



## MULTIPARISH COOPERATIVE SERVICE GROUP

*They sowed fields and planted vineyards that yielded a fruitful harvest  
Psalm 107*

### **Minutes for Clergy/Staff Deanery Meeting – October 20, 2006**

**Present:** Rev. Eddie Samaniego SJ (MHT), Rev. Robert Brocato, (CTK), Rev. Steve Brown (SMG), Rev. Ignatius DeGroot, OFM (OLG), Rev. Dominic Do (SMG), Sr. Miriam Fahey (SM/SMG), Sr. Patricia Galli, (MHT), Sr. Virginia Herrera, (SMG), Rev. Wm. Minkle, OFM (OLG), Rev. Eduardo Obero (SJV), Rev. Clair Orso, CS (HC), Rev. Peter Pham (SP), Rev. Francisco Rios, (SJV), Rev. Walter Suarez (SMG), Rev. Randy Suarez-Valenton, (SMG) Bro. Jim Sanders, SJ (MHT), Rev. Msgr. John Sandersfeld (SFOA), Rev. Randy Suarez (SMG), Rev. Victor Tran, (SP), Rev. Duc Vu, S.J. (MHT), David Cortese, (SJV), Victor Espinosa (SMG), Ginny Hinkle (SFOA), Linda Rokita (SJV), Raul Mendoza, (SJV), Ruben Solorio, Will Sousae (SFOA),

**Absent:** Rev. Jack Greer (FW), Adrzej Salapata, Sch (SBACPM),

**Please note the date change from the original schedule!!**

**Next meeting will be at St. Francis of Assisi Friday, November 17, 2006 from 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM. Lunch will be served. This will be a meeting for clergy, parish administrators and staff.**

Fr. Samaniego, S. J. called the meeting to order with a prayer.

#### **Immigration: Fr. Jon Pedigo**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) have addressed immigration issues for several years and sought ways to improve justice for immigrants. The Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform (CCIR) is an outgrowth of that effort. The Bishops needed to educate people about the realities of immigration. This may be the first major political/spiritual change since the 1960's civil rights movement.

Immigration, especially undocumented immigration has deep and complex root causes and effects. The impact on the home country is immense, empty villages, shattered families and deep personal loss. The impact on the host country is also great, especially for the undocumented. The host country can't provide the protection and services to the undocumented for legal and political reasons. Immigrants in general, and undocumented in particular, are exploited, used for political gain and frequently mistreated. The programs and policies of the host country create the "push factors" which cause the migration from the home to the host country.

People respond to immigrants in various ways, especially undocumented immigrants. The issue is emotional, clouded with misinformation. Parties who disagree are not able to clearly communicate. Analysis of the problem does not change views.

In an effort to open the lines of communication and foster an awareness of Justice for immigrants, the CCIR designed a method based on practices of the ancient church, i.e. small meetings at homes. In these meetings, the participants share their "story", the story of how their family immigrated to the U. S. and the problems and challenges they or their ancestors experienced. At the same time, stories of the present immigrants, especially of undocumented immigrants are shared with the group. Stories, versus analysis allow people to connect with the issue at a different level. The stories are a way to interject values into the

regional and national dialogue. Then data and comment can be introduced. At the end of the meeting, the members should come away with a greater understanding of the complexity of this human situation. Ideally, the participants will experience an emotional openness and change. They will become more tolerant, or perhaps even go on to take a political stance and become advocates of Justice for Immigrants.

CCIR has been welcomed by the Diocese of San Jose to institute this program in a two- year campaign led by Daniela Santos. They are engaging a wide range of organizations: Daughters of Charity, Catholic Charities, Religious communities and PACTS. Now they are approaching parishes to begin a grass roots movement, leveraging “Just Faith,” or “Faith Doing Justice” programs and providing workshops for those interested in organizing and facilitating the small group meetings. CCIR provides a place for those who wish to increase their participation in social justice programs for immigrants. CCIR also provides data refuting common misconceptions about the undocumented immigrant.

Several parishes have already begun this program. Based on the “Just Faith” program, St. John Vianney, has an active program of social justice aimed at immigration issues. Meetings to explain the program and train hosts have been held at Christ the King Church (75 participants from 13 parishes), St. Clare Parish (25 Participants from 9 parishes) and in Palo Alto (20 participants). There is a great need to involve minority groups in this effort. Second and third generation Latino’s have a tendency to be very conservative and not accepting of the present immigration situation. Filipino and Vietnamese communities also need to be involved in this program. All people need to separate legal/illegal issues from what is a human issue, a justice issue. These minority groups have great stories to tell.

Fr. John related a number of stories about mistreatment of undocumented migrants and the members of the deanery discussed their own experiences in dealing with parishes and parishioners. The meeting became, in a way, a house meeting.

The Deanery response to CCIR is to start recruiting parish members for house meetings, emphasizing second and third generation Latinos, Vietnamese and Filipinos. These meetings will train the mentors to run the meeting in a non-confrontational way. If effective, the meetings will lead to activism on the part of the participants. The first step is to have speakers at Sunday Mass. St. Patrick, Most Holy Trinity and St. Maria Goretti parishes have asked for a speaker to come as soon as can be scheduled. St. John Vianney and Holy Cross asked to delay until later. St. Francis of Assisi has already incorporated a similar program in their “Generations of Faith” program. The CCIR will tailor the presentations to the type and need of the parish.

St. Patrick is particularly interested in involving their youth group and students from San Jose State.

**Some Notes:**

CCIR is one of many advocate groups operating in the Bay Area. CCIR presents the view of the Diocese of San Jose. There have been some divisions between the various groups, regarding the intensity level of confrontation and boycotts during the marches. CCIR disagreed with the San Jose Coalition regarding boycotts and prevailed. CCIR shifted the discussion from confrontation with the system to a discussion of the needs of immigrant rich communities. People who become involved in political action should be aware of the different approaches and the potential for splits.

Events and activities which may further the cause:

October 22: fund-raising concert at St. Julie’s.

December 16: Catholic Charities sponsored Posdada: “Am I Welcome Here”. Parishes are asked to send multicultural representatives.

**Action Item:** During the discussion, several members commented on the Church's systemic problem regarding immigration and immigrants, particularly with reference to allocation of priests and resources. Fr. Samaniego agreed to bring this matter up with the Bishop at the Dean's meeting.

**Basic Ministry Course:**

Msgr. Sandersfeld reviewed progress of the Basic Ministry Course. We have found people have a need to have answers to articulate their faith and understand what it is to be a Catholic. Using the Creed, the course will build a foundation based on understanding, not emotion.

Planned dates are Feb 16/17 and Mar 16/17 at Most Holy Trinity.

An extension of this program will be offered Spanish and English in the spring. It will cover the discernment of gifts.

**Stipends for Assistance within the Deanery:**

Fr. Samaniego reviewed the deanery policy that clergy do not receive stipends when helping out in another deanery parish. There was no comment.

Fr. Samaniego also requested that members of the deanery try to standardize stipends for various events, Baptisms, Marriage, etc.

**Disaster Preparedness Plans:**

Fr. Brocato has a need to train his staff and lay leaders in basic first aid and CPR. Red Cross charges \$70.00 per person, American Heart Association \$60.00 per person. His original idea was to gather a large group of interested persons across the Deanery, but neither the Red Cross nor the American Heart Association gives a group discount. Still, there is a real need, but it is very expensive. Sr. Pat Galli suggested that Fr. Brocato contact Sr. Mary Peter, who is affiliated with O'Connor Hospital and is working at Most Holy Trinity. She may be able to provide some ideas or support.

**St. Patrick Proto-Cathedral Building Plan:**

There was a question as to the role of the Deanery in reviewing these plans. After considerable discussion, Fr. Pham explained that the project had been approved by the Diocese and the City of San Jose. He was bringing the project to the Deanery as a matter of information and was asking for prayers & moral support for this undertaking. The issues of underutilized facilities and reorganization of parishes was tabled.

**Action Item:** Each pastor is to write a letter to the Bishop stating their support for the project.

**Stewardship Meetings:**

Jim Degan requested someone to chair and host the meeting of pastors and stewardship committee chairpersons. Msgr. Sandersfeld offered to chair the meeting.

**Action Item:** Jim Degan to call Fr. Sandersfeld and set up details for him.

**Multi-Parish Cooperative:**

Jim Degan has resigned effective October 28, 2006. At this time there is no replacement for either Bro. Jim Sanders, S. J., or Jim.

**Action Item: Fr. Samaniego, S. J. will call a special meeting of the six participating parishes to determine the best course of action.**