CULTURAL PLURALISM and ETHNIC HERITAGE in a CATHOLIC DIMENSION:

TOWARD THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DIOCESAN OFFICE FOR NEWCOMERS
Migration is a recurrent phenomenon in the history of peoples. The Old Testament records the migration of God's chosen people. The Holy Family of Nazareth, fleeing into Egypt, was a classic type of a refugee family.

Since the days of the catacombs, the Church has shown a particular solicitude for migrants, refugees, aliens, exiles and pilgrims. The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 canonized the existing practice by calling upon all Bishops to provide pastoral care and liturgical functions for the people of diverse languages, rites and customs within their dioceses.

The II Vatican Council directed that "Special concern should be shown for those among the faithful who, on account of their way of condition of life, cannot sufficiently make use of the common and ordinary pastoral services of parish priests or are quite cut off from them. Among this group are very many migrants, exiles and refugees, seamen, airplane personnel, gypsies, and others of this kind." The Norms for the Implementation of this 18th article of the Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops directs: "The episcopal conferences are asked that, bearing in mind the great number of migrants and travelers today, they assign to a priest delegated for this purpose or to a special commission established for this purpose everything pertaining to the study and direction of the spiritual care of these persons" (n. 9).

The United States is a country of immigrants - only the Indians are truly natives. The Catholic Church in the United States is a Church of immigrants. The United States has opened the doors to millions who sought refuge from want, persecution and oppression. The Church in the United States has met the test of Christian charity by surrounding hundreds of thousands of migrants and refugees with assistance, care and protection.

In a letter of December 24, 1948 to Archbishop McNicholas, Pius XII wrote: "That you and your colleagues in the American hierarchy are shining examples of this exalted virtue has been demonstrated on numerous occasions by your noble deeds, and in particular by the establishment of a new and vigilant resettlement committee. With the help of this committee you have given careful thought to repairing the ruined fortunes of displaced persons in Europe...... We are confident, moreover, that the bishops, priests, and faithful of other countries also will be stirred by your example and will heed our oft-repeated and anxious admonitions to help their brethren in their sorrows and misfortunes."
Historians always point out the importance of the first generation of immigrants. The road they take determines the path for the many generations which follow. If in the struggle for economic security, religious practices are neglected and the religious heritage is submerged, when and by what apostolic effort can they ever be recovered? The Church is the migrant's principal religious and cultural link. It is the family of faith which welcomes the migrant and helps him to adjust to his new surroundings.

The Division for Migration and Refugee Services of the United States Catholic Conference and the Center of Migration Studies staffed by the Scalabrini Fathers have prepared a working paper entitled, "Cultural Pluralism: A Catholic Dimension". The Scalabrini Fathers were founded for the specific purpose of and have pioneered in, the care of immigrants. The objective of the paper is to encourage the establishment of Diocesan Offices for Migrants. The scale of the model for the diocesan office should not overwhelm us. It represents an ideal; - a challenge to utilize the available resources to meet current needs. Obviously, the needs will vary from diocese to diocese. The ideal provides us with a perspective and with motivation.

We are grateful to the authors for providing us with a background of official pronouncements and statistics which create a sense of urgency of the migration apostolate and offer concrete proposals for this phase of pastoral work.

John Cardinal Krol
Archbishop of Philadelphia

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CULTURAL PLURALISM AND ETHNIC HERITAGE
IN A CATHOLIC DIMENSION

Toward The Establishment of a Diocesan Office
For Newcomers

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A short while ago, in our working paper A NEW PARISH EVERY FOUR DAYS, we suggested that in this time of crisis it is difficult for the Church and its people to focus any great concern and interest on issues that appear not to arouse the same explosive temperament nor the same vibrant appeal inherent in so many other questions of our time.

Yet migration & heritage issues, we said, demand attention. The American Church was and continues to be a culturally pluralistic Church and as such it has a special structure, attitude, behaviour and pastoral theology. Heritage and concern for migration issues more than any other issue, stand out as symbols of the essential worth which our Church and our nation place on the dignity of the individual human being. Our response, to these pressing issues, we said, will indicate the degree of our humanitarianism and will certainly be the most effective gauge of our faithfulness to the high moral and spiritual principles of our founding fathers - to whom people, as the children of God, were the most important resource of a free nation.

In August 1969, Pope Paul VI issued a Motu Proprio renewing the spirit of concern and interest for the pastoral care of newcomers. The Sacred Congregation of Bishops followed with the publication of an instruction entitled ON THE CARE OF MIGRANTS. The new document set out to define people who migrate, and to reiterate the need for renewed pastoral concern on their behalf. The document refers to
migrants as those "who live outside their homeland or their own ethnic community and need special attention because of real necessity". (1,15)

We need only look at some of the other recent pronouncements of our Holy Father to realize the necessity and urgency for new approaches and new structures in this most vital ministry.

The Decree on Missions reads:
"...that the bishop(s) be the first and foremost herald...taking careful note of those changes introduced by the so-called urbanization, migrations....and religious indifferentism."

The Decree of Bishops urges:
"special concern for those among the faithful who, on account of their way, or condition of life cannot sufficiently make use of the common and ordinary pastoral services....especially those among this group who are migrants, exiles and refugees, seamen....and others of this kind."

"Pastoralis Migratorum Cura" bids the Church to concentrate its utmost efforts in assisting "those groups of migrants who are not only entrusted to (it) like the other faithful....but who, owing to the special circumstances in which they live also demand particular care, precisely in keeping with their needs". The document reads:
"....and since the very vast field of the apostolate in favor of migrants demands the proper understanding of all and the active union of all forces, it is absolutely necessary that, in addition to the priests who are directly engaged in this ministry the religious and laymen should also collaborate in it, in unity of purpose."

There is abundant evidence that a significant percentage of the Catholic population falls within the
definition of people who migrate as suggested in *Pastoralis Migratorum.* For example, the Dominican Consulate and
the news media estimate that there are approximately
200,000 Dominicans in New York. In addition an estimated
150,000 French speaking black, Catholic Haitians live
in the greater New York area with another 5,000 to 7,000
in Chicago.

A recent *New York Times* article tells us that 970,000
Puerto Ricans live in New York.

In the Dallas - Fort Worth area the U.S. Immigration
Service is detaining from 800 to 900 illegals aliens per
month.

The U.S. Immigration Service in its annual report
for 1971 states that there is a significant increase in
the number of immigrants from the Philippines (28,471)
Italy (22,138) Portugal (11,692) and Mexico (50,103), all
countries with a Catholic majority.

The Newark, New Jersey, area registers thousands
of Cubans while the flow of refugees from Eastern Europe
continues to the other parts of the nation.

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1 See chart on Current Catholic Immigration to the United
States from Michael G. Wenk and Silvano Tomasi, *A NEW
PARISH EVERY FOUR DAYS.* A working paper for the National
Council of Catholic Bishops, April 1971.
Two thirds of all immigration to the U.S. in the last decade, studies indicate, is from predominantly Catholic countries.

Vatican II recognized these facts and that migrants, exiles, refugees, and individuals in similar circumstances of this kind ought to be shown our special concern because of their critical condition of life.

Pastoralis Migratorum in light of this recognition by Vatican II urges:

1) "...a particular office of Immigrants and (other newcomers) constituted at the episcopal diocese to which immigration takes place." (IV, 29) For which...

2) "...a episcopal vicar or other suitable priest should be in charge..."

This document, while not fully elaborating on the role of the Diocesan office for newcomers does indicate that with due changes and adaptations the diocesan office could reflect the responsibilities as described by the Office of Migration at the Sacred Congregation For Bishops and by the National Conferences. The document advises:

1 - To study the principal questions of migration:

- collection of data on number, origin and settlement areas of immigrants; analysis of migration and integration processes; communication of this knowledge to all priests, teaching sisters, and, lay interested groups of the diocese.

2 - To undertake appropriate pastoral projects:

- organization of missions in the language of the immigrants & migrants; distribution of information on religious services in the various languages as well as on priests of the same nationality and/or language of the immigrants; coordination of apostolate in the language of immigrants
in the public communication media; work with pastors to organize Catholic lay groups along language lines until necessary.

3 - To act as an informed intermediary between the Bishop and the newcomer's communities:
making known the need of clergy of the newcomer's background in the various areas of the diocese; suggesting possible programs to be introduced in the Seminary curriculum to better equip seminarians for service in a multi-ethnic diocese.

4 - To promote periodic conventions:
to update information and create a favorable public opinion regarding newcomers and members of ethnic heritage groups.

5 - To promote suitable dialogue with governmental, academic, and social service and non-Catholic agencies concerned with the immigrant, migrant and ethnic heritage groups.

6 - To establish and organize a yearly "Immigrant Day" or "Newcomer Day"

and publish useful literature in the field of migration.

7 - To prepare annual reports for the Bishop, who, in turn, can transmit them to the National Secretariat for Migrants.

The time for launching this effort seems close at hand. Hopefully, in final analysis, the contribution and continued help that each diocesan Office for newcomers will give on behalf of the Church, will serve to diminish the overwhelming sense of anonymity, alienation and impotence so widely shared by many of those who are migrants. There is no single cure, but to our Church and to ourselves, three significant ingredients - participation, involvement and a sense of community stand out and point the way toward a solution.
MODEL FOR A DIOCESAN OFFICE
FOR NEWCOMERS

I. TITLE OF OFFICE

1 - The 1969 Instruction speaks of a Diocesan Office for Immigrants. We have modified it to call it an office for newcomers. At first sight, this name would not seem to be appropriate. The strict use of the term, "immigrant" might reflect the notion that these people are strangers who will remain distinct from native Americans. It could tend to polarize when the desire is to be integrated into their proper place in pluralistic America. The Church through this office can aid in this important function of integrating the newcomer into the unity of the faithful in each diocese while preserving their spiritual heritage, customs, and culture. In fulfilling this role, the Church will be assisting in the adjustment and assimilation process to what we call the American mosaic. (Each heritage group being an important and integral piece of the total picture.) In short, the term, "immigrant" should not be a label that we attach for any length of time to the newcomer.

2 - Other titles are possible. Examples would be:

a) Office for Migrants
b) Office for Nationalities
c) Office for Heritage Groups
d) Office for Non-English Speaking Groups.

This list could of course, be expanded. The first three classifications do, however, include all persons arriving in the diocese even those who speak English, a desirable aspect. Thus they would include English, Irish, Australian immigrants and also would include Blacks settling in the diocese from other areas. (Some special concentration on the foreign born and those with a foreign language will of course be necessary.)

3 - It is therefore recommended that, for the want of a more acceptable title, the office be named "Diocesan Office for Newcomers." In spite of its deficiencies, this title would reflect immediately its purpose and would be easily recognized.

This Model reflects some of the existing operations of the Diocesan Office For Migrants in the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York. We are grateful to the Rev. Anthony Bovilaqua, Vice-Chancellor of the Brooklyn Diocese for his assistance and guidance in this vital area of public and pastoral concern.
II. GOALS OF OFFICE

1 - It should be emphasized that the primary aim of the office is to fulfill the primary role of the Bishop of the diocese which is the spiritual care of all his faithful.

2 - In order to achieve this primary goal, the office must aim at the attainment of ancillary goals. Some of these secondary goals are:

   a. Providing liturgy in the mother language; taking into consideration special customs, rites and culture.

   b. Providing, to the extent that it is possible, priests who speak the mother language and are sensitive to the individuals culture.

   c. Assist the newcomer in obtaining employment and satisfying their temporal needs.

   d. Providing means or information for learning the English language.

   e. Providing assistance in resolving visa problems, obtaining pensions from native country, applying for welfare, social security, medicare, etc.

   f. Providing assistance in overcoming the ever present loneliness that many newcomers suffer.

3 - The subordinate goals which must be achieved in order to obtain the ultimate goals are assisting newcomers to become gradually integrated into the Church and civic community while allowing them to preserve, to the degree that they wish, their cultural heritage and structural autonomy.

III. FUNCTIONS OF OFFICE

1 - Research

   a. If not professional at least adequate determination of the number and location of newcomers within the Diocese.

   b. Determination of priests, who not only speak the language of the newcomer but also are culturally sensitive, with the objective of assigning them to areas where they can provide the most effective service.
c. Obtain data on religious and lay people willing and capable of assisting in this apostolate.

d. Analysis of problems and needs of the newcomers.

e. Study of the effect of the migration phenomenon on the priorities of the diocese itself. The American Church was and continues to be a culturally pluralistic Church and as such it has a special structure, attitude, behavior and pastoral theology.

The current image of the Church is to a large extent that of an English-speaking, middle-class, educated, society. This is reflected in the training of our seminarians, in the emphasis on adult education, in the functions, discussions and goals of so many of our priests, religious, and laymen. This image should be augmented to encompass the many other faithful, who are immigrants, migrants, refugees, members of heritage groups etc. It is not exaggerating, we think, to say that the future of some parishes and/or dioceses lies in these newcomers. It is essential, therefore, to study this new reality scientifically and in certain instances to make adjustments of diocesan priorities, thereby revitalizing pastoral theology to fully encompass the need of the newcomer.

2. Education

a. Teaching newcomers the use of the English language.

b. Proper education of migrants not only in their Catholic faith but also in the nature of the Church in this country. The migrants are at times confused by the Church in America. The American clergy are different from the paternalistic type priests to which they are accustomed. The American attitude towards attending Mass, divorce, the role of the Church often differs sharply from the attitude in their native land causing them anxiety and confusion.

c. Training of priests and seminarians in the language of the newcomer. The immediate priority should be instruction in Catholic High School, most needed languages in the area, be it Spanish, Italian or Slavic. Each seminarian should achieve a working knowledge of at least one of these three languages.

d. Facilities should be provided for the learning of one of these three languages by religious and lay persons interested in this apostolate.

e. While learning the language, priests, seminarians, religious and lay persons should also be educated in
what is more important than the language, that is, the mentality, behavior, values, culture and history, of the newcomer.

f. Education of all faithful in the diocese in the Christian manner of accepting these newcomers and in the Christian response all must give to the particular needs and difficulties of these people.

3 - Coordination

a. Coordinate apostolate, societies, studies, cultural and social programs, information, etc. for each of the individual language groups.

b. Coordinate activities of all the language coordinators.

c. Act as coordinating intermediary between the bishop and the migrant communities so that there is a constant flow of information and service between the two. In fulfilling this role, the diocesan office must always be viewed as the sign, representative, and extension of the bishop to the migrant communities.

d. Act as coordinating agency for migrants with other offices of diocese, especially personnel office, education office, Catholic Charities.

e. Act as coordinating agency for migrants with the communication media. In this role, use should be made of diocesan public information office, language newspapers, language radio and T.V. stations, journals, and parish bulletins.

f. Act as coordinating agency with city, state and federal agencies that can be of assistance.

g. Act as coordinating agency with migration offices in other dioceses, and with the National Migration and Refugee Service (M.R.S.-U.S.C.C.) the Office of the American bishops and with the National Emigration Office of the country of origin as in the case of immigrants.

h. Act as coordinating agency for gathering and distributing information in following areas:

   i. Churches where spiritual care can be provided in their language

   ii. liturgy (texts, etc.)

   iii. cultural & heritage activities

   iv. recreational opportunities

   v. immigration & citizenship procedures
V. employment

vi. welfare, social security, medicare, etc.

vii. medical and legal difficulties.

i. Act as coordinating agency in organizing programs such as following:

  i. Missions in language of the newcomer
  ii. Pre-Cana Conferences
  iii. Marriage counselling
  iv. Annual Migrant Day
  v. Seminars and conventions on problem of migrants and immigrants
  vi. Social activities, such as, outings, dances shows, etc.
  vii. Welcoming newcomers on arrival in this country, or at least in the parish.

j. Act as coordinating agency with non-Catholic Churches concerned with migrant communities.

IV. IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

1 - Determination of numbers and settlement areas of newcomers

2 - Determination of priests who speak language of the newcomer

3 - Recommendation to Personnel Board of Assignment of priests speaking the language in or in vicinity of settlement areas so that at least Mass, sacraments and basic spiritual care can be provided in language of the newcomer

4 - Providing information on Churches where spiritual care in their language is available.

5 - Training program for priests and seminarians in the needed languages.

6 - Enlistment of religious and lay persons concerned for migrants, immigrants, and members of a particular ethnic heritage group.
7 - Education of all faithful of diocese so that they may give Christian response to the needs and problems of migrants and Newcomers.

V. STRUCTURE OF DIOCESAN OFFICE

1 - Director

2 - Coordinator for each of the language communities, be they:

   a) Italian
   b) Portuguese
   c) Spanish
   d) French (in case of Haitians)
   e) Polish
   f) German
   g) Croatians
   h) Other language groups, such as, Lithuanian, Filipino, Korean and Chinese would be under one coordinator.

3 - The coordinators of the three major groups in the diocese should form a board of advisors consisting of priests involved in the work and also lay persons. If possible religious should be included on these boards. To be effective, these boards should be limited to a practical working number. (7)

4 - The Diocesan Office should form a board of advisors consisting of the priest coordinators, lay persons, and religious.

5 - Secretary

   a. She would have to be an executive type of secretary.

   b. For the beginning, one secretary should be sufficient.

   c. If possible, she should be able to speak at least one of the major languages in the area other than English required.

6 - Possible alternative to list of coordinators
a. For the lesser numbers among the other ethnic groups it might be considered advisable to name "Delegates" for these communities while restricting the term, "Coordinator," to the major ethnic groups in the diocese.

VI. COORDINATORS

1 - Qualifications

a. Should speak the language of the community for which he is coordinator and he should also understand its culture.

b. Should be able to relate to the people themselves and to the other priests and religious of the parishes where the migrants are settled.

c. Each major ethnic group (be it, Italian, Haitian or Spanish Speaking) should have a full-time coordinator. In the beginning, it may be necessary that the coordinator carry out his duties on a part-time basis.

VII. OFFICE SPACE AND MATERIAL EQUIPMENT

a. The office should be located, if possible, at the Central diocesan office. We recommend this location so that the local ordinary may have full identity with the programs.

b. Unused desks, chairs, and file cabinets, which should prove satisfactory for the initial stages of operation are an excellent beginning.

c. Other material would have to be purchased. This would include typewriter, stationery, books and other literature on immigration and migration, a dictating machine, etc.

VIII. BUDGET

Budgets will vary according to diocese: Below is a budget recommendation for urban diocese.

1 - Initial Expenses

a. Electric Typewriter $450.00

b. Dictating Machine 600.00

c. Telephone installation, office 100.00
   Accessories (desk lamps, etc) $150.00

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2 - Annual Operational Budget

a. Secretary ($150.00 per week)  
   Secretary:  
   40 weeks:  
   $7800.00

b. Stationery, printing, etc.  
   Stationery, etc.:  
   $500.00

c. Books, periodicals, literature  
   Books, etc.:  
   $300.00

d. Traveling expenses for Coordinators  
   Traveling expenses:  
   $1000.00

   Total:  
   $9600.00

3 - Total Budget for First Year

Initial Expenses  
   Initial Expenses:  
   $1150.00  

Annual Budget  
   Annual Budget:  
   $9600.00

   Total:  
   $10750.00

4 - To meet possible unusual expenses and expenses not adverted to, it is suggested that the initial budget total:  
   $15000.00

5 - This budget can be kept to a minimum. It presumes that the office will be able to use the facilities of the Chancery, such as, telephone, Xerox, Mailing Machine.

6 - This budget does not include any subsidies for special projects among any of the language communities. There is no way of determining for each diocese if such subsidies would be necessary and if necessary, how to estimate them.

IX. SOURCES OF INCOME

1 - The Diocesan Office should ascertain if there is available financial aid from government agencies and foundations. Government and foundation project (Ex. Ford Foundation, etc.) funds are available for community development.

2 - Occassionally societies representing the various language groups have made considerable contributions to offices that would cope with day to day service to their people.

3 - Major companies can be interested since at times this office may serve as a source for stable and dependable employees.