



The Missionary Cooperative Plan

1. A recognized Catholic missionary society in good standing with the United States Society for the Propagation of the Faith serving in one or more foreign countries, or
2. A recognized Catholic missionary society in good standing with the United States Society for the Propagation of the Faith serving in United States dioceses designated as missionary by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Home Missions Office,
3. A foreign (non-U.S.A.) Catholic (arch)diocese or eparchy struggling with poverty, persecution, oppression, or war

1. Guidelines & General Requirements for Application

Missions must submit a new application each year. The mission coordinator should request participation by submitting a letter on official letterhead. Please include the following information:

- The **name of the mission** and the country/diocese where the mission is located. For religious congregations, please include the name of the province.
- An **email address** for the mission representative in the U.S.
- **Information on the speaker(s) who will visit the parishes.** *Note:* The Diocese of Austin has many Spanish-speaking parishes. Please let us know if you have a bi-lingual speaker who is native or fluent in Spanish. We also have Masses said in Vietnamese and Korean.
- **How are donations used for the Propagation of the Faith?** You are welcome to send a brochure or pre-printed information sheet that describes the needs of the mission along with the application letter.
- **Catholic Identity.** *Note: This information request does not apply to dioceses, or groups that have participated in the Diocese of Austin MCP within the last 10 years.* Supply one of the following:
 - If the lay organization or religious community/province is listed in *The U.S. Official Catholic Directory*, tell us the diocese, section or page number, and edition (year), where we can find its inclusion.
 - For a mission not yet included in an official Catholic directory in any country, please provide an explanation of the group's connection to the Church. A lay association must be a *subordinate organization* of the Catholic Church to be eligible for participation in the mission appeal program. This information can be included as part of a Bishop's Letter of Recommendation explained below.

2. Include a Letter of Introduction or Recommendation

A diocesan representative should include a copy of a signed and stamped letter from the local Ordinary (bishop) that grants authority to the representative to coordinate the mission appeal on his behalf in the United States. If the group is a religious community, please provide a letter from the Superior General that grants authority to the representative to coordinate the appeals. For a lay association, a letter of recommendation from the local bishop acknowledging the works of the group in his diocese is strongly encouraged.

About the Missionary Cooperation Plan

- The Diocese of Austin does not use pre-printed envelopes for mission collections. Parishioners are instructed to make checks payable to the Diocese of Austin, the diocese then disburses funds once all parishes have submitted the funds. Missionary groups may not hand out pre-printed envelopes or materials that in any way attempt to collect names and addresses of parishioners for the purpose of future mail or phone solicitations.
- The mission organization is advised to send an effective speaker who speaks fluent English for the appeal. The speaker should prepare to preach at all Masses on the appeal weekend. Mission appeals should be kept to a maximum of 10 minutes. The appeal should focus on helping the faithful learn about the mission world today and the accomplishments of the mission organization. All missionaries should make their mission appeal after Communion when announcements are made, preceding the Blessing. Visiting missionary clergy may give the homily according to the dictates of the Roman Missal and then speak on their appeal at the end of the Mass.

“We ask that you share with us your experience as well as the faith experience of the people you serve...Our faith is deepened and broadened as we learn from you. You enrich us in our understanding of the problems and the challenges of the universal church.” (US Bishops on World Mission “To the Ends of the Earth”)

- Solicitation for sponsorship of specific/named individuals (i.e., orphans, students, seminarians, etc.) is not allowed.
- The MCP appeal weekend requires a speaker to appear *in person* at the Masses to make an appeal for prayers and financial assistance. Groups may not request that a letter be read at the Masses and a collection taken in lieu of a personal appearance.
- The Diocese of Austin and its parishes do not provide for or reimburse travel costs, shuttle service to or from the airport, or lodging accommodations. It is the speaker’s responsibility to provide for his or her own housing arrangements as well as transportation between parish sites and to and from the airport.

3. Submit the Application

Thank you for your application to the Diocese of Austin Missionary Cooperative Program. All applications should be received by October 1st to be considered for the following year. Applications are reviewed by the Diocesan Missionary Advisory Council and 34 groups are selected. Accepted groups will receive a letter with parish assignments in January.

Mail the application letter along with a *Letter of Introduction* to:

**Associate Director of Mission and Discipleship
Diocese of Austin
6225 E US 290 HWY SVRD EB
Austin, TX 78723**

Questions? Please email dekarlos-blackmon@austindiocese.org or phone 512-949-2407