

Diocese

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name people. But a number of Vietnamese immigrants take advantage of such programs in their own parishes when Father Tiep is not in town, Nguyen explained.

"We are very grateful that the diocese was able to come to our aid when we approached the diocese," Nguyen said. "That really says something to us that the diocese cared enough to do something about it."

The diocese likewise has a number of programs to assist the more than 10,000 Hispanics who live or work in the Rochester area. Those programs include the Office of the Spanish Apostolate, outreach efforts to Hispanic migrants, and the Hispanic *Instituto*, intended to help train Hispanic leaders.

Father Enrique Cadena, director of the *Instituto*, pastoral associate at Rochester's Corpus Christi Parish and coordinator of migrant ministry in the diocese's eastern portion, noted that migrant workers especially face prejudice.

"Much more than we thought," he said.

Sadly, the Mexican priest added, "Even in the churches where they have been going, the Anglos need education about the migrants."

Thus he has pulled together a team of lay people and pastors from parishes in Wayne County to promote awareness of and education about the migrants.

Part of the overall problem, Father Cadena observed, is that the diocese's migrant-worker and Hispanic populations are so diverse that each group has differ-

ent needs.

The migrant-worker population includes people who move frequently and are sometimes only in the diocese for a few months, people who are hired by the fruit and vegetable processing companies, and those who have settled in the area for an extended time.

Meanwhile, in Rochester — and to a smaller degree in Newark, Geneva and a few other communities — a number of Hispanics have settled permanently. These people are not part of the migrant stream. Nor are these Hispanics necessarily immigrants; the majority of them are from the U.S. commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Yet they still face problems, Father Cadena noted. Older immigrants had to struggle because of language and cultural difference. Their children are caught between their Hispanic heritage and the Anglo culture.

In addition to helping foster better cooperation among the diocese's Hispanic parishes, Father Cadena has encouraged leadership development.

Among Rochester-area Hispanics, this training comes through the *Instituto*, which, he noted, is attracting growing numbers of students. The institute is funded by the Thanks Giving Appeal.

Father Cadena is attempting to train some of the migrants who have settled in the diocese as catechists, so that they can assist fellow migrant workers who



File photo

CLOSE QUARTERS — Tiny shelters, three levels high, are living quarters for Vietnamese boat people confined at a refugee camp in Hong Kong in January 1990. Catholic groups there have asked the British government to bear the cost of housing the refugees.

move in and out of the region.

Father Cadena noted that he hears comments from Hispanics who say they've had mixed experiences in terms of feeling welcomed in the diocese.

"Some (people) say there is a lot being done for them," Father Cadena said. "But sometimes, I hear complaints that it is not enough. It could be better."

Migration

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cause of persecution and injustice — should not be denied justice, a safe haven or a new life. The church believes in a level of immigration that is both generous and reasonable. She understands governments' responsibility for orderly and humane regulations and for protecting the common good of their citizens. However, this should not be used as an excuse to justify selfish and exclusionary policies.

For so many decades the United States welcomed the stranger. Its leadership in weaving together so many people into a cohesive nation has been a beacon of hope and an example to other nations. The United States is a microcosm of the world's great religions, ethnic communities and races. As long as the United States does not bear a dispro-

portionate share of the world's immigration, any abdication of our tradition of welcoming those in need, who have so much to contribute, only reinforces negative sentiment and rejectionist actions here in our country and in other nations.

The church offers us a vision that can aid us in maintaining our nation's commitment to welcoming immigrants — a vision based on solidarity and the common good of society. Our country's long history as an immigrant nation should not be forgotten. It has been our strength and a source of renewal. We remember that the Holy Family itself had to flee into Egypt as refugees and that there was no room in the inn for the birth of our savior. Let us mark an end to our rejection of immigrants and embark on a new beginning where as a nation and a family of nations we begin learning again how to welcome the stranger into our midst.

Bishops decry growth of 'anti-foreigner virus'

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

The U.S. bishops agreed Nov. 16 to support a statement decrying the "virulent plague of anti-stranger sentiment" taking shape in public policy and attitudes (see Page 1).

Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of Newark, N.J., chairman of the Committee on Migration of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, proposed the statement Nov. 15 as a document for the conference to adopt during the NCCB's Nov. 15-18 meeting in Washington.

But because the proposal only arose during the committee's meeting a day earlier, it was unavailable in advance of the conference. Under NCCB bylaws it therefore could not be considered for approval as a statement by the full body of bishops. Instead, the bishops agreed in a unanimous voice vote to support it as a statement issued by the Committee on Migration.

The draft presented to the bishops noted that in a time of deep recession and anxiety about the future, the temptation to blame immigrants is easy.

"Rather than reject immigrants, we should reject the political cynicism of the anti-foreigner sentiment," the statement said.

A look at the underlying causes of mass migration in the world show a widening gap between rich and poor nations, ecological disasters, ethnic wars, economic and political collapse and the desire to improve daily life for one's family, it continued.

"While it is true that no one country can respond totally or take in all those seeking freedom and a new life, the world of nations simply cannot shut its eyes or doors. The most vulnerable in the world — those with nowhere to lay their heads because of persecution and injustice — should not be denied justice, a safe haven or a new life."

The history of the United States in welcoming strangers has created a microcosm of the world's great religions, ethnic communities and races, said the draft.

"Its leadership in weaving together so many people into a cohesive nation has been a beacon of hope and an example to other nations ... As long as the United States does not bear a disproportionate share of the world's immigration, any abdication of our tradition of welcoming those in need who have so much to contribute only reinforces negative sentiment and rejectionist actions here in our country and in other nations."

Attitudes of hostility — blaming economic and social difficulties on foreigners — are unacceptable in the context of Catholic social teaching and in light of the nation's Judeo-Christian heritage, said the statement.

It encouraged the nation to think about what is at stake by blaming and rejecting immigrants — respect for people and human dignity, family relationships, the strength of diverse cultures and the commitment to the common good of society "are placed in jeopardy when we too easily reject the sojourners, strangers and aliens in our midst."

In introducing a motion to support the statement, Archbishop McCarrick said the church has a duty to fight the "virulent plague of anti-stranger virus."

In a press conference following the vote, Archbishop McCarrick said the statement is aimed at a "theory in American life today that says we don't need any more strangers."

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