

# Best Practices Report – Diocese of Monterey

## DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The Diocese of Monterey, through the efforts of Catholic Charities, has implemented a “Train-the-Trainer” model of building awareness and leadership for “Welcoming the Stranger” through a series of multiethnic training sessions and workshops. Top-down training of Diocesan Directors and staff has been paired with “know your Neighbor” workshops to reach specific parish ministries and communities. This initiative has challenged communities to increase their welcoming capacities and communications skills regarding identified groups that were still in some way estranged.

## THE APPROACH

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

Training sessions have encouraged evaluation of the concrete and intangible needs of the people in parishes across the diocese. With over sixty percent of the diocesan population being immigrants, migrants, or refugees who live below the federal poverty line, building a sense of solidarity has improved the awareness of communion within parish life and challenged those who are not newcomers to extend their hospitality and service to the people they come to know in the breaking of the bread. Faced with increased awareness that they were not being welcoming, parishes and individual parishioners are redefining their understanding of welcoming, diversity, and culture in order to create structures that do provide welcome in sensitive and effective ways.

### *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 originally proposed “Know Your Neighbor” initiative was revised to include more participation in initial top-down training in order to increase the effectiveness of later grassroots efforts. The diocese has learned that maintaining stable ministries of welcoming may also require additional follow-up and coordination, seeing that not all practices are “best practices” and that successful initiatives that are not shared are much less likely to be replicated.

| <b>OUTCOME-BASED OBJECTIVES</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| <i>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:</i>                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Measurements of Success for Each Objective</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Milestones / Activities involved in accomplishing the objective</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Diocesan and parish staff participating in training sessions will increase their awareness and understanding of marginalized groups                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parish staff and ministry leaders throughout the diocese have been made aware of the “Welcoming the Stranger: Unity in Diversity” pastoral statement of the USCCB.</li> <li>2. Staff and ministry have developed “welcoming plans” for their communities.</li> </ol>                                                                                             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Multiethnic trainings were held in two deaneries and among diocesan staff, reaching 26 parishes, Diocesan Directors, Hispanic Ministries staff, Vocations staff, Diocesan Seminarians, and Catholic Charities staff.</li> <li>2. Support has been provided to tailor plans to meet specific parish needs.</li> </ol>                |
| Diocesan parishes will experience a comfort level in awareness and understanding and communication with the many diverse groups in their communities. Parishioners will increase their understanding of their own parish communities. Parishioners will be active in ministries that support newcomers and multicultural diversity. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parish ministries have been added to address the needs of migrants and other newcomers.</li> <li>2. Parishioners demonstrate increased awareness of issues of diversity and opportunities to help marginalized communities.</li> </ol>                                                                                                                           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. After their participation in the “train-the-trainer” workshop, parish leaders are training teams to go out and meet one-on-one with newcomers to welcome them to the parish and to provide support and information.</li> <li>2. Renew Groups have taken up multicultural ministries as part of their regular activities.</li> </ol> |
| There will be an increase in leadership and participation from diverse groups within the parishes of the diocese and people of diverse backgrounds will not feel as marginalized.                                                                                                                                                   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Five of 26 parishes report an increase in participation by previously underrepresented ethnic groups.</li> <li>2. Parish participants in “Welcoming” workshops are more willing to engage marginalized groups and ask for support from members of those groups.</li> <li>3. Parish activities and communication stress ethnic and cultural diversity.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. See above.</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

## **EVALUATION OF HOW NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET:**

### ***Difference this initiative has made in the lives of those whom it is intended to serve:***

There are now more structures of welcoming in place for newcomers to parishes. Parishes have identified groups within their own communities that were previously marginalized, and those groups are being encouraged to participate in the life of the parish. Many members of previously marginalized groups are becoming leaders within their own communities and beginning to share leadership responsibilities with other members of their parish communities.

### ***Ways in which the project has contributed to increasing the welcoming capacity of the diocese:***

Parishes have been forced to reevaluate their understanding of “welcoming” and to adjust their services to meet the needs of groups they have recognized they have failed to welcome. Each parish community has become aware of the need to have some process in place to welcome newcomers into their parish communities. Clergy and staff in parish and diocesan offices have received training to respond to different cultures in manners responsive to those cultures, or at the very least to be aware that they are communicating across cultural borders, which calls for increased sensitivity to modes of communication and varying responses.

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

The diocese has recognized the need for follow-up. There are proposals to compile best practices annually to share new initiatives and long-standing processes that keep various ministries or communities actively engaged in the work of embracing newcomers.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### ***For further information about this project and best practices associated with it, please contact:***

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