

# Best Practices Report – Diocese of Joliet

## DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The Diocese of Joliet has taken a comprehensive multi-year approach to integrating the message of “Welcoming the Stranger” (WTS) into the activities of the diocese. They established a “Welcoming the Stranger Committee” to oversee all of the activities related to the implementation of the pastoral. Diocesan agencies have undergone a “self-study” to understand how each ministry is working to meet the needs of the diverse population. The WTS committee has developed a three year process of workshops for parish and diocesan staff following the themes of the pastoral statement – Conversion, Communion and Solidarity. They also developed a tool for “Parish Group Study” on “Multicultural Inclusion”. The WTS Committee is promoting the use of this tool by leaders in each parish as a way to help make parishioners aware of the parish’s multicultural character and to respond to the needs of those who have not received welcome from the Church.

## THE APPROACH

### *Methods or activities the diocese has taken to address the needs outlined in the diocese’s needs assessment:*

In order help diocesan agencies better address the needs of the newcomers and ethnic communities, the diocese instituted an “agency self-study program.” This tool asked all diocesan agencies to report to the bishop how they are responding to different cultures, how they are currently implementing the themes of the pastoral and what steps they envision to improve their capacity in this regard. The bishop held an assembly with the heads of all diocesan agencies to study the reports. They were then presented to the Presbyteral Council and the Diocesan Pastoral Council. The plans have formed the basis of a collective plan for the diocese.

To further implement the Pastoral and build unity in the parishes, the diocese developed a parish group study series and diocesan workshops which are being offered over the course of a three-year cycle (Cycle 1 – The Calling to Welcome and Awareness; Cycle 2 -- The Call to Conversion; Cycle 3 – The Call to Communion and Solidarity). Each year in the cycle, the diocese hosts a major workshop for diocesan and parish leaders on the particular theme, bringing in such keynote speakers as Rev. Eric Law ’02 (kick-off), and Giaocchino Campese ’03 (theme 1) and Msgr. Ray East ’04 (theme 2). The workshops have been designed to animate parish and diocesan leadership to keep the topic current and vibrant, thus keeping the Pastoral “alive” and on-going in nature. These major workshops have been followed by a discussion series in each parish. The WTS committee provided the tool for parish group study [available for download on the Internet at: <http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/ohm/> ], as well as other materials to assist the parishes (including the WTS Parish Kit, Pastoral Statement and other materials on racism and multi-cultural themes). This has encouraged the diocese as a whole to become aware of newcomers and their needs, to reject apathetic approaches to needs that are identified, and to build upon the opportunities present in the diocese embracing all of the groups and cultures that are part of it.

Lastly, the diocese has taken special efforts to promote adult Hispanic Leadership particularly in parishes where there are large Latino populations but little representation of Hispanics in parish leadership positions. The diocese has offered special workshops and seminars towards this end.

### *Challenges or obstacles the diocese has faced in its approach and specific actions the diocese has taken (is taking) to overcome these challenges in order to achieve objectives:*

The greatest challenge has been lack of support and leadership by clergy. While the plan was approved by the Presbyteral Council, the WTS committee feels it was not actively “owned” and encouraged. The Committee believes that the clergy sex abuse scandal has taken the primary focus of the bishop and clergy. In response, the Committee took considerable initiative using the Joliet bulletin (JOB), agency email lists, and direct contacts to

extend information about workshops, other training, and implementation materials that were available. The committee also worked through established leaders within the parishes, as well as the clergy, to be sure parishes were able to send representatives and participate. Furthermore, they printed a handbook for each parish in the diocese and informed groups that “the pastor has a wonderful new tool to help them become more multi-culturally sensitive.”

## OUTCOME-BASED OBJECTIVES

*The following is a list of the primary objectives of the diocesan action plan and indicators of success for each objective, as well as a list of activities the diocese has employed towards accomplishing each objective:*

Objectives	Measurements of Success for Each Objective	Milestones / Activities involved in accomplishing the objective
<p>Diocesan agencies will perform self-evaluations concerning their capacities and resources to respond to the needs of diverse cultures.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 95% of diocesan agencies participated in self-study process and have projected future goals. Plans resulting from the self-study process include:</li> <li>2. Catholic Schools Office – promoting multicultural sensitivity training with both staff and children and working on more financial aid for minority students.</li> <li>3. Family Ministry and Office for Divine Worship are working to improve multi-ethnic flavor of dioc. Liturgical celebrations.</li> <li>4. Catholic Charities has initiated a major process of self-evaluation, starting with creation of a Cultural Diversity Committee to assess and implement changes regarding cultural awareness and sensitivity when providing services.</li> <li>5. See box below for more examples from diocesan agencies.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Self-study process developed and undertaken</li> <li>2. Feb. '04 – bishop met with all diocesan agencies to study report</li> <li>3. May '04 all reports were completed and presented to the Presbyteral Council, the Diocesan Pastoral Council and all diocesan agencies.</li> <li>4. Shared goals across diocesan agencies developed by May 2004. The reports have formed the basis of a comprehensive Diocesan Plan to “welcome the stranger.”</li> <li>5. Diocesan staff received training to provide multiculturally appropriate welcome.</li> <li>6. Agencies (and parishes) received binders on the “Welcoming the Stranger” pastoral, racism, and multiculturalism.</li> </ol>
<p>Diocesan agencies and parish leadership will be more aware of the need to respond to culturally diverse peoples by participating in a three year cycle of awareness, conversion, and communion coordinated by the WTC Committee.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 65% of parishes and 95% of diocesan agencies engaged in Cycle I.</li> <li>2. Diocesan workshops concerning major themes of the pastoral statement have strong attendance (more than 150 people from diocesan offices and parishes).</li> <li>3. Diocesan offices and their parish counterparts are implementing special programs in response to training. Examples include those in box above and:</li> <li>4. Parish Social Justice Committees have targeted immigration issues as</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Oct. '02 – Eric Law gave input to over 200 people to kick off implementation and education of the pastoral “Welcoming the Stranger....”</li> <li>2. Oct. '03 – Giacchino Campese gave a workshop “An Intercultural Church in a Globalized world”</li> <li>3. Feb. '04 – Msgr. Ray East served as keynote for the workshop on the second major theme of the pastoral “Conversion.”</li> </ol>

	<p>a major focus of their activities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Religious Ed Office is developing multicultural workshops for DRE's and Pastoral Associates.</li> <li>The <i>Tribunal</i> has initiated an effort to recruit Spanish and Polish translators for its publications.</li> </ol>	
Parishes will study other cultures and immigrant / migrant experiences and develop plans to improve reception of those groups.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parishes respond to WTS Committee surveys and visits.</li> <li>Parishes use materials provided by the WTC Committee.</li> <li>Parishes are celebrating more ethnic feasts.</li> <li>Interest and participation in the activities of the diocesan mission to Bolivia has significantly increased</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WTS Committee developed three cycles of small group discussion resources, and promoted this tool on diocesan website and directly with pastors and parish leaders.</li> <li>Majority of parishes are using the Parish Group Study tool on Multicultural Inclusion (already completed Cycle 1 and are working on cycle 2).</li> <li>Workshops were held related to the three themes for parish and diocesan leadership.</li> </ol>
Promote Ethnic Leadership within Multicultural Parishes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90 Hispanic leaders are enrolled in special classes at this time. They are asserting greater influence in their parishes and there is an eagerness among Lay Hispanic Leaders to continue study. Additional seminars, workshops and classes are in preparation for the future.</li> <li>Korean seniors are receiving assistance to help them relate with other cultures in the diocese.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11 Parishes sent leaders of their communities to participate in workshops, seminars on Hispanic history, the Hispanic pastoral plan, and the Encuentro process and their application within multicultural parish settings.</li> <li>The WTS committee helped the Korean parish to receive a grant from CCHD for its program.</li> </ol>

<b>EVALUATION OF HOW NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET:</b>
<b><i>Difference this initiative has made in the lives of those whom it is intended to serve:</i></b>
Clergy and diocesan and parish leaders increasingly have the training to respond to multicultural needs in culturally sensitive manners. Over 90 Hispanic adults, and additional Hispanic youth participants, have been trained and empowered to provide better leadership and to work as integral members of parish structures. The Korean community obtained training to welcome the Hispanic community, linking different cultures in the common experience of life as newcomers and future leaders in the local Church.
<b><i>Ways in which the project has contributed to increasing the welcoming capacity of the diocese:</i></b>
Each diocesan office has undertaken initiatives to be more welcoming. For example, the Catholic Schools Office is promoting multicultural sensitivity training and seeking funding for additional financial aid opportunities for children of underrepresented cultural backgrounds. The Office for Divine Worship now includes multicultural influences in planning for diocesan liturgies. The Hispanic Ministry Office trains Hispanic adults and youth for ministry and service in their parish communities. The Diaconate Office now actively seeks deacons from ethnic communities, and it has succeeded in recruiting Hispanic, Filipino, Afro-American, and Vietnamese deacon candidates.

The diocese has tracked participation in multicultural initiatives in approximately 50% of parishes and 60% of diocesan ministries.

***Ways in which the diocese plans to build up the work in the future:***

Implementation of diocesan and parish initiatives is expected to give direction to the next set of actions to be taken. The self-evaluation Catholic Charities has undertaken will result in new initiatives to respond to unmet needs identified through the process. Participation and implementation regarding the third cycle of training and diocesan action will continue the formation efforts of the diocese to keep multicultural awareness in the forefront of its considerations concerning how to be a community of welcoming, conversion, solidarity and communion.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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