

# Best Practices Report – Diocese of Salt Lake City

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT
<p>The Diocese of Salt Lake City, through the efforts of the Office for Ethnic Ministry and the Office for Hispanic Ministry, is training “Welcoming Committees” in ten target parishes with the largest populations of immigrants and refugees. These committees are providing comprehensive services to welcome immigrants, refugees, other newcomers, and persons with disabilities and enable those people to participate in the full life of their parish communities. The diocese is also training diocesan staff, Catholic Community Services employees, and members of several diocesan commissions and the National Conference of Catholic Women to assess and respond to the needs of these populations within their own ministries. A diocesan-wide needs assessment has been developed and is being distributed through parishes and diocesan agencies to inform the response of these entities. Furthermore, in an effort to serve the newcomers directly, Catholic Community Services is publishing a brochure in the languages spoken by the major refugee and immigrant groups in the diocese which informs them about available services and resources.</p>

THE APPROACH
<p><b><i>Methods or activities the diocese has taken to address the needs outlined in the diocese’s needs assessment:</i></b></p> <p>As one of the major objectives of this program is to empower ethnic communities, the diocesan staff is working to encourage leaders from among the ethnic communities to participate in the training programs. The diocese is subsidizing the participation of immigrant leaders in the training program to overcome financial barriers that have affected participation rates in the past, particularly with the Hispanic community. The diocese has also focused training efforts in underserved communities (particularly among Native Americans and persons with disabilities). Furthermore, the diocese has replaced unorganized attempts at communication with ethnic leadership with more formal structures</p>
<p><b><i>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:</i></b></p> <p>Several parishes have chosen not to participate in training activities or the diocesan needs assessment. Some parishes have responded they do not need training, - a position with which diocesan leadership disagrees. As an alternative in these cases, the diocese has established Diocesan Commissions to assess and respond to the needs of particular groups and to help train their leaders.</p>

OUTCOME-BASED OBJECTIVES		
<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>		
Objectives	Measurements of Success for Each Objective	Milestones / Activities involved in accomplishing the objective
<p>The training of “Welcoming Committees” in parishes with the largest populations of immigrants and refugees.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A ten-parish pilot project is sensitizing parishioners to the needs of immigrants, refugees, and persons with disabilities.</li> <li>2. 367 people, of whom 118 were identified parish leaders, have received training and resource</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. December 9, 2002—St. Thomas Aquinas parishioners from “Anglo” and Hispanic backgrounds received training.</li> <li>2. February 14, 2003—14 members of the St James parish Pastoral Council received training.</li> </ol>

	materials for implementation of practices learned during training.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. March 9, 2003—St Thomas Aquinas leaders received follow-up training.</li> <li>4. Christ the King parish received training.</li> <li>5. St. Joseph parish received training.</li> </ol>
Groups within the diocese will become aware of “Welcoming the Stranger Among Us.”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Members of various diocesan teams and groups have received copies of the pastoral statement.</li> <li>2. Training sessions have been conducted to discuss effective strategies for incorporating the message of the pastoral statement into the activities of the diocese and its groups.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Diocesan Hispanic Commission has received an introduction to the pastoral and training concerning its implementation.</li> <li>2. The Diocesan Native American Commission has received an introduction to the pastoral and training concerning its implementation.</li> <li>3. The Diocesan Commission for Persons with Disabilities has received an introduction to the pastoral and training concerning its implementation.</li> <li>4. The National Conference of Catholic Women’s Province Meeting included an introduction to the pastoral and training concerning its implementation, including a special review of the Sudanese “Lost Boy” case.</li> <li>5. August 17, 2003—Youth Picnic Celebrating Unity in Diversity draws 170 youth.</li> <li>6. September 27, 2003—Diocesan Congress includes high turnout of ethnic catechists.</li> <li>7. December 6, 2003—Diocese celebrates Our Lady of Guadalupe in Bilingual Celebration.</li> <li>8. December 21, 2003—Diocesan celebration of multicultural Posadas at the Cathedral of the Madeleine.</li> </ol>
A “Welcoming” brochure will be developed for distribution to refugees by Catholic Community Services or parishes.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Content has been developed for the brochure.</li> <li>2. Efforts have been made to assure the brochure is available in any language used by known refugee communities in the diocese.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Two planning meetings have taken place to determine appropriate content.</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:***

Several parishes have realized they have a need for greater diversity among their staff and within their parish leadership. Members of the Hispanic community have reported an increased feeling of belonging and participation in the life of the Church. Diocesan and parish leaders have an increased awareness of how to respond to newcomers and people who have been marginalized. Offices in the Pastoral Center are becoming more adept at providing appropriate services to those in need.

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

Pilot parish projects have been successful in responding to the direct needs of the parishioners that previously were receiving inadequate attention. Ethnic leaders from the pilot parishes are now helping to train leadership in other parishes throughout the diocese in the strategies and techniques that have proved successful in Salt Lake City and Salt Lake Valley. Groups that come into contact with the good results in pilot parishes are also learning and requesting additional training, (as is seen in the interest taken by the Catholic Women of Utah group, among others).

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

Leaders of successful projects in pilot parishes are to spread the concept of “Welcoming Committees” and to share their implementation strategies with leaders at potential host parishes. Leaders from the pilot parishes have already come together to develop a body of best practices and to help new parishes build upon this work. In this way, all parishes in the diocese will eventually have the increased capacity to respond to newcomers. Multicultural celebrations are now planned in several parishes to strengthen parish unity through celebration of parish diversity.

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

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