

GUADALUPE MINISTRY REPORT

2014

The Guadalupe Project addressed the following areas of ministry:

1.- Liturgy

- On Sunday, the Hispanic people gather as the Body of Christ to celebrate the Lord's Day. Bilingual Priests, from three different dioceses: Crookston, Fargo and St. Cloud come to celebrate mass and the sacrament of reconciliation.

Ministers find the Church the place to serve the Lord and make a difference in the lives of others. The welcome team greets people as they arrive at church and helps them to find a seat and takes care of the needs of our guests. The worship team includes two choirs: one made up of local people and one by migrants. They greatly enhance the celebration. The coffee fellowship ministry provides the coffee and donuts that people enjoy every Sunday after our service.

- The weekly bulletin is used to deepen insight into the Holy Scripture and give to the faithful people a Christian message to improve their lives.
- Some English/Spanish liturgies are celebrated during the year, for the purpose of building community, creating good relationships and fellowship.
- Liturgy is the center of the life of the Church. Liturgy and popular piety are two forms of worship. Once a week people spend an hour in Eucharistic adoration in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. They center their prayer in Jesus Christ praying for peace, life, vocations, and other issues that are at the heart of the life of the Church and the world.

2.- Religious Education

The Sunday Religious Education program is held at St. Francis de Sales. All teachers have met the requirements for volunteers working with children according to the Diocese of Crookston safe environment standards.

- Our First Communion program recognizes that children are particularly capable of receiving and enjoying the most essential elements of our faith - the announcement of God's love, in the person of the Good Shepherd, who died and rose. Children become familiar with Jesus, selected parables about the Kingdom of God, and parts of the Mass. The role of the teacher, or catechist, is to make presentations in the classroom, and listen with the child to discover more deeply how much God loves them.

- Our summer Sunday Confirmation Program enrolls Middle School students in grades 6-8. The program is designed to meet the catechetical, educational, spiritual, emotional and social needs of young adolescents. The Confirmation format, brings the students out of the classroom and into a larger group setting for group activities, presentations of the material and prayer, and then gives them the opportunity to break into smaller groups to process the teaching and build relationships with the others in their class. It helps them make the faith relevant to their everyday lives and helps form their Catholic identity. The emphasis during the time of preparation for Confirmation is placed on helping the students to develop a relationship with God and a living faith as they prepare to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Our formation program includes topics like: Sacred Scripture, Person of Christ, Church, Sacraments, Morality, Values, Social Justice and Vocation.
- Discipleship is linked to stewardship. Students from our religious education program are involved in the Sunday liturgy. They are the ones that do the ministry of welcoming, ushers and those carrying the gifts to the altar, and serving coffee and snacks after mass, supervised by an adult.
- In September 2014, a group of 15 celebrated the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist with our Bishop, Michael Hoepfner, who presided at the Ceremony.

3.- Baptism Preparation

- Because parents are working most of the time, classes for the reception of the sacraments are scheduled according to their free time. Preparation includes the encouragement to be present on Sunday Mass.

4.- Adult Faith Formation

- Three years ago, our Diocese of Crookston brought the program, “Arise together in Christ” in Spanish, provided by Renew International. “Arise together in Christ” is a three-year, parish-centered process of spiritual renewal and evangelization that enables people to deepen their faith, develop a closer relationship with Christ, grow in community, and reach out in service to others. It emphasizes people living in good relationship with one another, as they make concrete applications of the gospel to their life situations.
- After having received a proper training, six small faith communities met to share their faith. They ended the fourth-fifth cycles and some of the accomplished

goals are: they are witnessing the Word of God in Sacred Scripture; are developing a vibrant community of faith and service that is ongoing and to enhance the celebration of the Sunday liturgy. People from this group have created a choir for Sunday Mass, are visiting people at the hospital and those who have fallen away.

Our Latino community was greatly benefited with this program, the tools that it provided were not only a strategy for adult faith formation and practical means of evangelization, but in creating community and a good relationship among them. With this experience, they are developing willingness to participate in spiritual retreats. In addition to attending Mass each Sunday, they stay an extra one and half hour to receive their Bible class. Also, they developed leadership and now they will continue their meeting but now following the book “La justicia brota de la fe” it meaning is: formation in the faith and the social doctrine of the Church. We expect good things from their study.

- **Bible Study**

A steady group gathers every Sunday after mass to study the Holy Scriptures and share their faith. There is more interest among the participants in reading the Bible. Participants not only receive instruction but also prepare some issues during the year.

- **Koinonia**

Koinonia is a Catholic retreat program sponsored in Spanish by the St. Cloud Diocese in which adults have a weekend community experience in Christian living.

Our Latino community has taken advantage of this wonderful “renewal” program. Last year some people from our community participated in the retreats, and the fruits are evident: their learning about Christian life, fellowship and faith-sharing support that allows and challenges their inner renewal. People participate more in church, in Bible Study, in the Holy Hour and in the activities promoted by the ministry and what is even better, they are improving their lives.

5.- Spiritual Retreats

Adults

- The community enjoys a temporary withdrawal from ordinary daily living to nourish their inner spiritual longings. For this reason, we provide to them retreats during the year:

Last year the Hispanic community in Moorhead greatly benefited by the project funded by the Diocese of Crookston's "Faith for tomorrow fund". We brought a Mexican priest for "Two weeks of parish mission", starting July 27th and ending August 10th, 2014.

During these two weeks, some households were visited, some people asked for a blessing for their house and they took time to talk about their problems. Communion was taken to the sick, who received it after making a good confession. Every night we had a conference with the participation of 35-40 people daily.

On August 9th the priest led a spiritual retreat; it was attended by about 50 people.

To conclude the two weeks mission, the sick were invited to confess their sins and receive Communion and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick during the Mass. More than 40 people received the sacraments this day.

Many people had the opportunity to confess their sins and receive spiritual direction during this time.

Some of the topics discussed in the conference were:

- Evangelization and Mission of the Church
- Models of the Church
- Our missionary spirituality
- Trinitarian basis of the mission
- Missionary commitment, among others

Many people celebrated reconciliation; some returned to the Church; and the group that comes to the Holy Hour every Thursday night, has grown.

Youth

- Young people have the same opportunities as the adults. Some youth meetings were offered to them in which they play, learn and grow together. Youth have a variety of spiritual needs. In order to meet those needs, our retreats involve faith sharing, complex group dynamics, group and individual prayer, simulation activities.

Last year our youth group was included in "Arise together in Christ", provided by Renew International and supported by the Diocese of Crookston. A Young couple took care of the sessions. At least 15 teenagers participated. This program was mandatory for young ladies who celebrated their XV Años.

6.- Outreach program

Outreach ministry is the work of the Church and of every baptized, stretching out to meet needs in the wider community. As Catholic Christians, we engage in outreach whenever we answer our baptismal call by serving the needs of others.

- During the summer a Diocesan Seminarian was assigned by the Diocese of Crookston to do this work, particularly.
- Although the community commitments provide many opportunities to meet the needs of others in their daily lives, two ministers visit the Hispanic community and bring to them a word of hope, Christian literature and information of the activities held at the parish. Visiting homes not only gives us the opportunity to know better the people who we are working with, but also, it is the best way to hear their problems and spend some time with them.
- Parishes, public institutions and groceries stores support our outreach ministry in many different ways, posting in their bulletins our announcements to promote our events, especially the Sunday Mass in Spanish.

7.- Clay County Jail Ministry

- Once a week a visit is made to the local jail to share with the inmates, men and women, the Sunday's Mass readings. Conversation with jailed inmates on a variety of topics, including spirituality, help stimulate their thought processes. We can see the impact prison ministry can have on inmates serving long-term sentences.

8.- Pastoral care

- Sick are visited once a week at the Hospital, at the nursing homes or in their house. After hearing the Gospel and a little reflection, they receive Holy Communion. Their names appear in Sunday bulletins; special petitions are made every Sunday for them and the community is committed to pray for them.

9.- Lent

- Lent is observed by meditating on the Way of the Cross every Friday. On Good Friday the community walks the streets carrying the cross and showing their faith, devotion and repentance. Children and youth are the most interested in this pious practice.

10.- Mary, our Mother

a) Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe,

- Novena: nine days before the celebration, the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe visits different homes, the rosary is recited and a little meditation of our Lady is given each day.

- On December 12th, people sang the Mañanitas, then the rosary, followed by a reflection of the “Mystery of our Lady of Guadalupe”
- In the evening, Mass was celebrated, our Bishop Michael Hoeppner, our pastor and other priest friends attended.
- A band of Mariachis were brought from Minneapolis by the community.
- Our children were part of this beautiful celebration. They prepared some folkloric dances for the reception at the Parish Center. Hundreds of people attended the event.

b) Marian Vigil

- For a second year a Marian Vigil was planned for the end of May, to honor our Lady. There were about 50 people -children and adults- praying and singing to the Mother of Jesus. The community meditated this evening on “**Mary, model for every woman**” and then community prayed the Rosary, having battery lights in their hands. The Vigil finished with the coronation of our Lady.

11.- Christmas and other Activities

- Posadas, three Kings, mother’s and father’s day and other celebrations are held in order to keep the community and Latino traditions alive. For Christmas children have “piñatas” donated by some generous families. Children perform Joseph and Mary for the “posadas”, and the community sings the songs. All these festivities ended with a potluck. Families and their children enjoy all these popular celebrations.
- For the second year we had a Cultural Day event in which people taught each other about their own cultures. Latinos from Peru, Santo Domingo, Nicaragua, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Texas and Mexico show to the community the main traditions and customs from each country. Talking and working with new people allowed us to develop team spirit. Everyone contributed to make this an unforgettable day. We worked for a common goal and this lifted our spirits.

For entertainment we had a musical band “La Esquina”, who played nice Latin music and kept the community busy. Some dancers made their performance, dancing “Los Tlacoleros”. Everything ended with potluck: food from every country.

- Fundraising, was another activity which reinforced our working team. When our members know their responsibility and understand the roles played by others, using everyone’s skills and abilities, it helps to enhance communication among them and to operate in a productive manner.

12.- TONANTZIN

This is an open group for children and adults who want to preserve their cultural traditions or just for having fun. This year, they had some performances around the city such as: NDSU; VA Medical Center and Horizon Middle School. They always participate in the feast of our Lady of Guadalupe.