

# Parish Summary Report

## Parish Information

**Date: May 6, 2017**

**Name of Parish/Organization: Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception**

**City: Camden**

**(Arch)Diocese: Camden, New Jersey**

- 1. Briefly describe the parish/organization:** *[Include: location (inner-city, rural, coastal, etc); total number of families, students, or clients; who do you serve? age range, race/ethnicity, gender (if applicable), type of services (if applicable)]*

*We are an inner-city parish which merged with two other parishes over nine years ago. We have about 356 families registered. We are Anglos, Latinos, Filipinos and African Americans. We have a Mass in English (averaging about 175 people and growing) and another in Spanish (averaging 425 people and growing). We are one of six parishes in the city of Camden who have just completed a two-year merger process. St. Joseph Polish will merge with us July 31 adding a Polish culture to the mix.. We are fortunate to baptize newborns monthly and we have at least two parishioners who are enjoying their nineties! We have a variety of social outreach programs including our Cathedral Pantry which feeds between 350-500 people per day.*

- 2. Parish/Organization Team:** *[List the names, titles, ethnicity, and generation (1st, 1.5, 2nd, 3<sup>rd</sup>) of Parish/Organization Team Members.]*

José Rubert: co-chair

Miledys Caba: co-chair, parish council

Maribel Román, parish council

Mariannie Zayas, choir & lector

Carmen López, CCD instructor

Luz Pitre, CCD Instructor

Petra Rodriguez

Teresa Olavarria, choir

- 3. Briefly describe the participants of the five sessions and consultation process.**

*We began with 80 participants not including the eight group leaders. We had a youth group composed of high school students. Originally, eight members registered but we never realized this number. We had a group of adults that was conducted in English. This left us with six groups of adults in which the meetings were solely in Spanish. Groups averaged about ten people but a few had 12 members. Inclement weather impacted attendance one week.*

## Demographics of Hispanic/Latino People in the Peripheries

### 4. Briefly describe Hispanics/Latinos encountered in the peripheries.

a. **Who they are:** *Overall, we engaged about 27 people, 12 males, 12 females (adults) & 3 young adults*

b. **Locations:**

*1- bus terminal/ 1- family/ 1- home / 1- clinic /2- adult day care/some at work/some driving*

c. **Sex:** *50% were male and 50% female*

d. **Primary Spoken Languages:** *25 Spanish /2 English*

e. **Countries of Origin:** *Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Mexico*

f. **Catholic Identification:**

*7 identified themselves as Catholic and 4 non-Catholics (1 is not an active Catholic but consider himself one) (1 none-Catholic but interested learning and a possible convert to Catholicism). The rest are unknown.*

## The Voices of Hispanic/Latino People in the Peripheries

### 5. Sense of Belonging: How welcome do they feel by the Catholic Church?

*5 - somewhat welcome, 8 – welcome, 12 -not welcome at all and 1 never got around going to the Catholic Church but interested to go*

### 6. Describe their obstacles, needs and situations in need of our attention:

*illness, loneliness, immigration, deportation, fear of speaking up, needs of their children, poverty, unemployment and disconnected with the church, lack of transportation, lack of communication OR communication issues, young not participating, persons are deeply wounded, lack of knowing our religion (or our church), lack of commitment*

**7. Describe their dreams, aspirations and contributions (gifts, talents):**

**a. Hopes and Dreams**

- *Discover the dreams, so they may be shared*
- *Become citizens, have a job, less poverty,*
- *More faith and acceptance.*
- *Learn more about the Catholic faith.*
- *Integration of the family.*
- *Establish a youth group*

**b. Gifts and Talents**

- *We all have gifts: let's recognize them*
- *The Church is willing to share all cultures and traditions*
- *Assurance of people being there for them.*
- *Sharing talents, lectors, ushers, people like to evangelize, share music and pray.*

**Listening to the Voice of the Parish Community**

**8. List the ways in which we are already, a) responding to obstacles, and b) affirming the presence and contributions of Hispanics/Latinos in the peripheries:**

- a) **List the ways in which we are already responding to the obstacles, challenges and needs we have identified. Make sure to consider our response to the needs of young people (adolescents and young adults).**

**What is being done:**

- *We are evangelizing.*
- *We are offering workshops for lectors, Eucharistic ministry and ushers. We announce meetings and orientation for immigrants and their rights. We welcome new people each Sunday. We invite people to join the choir. We visit the sick in the hospital, families, adult day care, prayer groups and retreats.*
- *Cathedral pantry feeds 350+ people Monday through Friday. We distribute food to needy families. We provide dinners at Thanksgiving and presents to the needy at Christmas.*
- *Catechesis to children (about 140) and adults (various ecclesial communities: Caminantes, Juan XXIII, Carismáticos, various retreats for the aforementioned groups, as well as Advent Evening Prayer Services with outside celebrants, V Encuentro during Lent, during the summer, we offer an 8-week Basic Bible Series.*
- *Novenas for deceased.*

- *Flock Notes: good communication using Internet*
- *Influential leaders within the parish community*
- *Empower the laity*
- *New initiatives: Monthly rosary procession for peace, Corpus Christi celebration, a calendar of events (Pro-Life activities & drives).*

**b) List the ways in which we are already affirming the presence and utilizing the contributions of the Hispanics/Latinos in our community. Make sure to consider our response to the gifts of young people (adolescents and young adults).**

- *Children's choir at English Mass, young adults getting involved in choir, working in different retreats, helping immigrants with right and correct information for their solutions.*
- *Parish Mass attendance growing*
- *More people learning other cultures (Dominican, Puerto Rican, Mexican)*
- *Juan XXIII retreats and those of other ecclesial communities*
- *(see a) above*

**9. Describe the ways in which we can increase and strengthen our ability to welcome, accompany and embrace Hispanics/Latinos in our faith communities:**

**a. What can we do to increase a sense of welcoming, belonging, and stewardship among Hispanics/Latinos?**

- *When new visitors come to our church we acknowledge them, receive them cordially, talk to them and let them know about the different ministries that we have in our church (through a pamphlet that we would give them after we ask each Sunday "is there anyone visiting us for the first time?" We make them feel welcome; be an example in and out of the church that they can see Christ in us. We aim to be very hospitable!*
- *We need a better-trained hospitality group. Have them wear an identifying jacket.*
- *Choose young people for offertory, lectors, and servers.*
- *Improve the website. Make it up-to-date, informative and user-friendly.*
- *Instruct the faithful on the proper way to give the sign of peace.*

**b. How can we strengthen our ability to seek out and accompany Hispanics/Latinos who have left the faith and those who live in at-risk situations, especially our young people (adolescents and young adults)?**

- *Pass down the faith!*
- *Let them know they are not alone, that they are worthy of us and God, that we are all brothers and sisters. We need them! Extend an invitation to be part of evangelization, retreats and church activities by music, praise and worship for our young adults*
- *Go out and look for members, welcome and invite them. Send letters or make calls.*
- *Get better registration for Flock Notes: let it function as a hotline.*
- *Gospel for children?*
- *Prayer chains*



- *Ministry for widows(ers), married couples and the sick.*

**c) What can we do to foster family ministries that genuinely support Hispanic/Latino families?**

- *Be sincere and accepting of our Hispanic community*
- *We need better pastoral care of our youth*
- *Continuing Education offerings*
- *Teach children to be evangelizers*
- *Understand and outreach to the divorced and separated*
- *Pastoral outreach: acceptance and appreciation for those in same-sex relationships*
- *Knowing others' culture and traditions*
- *Representation of each culture in different ministries and church committees*
- *Invite people who are willing to help to do so*
- *ESL classes*

**10. Name the insights and next-action steps that have emerged throughout this process:**

*Personal care to others and genuine interest by believing and having faith, offering trust and support and sharing our personal relationships with God.*

**A.) Diocesan Level**

- *Accepting Hispanics for job opportunities*
- *Lay leader representation*
- *Free transportation to Mass for senior citizens and persons with disabilities needing so*
- *Promote Hispanic vocations to priesthood and religious life*
- *Identification cards for immigrants*
- *Invite the Bishop for Mass*
- *Small faith-groups in Hispanic ministry*
- *College information, especially scholarships, for our students*
- *Parish pamphlet explaining parish offerings in both languages*
- *More health services*
- *Workshop for hospitality ministers in Spanish*

**B.) Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception**

- *Get the young back to Mass*
- *Support for families especially when they have lost a young one*
- *Survey of what is working and what is not*
- *Bilingual website*
- *Multicultural night*



- *Prayer committee with representatives for each group*
- *Training for hospitality ministers. Creation of new welcome groups.*
- *ESL classes*
- *Social Activities*
- *Outreach Activities: food and clothing drives*
- *Communication with those who have left the Church*
- *Tag Sundays: people wear name tags during Mass and share in coffee and donuts after (get to know sessions)*
- *Bible courses for all ages*
- *Guest speakers*
- *Sporting activities*
- *Bingo*

### **New Leaders**

**11. After the Missionary and Consultation process, how many potential new leaders have emerged in your Parish/Organization ready to serve the Hispanic/Latino community and our diverse local communities and ministries?**

*1 in English / 2 music/ 6 in Spanish/ 2 Eucharistic ministry*