need of pastoral care. Many may not have visas to allow them to receive spiritual care on shore, hence the need to find ways to reach out to them where they are at.
• Pastoral awareness of our responsibility to evangelize these groups and to develop and provide personnel to service these ministries is crucial.
• Present resources include: Catholic Airport Chaplaincy in twenty eight dioceses with each presenting a different reality in the use of facility; Apostleship of the Sea has ten Catholic Centers and fifty chaplaincies within our dioceses.

Bishop Rutilio emphasized the need for every evangelization effort to include the mystery of Christ-professing Christ into every human situation, into every culture, peoples, nations, and the whole world. He elaborated on the three groups of peoples unto whom the new evangelization needs to speak:

• Members of the church who are presently active to whom the new evangelization serves to strengthen their faith and commitment to Christ and to help them see the need to develop a missionary spirit.
• The baptized who no longer are experiencing the consolation born of the Catholic faith who either no longer go to church or have joined other denominations. People on the move are very vulnerable to falling into this category.
• Those who do not know Christ or have rejected Him noting that this group is growing in the United States especially among young adults who tend to reject established religion.
• He emphasized the need to use Christian witness as a model for presenting the message of Christ noting that people tend to believe more in action than in words. With regard to people on the move, he shared his belief that Deacons and, especially priest and nuns in religious life, are very adapted to this kind of ministry for many reasons:
  • Religious priests, brothers, and nuns are more mobile and more aware of cultural differences due to their inter-cultural ministry engagement.
  • They are freer in terms of disposition to be moved around according to identified needs.
  • They are more in touch with people with less means and who live on the periphery of life.
  • For deacons, this could be a whole new ministry for them in the church as they can be assigned to a variety of ministries.

Group Discussion Outcomes

Questions: What are the needs of the people on the move and are there any special programs in your parish or diocese to address these needs and if so do these programs have adequate resources for the ongoing evangelization of this group? How can PCMRT assist in the pastoral care of people on the move or with the existing program?

Awareness:
Many of the group members were not aware of the needs of this group. Shortage of programs available to service the pastoral needs of these people in our dioceses and parishes were noted.

Needs:
• Shelter, language training, immigration and legal issues, spiritual and sacramental needs, finances, counseling for various needs, loss of faith, unavailability of chaplains for pastoral care, absence from family for extended periods of time, marital and family issues, etc.
Addressing Needs

- Establishing community centers as a welcome place for these groups
- Use advocacy and direct help to attend to their basic need for shelter, financial assistance, sanitary conditions, Language training, etc. Provide transportation to worship sites where needed and have Catholic Charities network with governmental agencies in providing some of the needed services.
- Providing counseling services, sacramental resources and religious education programs outside of regular Church routines. Possibility of adapting the RCIA to create an alternate program suited to the needs of people on the move. Use of multi-media resources for outreach-internet, videos, CDs and tapes, radio programs, pamphlets and leaflets, placards, prayer and devotional booklets, and other sacramentals. Engage ethnic liturgical materials and musical instruments adapted to their worship needs.
- Identify closest parishes to these groups and liaison with these local parishes to provide pastoral services as needed.
- Need for more detailed information about these groups so as to better understand their needs and develop adequate programs and resources in response.
- Need for more education in parishes on the need for cultural sensitivity, openness, knowledge and respect for different cultures, and sharing stories of people on the move and engaging parishioners in multi-cultural events.
- Provide resources to enable people on the move access more easily Catholic places of worship nearest to their landing or lodging and make our churches a welcoming place for visitors. Diocese and parishes need to publish any programs they have in the service of this group.
- Airport chapels and places of prayer need to be made more visible and access to a chaplain readily available. USCCB should advocate for more chapels and places of prayer at different airports and sea ports. The need to establish a more formal ministry program for these groups and be available to welcome and minister to them on arrival.
- Be more proactive: Sensitizing those in priestly training, religious communities, deacons, and lay leaders about the ministry needs of this group and provide seminars and training programs to enable them learn how to engage this group in our evangelization effort.
- Appoint chaplains and lay volunteers committed and dedicated to this ministry
- Because of the mobile nature of this group and the challenges this mobility presents, forming leaders among their rank and file to help liaison services may be helpful.
- Presentation at the different regional and national meetings of our bishops to sensitize them on the pastoral needs of these groups and our responsibility to meet those needs in the face of the New Evangelization.
- Have PCMRT coordinate outreach programs for this group.

Way forward:

- Further examination of these suggestions to identify viable options for the pastoral care of people on the move that are consistent with the Churches mission for the New Evangelization.
- Determine how identified options can be implemented and by who
- Establish implementation program and determine timeline for execution.
- Determine supervision of program implementation in order to monitor outcomes.
Immigrants: Evangelization and Ethnic Communities
Background Information
Most Rev. Edgar M. da Cunha, Episcopal Liaison to the Brazilian Apostolate, provided the background for discussion on this issue.

- Noted the critical shift in the Church's commitment to evangelization exemplified in the fact that the word "Gospel" was used only once in Vatican I and the word "evangelization" was not used at all in contrast to Vatican II where the word "Gospel" was used 157 times, the word "evangelization" 31 times, and the word "evangelize" 18 times.
- At the heart of evangelization is the conversion of society through the proclamation of the gospel, a gospel that is a lived experience for modern man listens to witnesses rather than to teachers and if they listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses. Thus Evangelization is not about us; it is about Jesus, hence to need to foster intentional Catholics rather than cultural Catholics.
- Years ago, we had national parishes that were the center of religious and ethnic identity for immigrants in a country dominated by Protestantism. Today, what we have is international parishes, with each ethnic group trying to preserve its values, customs, language and native heritage as they face the high possibility of their children being assimilated into the dominant culture with the hope that they can give them something to fall back to and reach back to preserve some of the elements of their original cultural heritage.
- The reality is that our Church is part of an increasing global society and needs to welcome the different cultures and languages into our parishes and help them preserve their heritage through integration as opposed to assimilation.
- Lessons from the conversion of St. Paul reveal (a) that conversion leads to integration, (b) the need for enculturation wherever possible, (c) the willingness to suffer for unity, (d) the ability to empty the self in order to make room for others, and (e) the need to see diversity as an opportunity rather than as a detraction.
- Ways to foster integration include: working within areas of common ground Mass, devotions to Mary, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, liturgical calendar; fostering the sense of parish as a community of different families and encourage parishioners to be open to notice and discover the multiplicity of God given talents and gifts in their multi-cultural parish; using small parish communities to promote acceptance, adaptation, integration, and respect for individual identities with the understanding that the key to the future of our church and parishes is the immigrant populations.

- The need to find ways to discourage the denial of other peoples cultures or the imposition of one's culture as the only good one or the one that is universally acceptable, thereby creating unwelcoming environments in our parishes.

Group Discussion Outcomes
Question: Why is evangelization important for integration to take place in multicultural settings and what do we need to do to create an integrated parish? What are some of the obstacles to integration and do you see integration or assimilation as more prevalent in the people that you serve?

Relationship between Evangelization and Integration
- Evangelization leads to conversion and conversion leads to discipleship which opens our eyes to see the world with new eyes and open minds—a recognition that we are all one and equal in the eyes of God and that we are not better than anyone, just different.
• Evangelization forms and fosters intentional disciples who put Christ at the center of their service to others, who can understand and feel with others while recognizing and appreciating differences.
• We need to reach out to people outside our parish walls.

Action
• Effective leadership at the parish level—a leader who is clear as to objectives of the new evangelization, open, empathic and sensitive to the needs of the different groups, can articulate the need for integration and educate parishioners accordingly. Leadership needs to avoid situations that can polarize the groups.
• Realization that no one person or group has all the ideas; the whole community does and is needed.
• Allow different ethnic groups to celebrate in their own language and tradition.
• See contributions from wider perspective not just monetary-talents, faith, traditions, values, etc. (Stewardship)
• Respect for others, openness and sensitivity, a sense of giving and receiving.
• Involvement of ethnic minorities in leadership roles in parishes and dioceses
• The use of worship, music, preaching, and the sacraments to foster integration.
• We need to reach out to people outside our parish walls.

Obstacles to Integration
• Fear of differences as an emotional response
• Fear of loss of status quo.
• Inability to recognize the gift of God in minority populations.
• Language and cultural misunderstandings coupled with lack of respect for individual identity.
• Relationship difficult to form when people only meet at church.
• Racism, prejudice and ignorance about other cultures.
• Lack of leadership

Assimilation verses Integration
• More assimilation is noted (a) people concerned with greater prosperity, (b) the old model of assimilation still in action (c) culture of individualism, (d) focus on personal spirituality and apathy to organized religion.
• Some integration is visible: (a)bilingual liturgies are becoming more acceptable, (b) the young tend to mix more than segregate (c) community communal prayers and liturgies becoming more common.

Way forward:
• Further examination of these suggestions to determine how identified options could be implemented and by who.
• Determine what training programs may be needed and associated with implementation.
• Establish implementation program and determine timeline for execution.
• Determine supervision of program implementation in order to minor outcomes.