

PROYECTO SOCORRO

A PARTNERSHIP OF PROVISION

Office of Hispanic Ministry of the
Diocese of Grand Rapids

650 Burton Street SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507



Why a Partnership?

- Because we are called to communion, and this call is to all members of the Church. This call to communion invites us to a profound conversion so that we can become truly a sacrament of unity by preparing ourselves to receive newcomers with a genuine spirit of welcome.
- Because we acknowledge that the socio-economical benefits and challenges that new immigrants bring to our diocese go beyond parish boundaries and they need be addressed and assumed by inner city and suburban parishes together.
- Because the Lord calls us to discover in the immigrant and among those who are the poorest among us, His presence and His face. *"I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me"* (Matthew 25:35).

Many newcomers have a day-to-day struggle to meet their basic needs or are going through a temporary financial crisis and have various social service agencies to turn to; but there are also those who—because of their immigration status—cannot receive all the necessary support. Furthermore, there is the matter of the language barrier, which causes some people to be unaware of the help that is available and hinders their ability to communicate their needs to others.

What is our Objective?

Our objective is to increase our services to newcomers* by engaging in a coordinated effort. We want to reach out to newcomers who, because of diverse circumstances, cannot receive necessary services, or do not know how to apply for them, and assist them to receive help from those agencies established to help them. We hope to achieve this by:

- Creating common guidelines to provide our services while avoiding duplication.
- Networking with agencies that also provide services to newcomers.
- Coordinating between parishes and organizations so that resources can be dispersed more effectively.

Our specific objectives are also our long-range objectives; it is our expectation that this will be an ongoing project. The circumstances in which the newcomers find themselves will probably not disappear in the very near future, and we want to be a continuing force to breach the chasm of despair, hardship and suffering among these people who contribute so much to the economy of this country and yet receive so little in return.

How it works?

- Hispanic Ministry will use the Proyecto Socorro Fund for the direct help to clients who are not able to apply for help in other agencies and that correspond to the guidelines that have already been laid down regarding the distribution of these funds.
- Inner city parishes or agencies that receive requests from newcomers will analyze the cases and transfer them to Office of Hispanic Ministry.
- Surrounding parishes could partner in this project by helping to provide volunteers that are able to help these newcomers (i.e. with dental services, legal help, doctors, real estate agents, etc.). These parishes would also support this outreach through a monthly donation that will be used to increase the emergency fund mentioned above or in direct services.

Will YOU be a Partner with us?

This is a collaborative effort and cannot be accomplished without the help of all who are concerned about this ever-increasing need that we encounter day by day. Join with us in discovering the face of God in the newcomer. Donations are needed to fund and support this on-going endeavor. As we pool and coordinate our efforts, the impact on those we serve will be even greater. Our collaboration is the criteria for success.

If you would like to be a part of this project, please call the Office of Hispanic Ministry at the Diocese of Grand Rapids at (616) 243-3927.