An Introduction to

BUILDING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE FOR MINISTERS (BICM)

Presentation at the Diocese of Toledo

Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Five Guidelines for Intercultural Competence

• Frame issues of diversity theologically

• Seek deeper understanding of culture

• Develop intercultural communication skills

• Expand knowledge of the obstacles that get in the way

• Foster ecclesial integration/inclusion and stewardship
The Six Catholic Families, USCCB

- African American Family
- Asian/Pacific Islander Family
- European American Family
- Hispanic/Latino Family
- Native American Family
- Migrants, Refugees, People on the Move
Emergence of Shared Parishes

• In a recent study CARA shows that 33 percent of parishes in the U.S. celebrate Mass in a language other than English, compared with 22 percent in 2010.

• The great majority of these parishes are ‘shared’ by two or more distinct cultural/ethnic communities.

• The shared parish model strives to achieve a high level of ecclesial integration/inclusion among its diverse members in a spirit of unity in diversity.
Intercultural Bingo
Introduction of the Iceberg Concept of Culture
## Parameters of Cultures

### Collectivism

- Maintaining the group has priority over individual hopes and desires.
- Group or elders may make decisions (career choice or marriage partner) for individuals within the group.
- Extended family structure
- Maintaining “face” is paramount
- Loyalty to the group is highly valued.
- Maintaining harmony in the group is a major concern.

### Individualism

- Individual has priority over group.
- Individual is the ultimate decision-maker, expected to be independent, creative and to seek self-fulfillment.
- Immediate or nuclear family structure.
- Loyalty to the group is contingent on the groups’ performance and support of the individual.
- How the individual stands out from the group is an important concern.
# High and Low Context Cultures

## Tolerance for Ambiguity

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| - Every event need not be explained.  
- Few explicit rules which can be interpreted generously.  
- People do live with a great deal of ambiguity. | - Every event (especially misfortunes) needs an explanation.  
- Rules for behavior are explicit and leave little room for exceptions.  
- People work hard to avoid uncertainty. |
The Mutual Invitation Method
(Eric Law)

**RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION GUIDELINE**

**R**: take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say and feel, and speak with words others can hear and understand.

**E**: use EMPATHETIC listening, not just words but also feelings being expressed, non-verbal language including silence.

**S**: be SENSITIVE to differences in communication styles.

**P**: PONDER what you hear and feel before you speak.

**E**: EXAMINE your own assumptions and perceptions.

**C**: keep CONFIDENTIALITY.

**T**: TRUST the process because we are NOT here to debate who is right or wrong but to experience true dialog.
Six Stages of Intercultural Sensitivity

- Denial
- Defense
- Minimization
- Acceptance
- Adaptation
- Integration
Intercultural Competence is

Capacity to ...
• communicate
• work
• relate

... across cultural boundaries
Three areas of Intercultural Competence

Basic Components

Respect: (valuing other cultures);
Openness: (withholding judgment);
Curiosity & Discovery: (tolerating ambiguity)

Knowledge & Comprehension:
Cultural self-awareness;
deep cultural knowledge;
sociolinguistic awareness

Skills: To listen, observe & evaluate;
To analyze, interpret and relate
Working with Groups in Intercultural/Interacial Settings

- Communication Styles Based on Face Management
- Dealing with Conflict
- Leadership
- Meeting and Decision Making
Prejudice is a hostile or negative attitude toward a distinguishable group of people, based solely on their membership in that group.

A Stereotype is a generalization about a group of people in which identical characteristics are assigned to virtually all members of the group, regardless of actual variation among the members.

Discrimination is an unjustified negative or harmful action towards a member of a group, simply because of his or her membership in that group.
The Methodology of the Church in America

• Encounter with the Living Christ – Catholic Identity.

• Conversion: to “turn one’s mind and heart around.”

• Communion: The Church, rooted in God’s love, is called to offer all people the sense of identity, purpose and community they seek.

• Solidarity: A firm and persevering determination to commit one-self to the common good.
Model for Reconciliation

Conversion → Communion → Encounter → Hospitality → Solidarity → Mission → Reconciliation
Ecclesial Integration/Inclusion vs. Assimilation

Integration is not to be confused with assimilation. Through the policy of assimilation, new immigrants are forced to give up their language, culture, values, and traditions... By [ecclesial] integration we mean that all [cultural/ethnic communities] are to be welcomed to our church institutions at all levels. They are to be served in their language when possible, and their cultural values and religious traditions are to be respected. Beyond that, we must work toward mutual enrichment through interaction among all our cultures.

(National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry #4)
From Newcomers to Stewards of the Faith Community

Phase 1. Welcoming

Phase 2. Belonging

Phase 3. Ownership
Model for Achieving Ecclesial Integration and Inclusion

Conversion
Welcome
Encounter

Sense of belonging
Communion

Integration
Hospitality

Reconciliation
Stewardship

Solidarity
Ownership
Mission
Five Pastoral Principles in Shared Parishes

1. Articulate a vision of ministry based on ecclesial integration/inclusion.

2. Foster the inculturation of the Gospel in all cultures.

3. Plan with the people, not for the people.

4. Broaden your understanding of ministry groups, programs, and structures, and cast a bigger.

5. Empower people from the different cultures/ethnicities into leadership positions.
Best Practices
In Diocesan Ministries

Hispanic/Latino Ministry: Aligning With USCCB Identified “Best Practices”

The data supports the findings of “Study on Best Practices for Diocesan Ministry Among Hispanics/Latinos” (USCCB, November 2006) in that the Archdiocese is at stage two of a four-stage process of organizing Hispanic/Latino Catholics. We are making progress toward the end goal, which consists of vibrant, intercultural parish communities supported by effective intercultural Archdiocesan leadership and services.

Stage I
Outreach Stage:
Hispanic/Latino ministry localized in certain areas or parishes of the diocese without diocesan coordination. Primary activities/priorities are social services, advocacy, and the establishment of the Sunday Liturgy [2 parishes]

Stage II
Diocesan Focus Stage:
Hispanic/Latino ministry coordinated through a diocesan office that provides direct ministry services [21 parishes to varying degrees, 5 of which are fully contributing through the HMLT]
- HMLT initiated a common data-gathering process to inform decision-making
- Influential connections between parishes and with the Archdiocese varies from parish to parish
- In the survey more than 50% of parishes indicated a desire for Archdiocesan assistance with vision, organization, and connection
- Archbishop’s bilingual Advent message was appreciated
- Hispanic Leadership training currently involves 68 lay people from 21 parishes

Stage III
Parish-Based Stage:
Hispanic ministry is the responsibility of the parish with diocesan office as a resource for the parishes and other archdiocesan ministerial offices.
- Sunday Mass schedules in about one-third of the parishes facilitate natural interactions between the Spanish-speaking and English-speaking members
- Bilingual Holy Week services at six parishes
- Social or devotional events are common connecting points
- Racism and disparities that are counter to attitudes and practices of mutual cultural integration are still present

Stage IV
Diocese-Wide Stage:
Hispanic Ministry Office is highly influential and collaborative and other diocesan ministry offices are equipped to provide resources to parishes in their pastoral efforts with Hispanics within their own ministerial responsibility. Most parishes with a significant Hispanic presence provide a comprehensive Hispanic ministry.
- PST collaboration and learning that will influence future connections with parishes
- More print materials available in Spanish, including website and Archdiocesan documents [move translation to outside resource]