



Dear Diocesan Director/Coordinator,

The Catholic Church in the United States reflects our country's cultural and ethnic diversity and is enriched by the customs and traditions of peoples from around the world. The pastoral needs of Catholics from a range of backgrounds are equally diverse, especially the needs of immigrants, ethnic minorities, and people like seafarers, whose occupations take them away from home for long periods of time.

The Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops works to address the needs of many ethnic populations through its Subcommittees on Asian and Pacific Island Affairs (APIA) and on the Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers (PCMRT). With support from The Catholic Relief Services Collection, the APIA subcommittee sponsored a new certificate program in Asian and Pacific Islander Catholic ministry that provides culturally competent formation to pastoral ministers and laity to better serve Asian and Pacific Island communities. Inaugurated in August 2023 at the Franciscan School of Theology at the University of San Diego, this 10-month online program trained 15 students in church teachings as well as in the immigration histories of sociological issues facing Asian and Pacific Island Catholics.

For its part, PCMRT sponsored the Fourth African National Eucharistic Congress, which takes place every five years, and brought together nearly 1,000 African immigrant Catholics at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. They participated in an episcopal encounter, a eucharistic procession, and a unity Mass. The episcopal encounter was an especially life-changing experience for the young adult participants, who had the opportunity to discuss their questions and perspectives with participating bishops.

Your support for The Catholic Relief Services Collection makes possible these faith-enriching, life-changing pastoral ministries and encounters.

We rely on you to promote this collection, and we are here to support your efforts. Bulletin announcements, parish appeals, web banners, and more are available for your use at www.usccb.org/catholic-relief. There you can also find a social media tool kit with Facebook, X, and Instagram posts and photos you can use. If you have any questions, please contact me at 202-541-3365 or mhren@usccb.org. On behalf of the National Collections staff and all who benefit from The Catholic Relief Services Collection, thank you.

Gratefully in Christ,

Margaret Hren
Assistant Director, Promotions



The Catholic Relief Services Collection

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