



# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

## “Plan Pastoral” Frequently Asked Questions

*Note: For brevity and to avoid confusion between the terms Hispanic and Latino, the Diocese of Grand Rapids is using the term “Hispanic” in all references below.*

### What is the “Plan Pastoral”?

The “Plan Pastoral” is a strategic planning process that is being undertaken by the Diocese of Grand Rapids to help shape the strategic direction for Hispanic ministry in the diocese for the next five years. The plan will determine which areas of pastoral ministry in our diocese we are doing well and which areas need more attention and resources.

### Why is it important to the Catholic Church?

The Hispanic community has a significant role to play in the future of the Catholic Church in the United States. As the places where we live, work, and worship continue to change, we need to adapt to meet those needs and accompany people.

We are called to embrace each other’s differences, and to confront cases of prejudice, stereotyping and racism that are present in our society.

### Why is it important to the Hispanic community at large?

All members of the Hispanic Community deserve to be fully integrated into the Catholic Church. This plan supports our parishes in inviting all members of the Hispanic community, both recent immigrants and previous generations, to full involvement in parish life to strengthen the One Body of Christ.

### Why are you not launching a strategic plan for the English-speaking community?

In 2009, the diocese undertook a large pastoral planning process, “Our Faith, Our Future”; addressing all parishes in the diocese. One outcome of that process was a call to develop and focus on the rapidly growing Hispanic community in our area and how to best provide pastoral care to them.

This strategic planning process is our response to that call.

### Why now?

For a number of years, the Hispanic community in West Michigan has continued to grow rapidly, but we have needed a plan for strategic direction on how to integrate and welcome this community into full sacramental participation in the Catholic Church.



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This pastoral planning process coincides with a national process to plan for Hispanic Ministry through the “V Encuentro” (5<sup>th</sup> Encuentro).

### What are the key dates people should know about?

Throughout the Spring, data gathering will occur in communities throughout the diocese. This summer, the data will be analyzed and a plan will be created. A final plan is expected in December of 2017.

### Statistics about the Hispanic community in the diocese:

#### Number of parishes with active Hispanic Masses and ministries?

14 parishes. The Cathedral of Saint Andrew (Grand Rapids), Holy Name of Jesus (Wyoming), Our Lady of Guadalupe/St. Bartholomew (Grant/Newaygo), Our Lady of Sorrows (G.R.), Shrine of St. Francis Xavier and Our Lady of Guadalupe (Grand Rapids), SS. Peter and Paul (Ionia), St. Agnes (Marion), St. Patrick-St. Anthony (Grand Haven), St. Francis de Sales (Holland), St. Gregory- Our Lady of Fatima (Hart), St. Joseph (Wright), St. Mary (Muskegon), St. Joseph the Worker (Wyoming), St. Mary (Grand Rapids).

#### What countries are represented in our parishes?

According to research by the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University, people from Mexico and Central and Southern America are among the largest populations of Hispanics in West Michigan.

#### How many Hispanics live in the diocese?

According to research by the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University, the total Hispanic population in West Michigan stands at 108,276 as of 2014. This number represents all Hispanics, not Hispanic Catholics.

Census data does not provide us with an accurate number of Hispanic Catholics living in the diocese because religious affiliation is not categorized. Comparing recent demographic reports, we can say about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of Catholics in the diocese are Hispanic.

#### How does this unify the diocese as a whole?

This pastoral plan renews our call for full awareness, understanding, and support of the rich diversity of the universal Church. When we embrace each other's differences it exposes us to new ideas, opens doors of communication, and enhances our connections as humans, and to our Creator.



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The successful implementation of this plan will ignite the faith of members of the Hispanic Catholic Church calling them to share the Gospel message with others far and wide.

### Who's involved in the planning?

The entire Catholic community is called to participate in this process. At the diocesan level, a strategic planning steering committee, consisting of diocesan staff members and parish representatives, is in place to lead this process.

### How long is the planning process?

The planning process will be a year-long.

### How long will the plan shape the future of Hispanic Ministry in the diocese?

This plan will shape the strategic future of Hispanic Ministry in the diocese for the next five years.

### What items are you expecting to see come out of this plan?

This plan will identify to whom and where we are called to serve. It will also show us areas of pastoral care that need more attention. This strategic plan will identify parishes in our diocese who currently do not have a Hispanic ministry program in place, but should due to the demographics of their area.

We expect to identify strategic goals around include youth, young adult, and family ministry; how to better serve immigrants, how to evangelize better, and how to increase vocations in all forms.

### Where are the funds for this planning process coming from?

Resources that support Hispanic Ministry in the diocese come from our annual Catholic Services Appeal (CSA) and parishes that support programs at the local level.

### Does the Diocese of Grand Rapids have to serve members of the Hispanic community who have entered the country without proper documentation?

The Catholic Church is called to serve all people regardless of citizenship status as we live out the call of Jesus to care for our neighbor. We have a moral obligation to support the human dignity of all people, offering them care, comfort and education.



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[Doesn't this moral obligation conflict with civil law?](#)

No. The freedom to exercise our religion is our foundation for supporting the dignity of all immigrants.

[How does the inauguration of President Trump affect this plan or his comments on controlling immigration?](#)

It is difficult to make any predictions at this point as it is too early in his presidency.

We pray for our newly elected officials and hope that they enact programs that promote the common good, especially those that protect the most vulnerable among us.

We stand in solidarity with the migrant and refugee families living here in West Michigan and across the United States.