

LATINO MINISTRY OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF LOUISIANA

ACTIVITY REPORT July 2021 – September 2022

Introduction

This report is a picture of the performance and activities that have been carried out by the Latino Ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana. The biggest challenges that have come along the way have been the lack of knowledge of the Episcopal Church within the Latino community and the lack resources that allow greater participation of the Episcopal Church in mitigating the needs of Hispanic and Latino families in the metropolitan area of the City of New Orleans.

Despite these limitations, the Latino Ministry has managed to extend its pastoral labor, which together with social action has obtained satisfactory results to begin to attract the Hispanic community to the Episcopal Church and establish the bases for the development of the Ministry.

The pastoral labor and activities that the Latino Ministry has established are highlighted below:

a) Community Partnership

- ❖ The Latino Ministry is in relationship with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana Foundation to expose the name of the Latino Ministry within the community, it has access to resources, and helps assist the community firsthand.
- ❖ The Latino Ministry is in relationship with the Department of Citizens Affairs and its cross-cultural Coordinator. Ms. Daniela Bello, who is the liaison, supports the Latino Ministry and brings it where the community is in need, especially if families have applied for public assistance and they are not eligible.

b) Spread the Word

- ❖ Meetings took place to speak about the Latin Ministry and the activities, that could happen in the near future, the visits reported occurred between July 2021 and June 2022, but is an ongoing process of conversation.

✓ Contact was established with the rectors of:

- St. Martin's (Metairie)
- St. Anna's (New Orleans)

- St. John's (Kenner)
- St. Mark's (Harvey) – Vestry has full participation.
- Church of the Annunciation (New Orleans)
- Mt. Olivet Church (Algiers- New Orleans)
- St. Luke's (New Orleans)
- St. Philip's (Algiers - New Orleans)
- St. Paul's (New Orleans)

c) Outreach to other stakeholders in the community to introduce the Latino Ministry

- ❖ **Visits to the Funeral Homes in the Greater New Orleans area:** out of 47 funeral homes contacted, 25 were actually operating, 15 visits were in person, and the remaining 10 requested us to send a letter instead of a visit.
- ❖ **Visits to Hispanic Restaurants:** to establish relationships for future activities, sponsorships, and collaborations.
 - La Patrona Restaurant – New Orleans
 - Chilangos Restaurant – Kenner
 - La Cocinita – Kenner
 - Sabores De Mi H – Kenner
 - Los Tres Amigos – Harvey
 - Sabor Latino – Metairie
 - Golden Gate Bistro – New Orleans
- ❖ **Door to door walk in Residential Apartments (families):** with the help of families of the Spanish Service and volunteers from St. Augustine, the following units were visited:
 - Flowergate (3400 Kent Ave, Metairie, LA 70006) - 25 families
 - Canterbury Square (3127 Transcontinental Dr, Metairie, LA 70003) - 20 families
 - Breckenridge (6525 Park Manor Dr, Metairie, LA 70003) 15 families.

d) Communication with media outlets

- ❖ Hispanic Newspaper and Radio Station “**Jambalaya News**”

Contact was established with Jambalaya Radio and Newspaper. We are registered for a weekly radio program to speak about the Episcopal Church, and Bible studies and to promote the Latino Ministry as well.

e) Popular religious and cultural events

- Dia de los muertos – Nov. 2, attendance of 45 people approx,
- Our Lady of Guadalupe Dec. 12, attendance of 65 people approx.

- Our Lady of Suyapa. Feb. 3, attendance of 75 people approx.
- Hispanic Heritage: we celebrate for whole month our Hispanidad from September 18 to October 16, 2022

What we are doing now

- ❖ Saint Augustine's – Metairie
 - Sundays – 12:00 pm – Spanish service.
 - Monday to Friday: Morning and Evening Prayer – Online Prayer at 9:00 A.M and 7:00 P.M (September 2021 to July 2022)
 - Fridays – Way of the Cross at 6:30 pm. (Lent)
 - Saturdays – Rosary and Bible Study. (Lent)
 - On - 04/01/2022 (Friday) First bilingual way of the Cross.
 - On 04/14/2022 (Maundy Thursday) First bilingual service.
 - On 04/16/2022 (Paschal Vigil) First bilingual Service.
- ❖ St. Ann – New Orleans
 - Sundays – 2:30 P.M – Spanish service.
- ❖ St. Mark – Harvey
 - Sundays – 6:00 P.M – Spanish service.
- ❖ Outreach community
 - English class - 20 students.
 - Spanish class – 18 students.
- ❖ Around the Dioceses
 - Post Hurricane Ida Assistance
 - We had two activities of food and water giveaway for the families and one back to school and food activity of Crown Point in Marrero for whole year.
 - The Diocese through the Latin Ministry helped many Latin families.

The Latino Ministry of the Episcopal Diocese assisted the Latino families with \$10000.⁰⁰ that were divided in two checks of \$1000.⁰⁰, ten checks of \$600.⁰⁰, and four of \$500.⁰⁰; these checks were issued in order to assist with rent and utilities. Also, the Latino ministry gave out \$8500.⁰⁰ in gift cards. All these were the results of the efforts and conversations with the Episcopal Relief Development.

Actually, Latino Ministry is working on the Pos-hurricane Ida Long-Term Program for 2022 and could be extended for 2023. This initiative was presented and is being sponsored by the Episcopal Relief Development, with their help the Latino Ministry is working hard to bring those resources. The delegate of the Episcopal Relief Development, came to Louisiana to meet with the different stakeholders, the agenda of the visit was organized by the Latino Ministry, and it was a very productive encounter since the Latin Ministry was able to show all the challenges that the community in Louisiana has. This project helps 25 Latino families with rent, utilities.

f) Pastoral care

- ❖ The Latino Ministry giving spiritual direction to 5 Latin people. (Open to take more people of they are interested)
- ❖ Visit to the sick in Hospitals, 12 families have requested the visits.
- ❖ Two funerals in Spanish.
- ❖ Two new members have been received from to the Episcopal Church
- ❖ 6 baptisms were celebrated.
- ❖ Attendance for the Spanish service:
 - Saint Augustine's from 15 to 35 attendances.
 - St. Ann from 5 to 10 attendance.
 - St. Mark from 8 to 12 attendance.

In this report I would like to write some notes.

Notes:

- ❖ We started the Spanish service in January 2019 in St. Augustine's (the last service was on December 2020)
- ❖ The 183rd Annual Convention was held on October 24, 2020, under the Leadership of Bishop Morris Thompson, Approved the Latino Ministry for our Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana.
- ❖ When Padre Benjamin Sanchez was at the seminary (August 2020- May 2021) the bishop gave him the authorization to keep in touch with the Latino families. Then, the Diocese through St. Augustine's Facebook page offered Sunday Noon Prayer for six months.
- ❖ On June 27, 2021, the Latin Ministry officially began in the diocese with an office at St. Augustine's Metairie.
- ❖ The Latino Ministry is responsible for the Choir that leads whole Spanish services on Sundays.