

How to respond to the growing needs of the Hispanic Community? Potential elements for the PAV Hispanic Pastoral Plan

Report from discussions in Parish Councils from St. Andrew, Pontiac Catholic Community, St. Irenaeus, St. Joseph L.O., St. John Fisher, St. Mary of the Hills, Sacred Heart

The reports from the different parishes of the Pontiac Area Vicariate regarding Hispanic Pastoral Ministry underline both common concerns as well as common potential initiatives.

Concerns:

- The language barrier and lack of Spanish speaking staff in most parishes (exception of PCC).
- Need to identify the Hispanic members of the different communities and their needs (where are they? What are their specific needs?).

Suggested initiatives:

- Liturgical :
 - Sensitivity to Hispanic Catholic traditions (feast days, expressions of devotion) etc.
 - Introduction of Spanish songs in liturgy.
 - Possibility of Spanish masses from time to time in different parishes.
 - Train liturgical ministers to assist in celebration of liturgies (masses, sacraments, etc.)
- Organizational :
 - Spanish speaking staff (if possible)
 - Representation of Hispanics in Pastoral Councils / VPC etc.
- Educational:
 - Better links with our Catholic Schools for ensuring that Hispanic children are supported financially and educationally (scholarships, ESL, initial bi-lingual help).
 - Educate our communities on cross-cultural issues.
- Inclusion:
 - Assure that Hispanics are welcome and active in the different parish ministries.
 - Assure inclusion of youth in the different youth ministries and activities.

Other important suggestions:

- Develop education of communities and services to help the Hispanic population settle in the area: issue of immigration, housing, worker rights, transportation).
- Direct support of the Catholic Social Services Oakland County (CSSOC) which already provides many services but need support from parishes (i.e. youth ministry activities).
- Make the Vicariate bulletins more friendly and relevant to Hispanics.