

# Grant funds migrant video

Rob Cullivan/Catholic Courier

About 18,000 migrant workers can be found in the Diocese of Rochester, and most of them are Latin American Catholics. A new video in the making will tell their story.

The Diocese of Rochester obtained a \$15,000 grant from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in November to make the 10-minute video, which will document the lives of migrant workers and the diocese's efforts to minister to them. The video is being produced by AV8 Productions in Rochester.

"(Migrants) are people who are faithful, who have a deep spirituality and who are supporting our overall community, and we don't know them," said Bernard Grizard, diocesan director of Parish Support Ministries, which is overseeing the video's production and eventual distribution. "They're not only working on farms, but in restaurants, construction, factories ... A welcoming presence from other Catholics is es-

pecially needed."

Grizard said the diocese decided to make the video in order to update presentations on its migrant ministry programs, and to inspire people to work in migrant ministry. Currently, the diocese must rely on outdated videos or videos filmed outside the diocese to explain migrant ministry, he said. He added that more and more migrants are settling permanently in the diocese from such countries as Mexico and from the U.S. Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the video will document that development as well. Footage has already been shot of migrants attending Catholic services as well as of interviews with those who minister to migrants. Locations shown in the video will include Sodus, Brockport and Mount Morris, he said.

"We have the need to raise the level of awareness at the parish level regarding the needs of migrant workers," Grizard said, noting that parishes will be invited to screen the video for their members. "Many of these parishes have untapped resources that could potentially be put to use in the area of migrant ministry in terms of hours of volunteer time and talent, and in terms of financial donations."

Volunteers are needed to welcome migrants and minister to migrants, he said, as well as help them learn about American cultural norms.

He added that when the video is finished in spring of this year, the diocese plans to present it at a meeting of diocesan employees and ministry directors. Each diocesan department will then be invited to attend a migrant ministry awareness training program tailored to their employees' or volunteers' particular needs. For example, he said, men in formation for the priesthood could be offered the opportunity to learn about migrant ministry and train for it.

The diocese already has a number of people working on behalf of migrants in such offices as the Spanish Apostolate and Interdiocesan Migrant Ministry, a joint effort of the Rochester and Buffalo dioceses. Meanwhile, Catholic Charities officials have advocated for better labor and living conditions on behalf of migrant Catholics, many of whom attend such parishes as St. Mary's of the Lake in Ontario; Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Brockport; Church of the Epiphany in Sodus; and St. Francis de Sales in Geneva. Grizard added that in November 2001 the diocese created a Migrant Ministry Task Force to coordinate its various migrant outreach efforts.

Ultimately, Grizard said, he hopes that the video will make Catholics aware of their brethren in faith who labor in the fields and factories around the diocese.

"(The migrant community) is one of the riches of the diocese, which is a hidden gift of the diocese," he said.

## PROJECT UNITY WANTS MIGRANT SAFE HOUSE

Project Unity, an effort by diocesan Catholic Charities to build relationships between rural, urban and suburban parishes, is seeking to establish a "safe house" for migrant workers in the Diocese of Rochester, according to Mercy Sister Janet Korn, social justice awareness coordinator for Catholic Charities.

Sister Korn said those who minister to migrants in the diocese have found that they need an emergency shelter, especially in cases of illness or if they are fleeing domestic abuse. She said that the diocese is currently looking at establishing such a place in a number of possible locations near migrant populations, including Geneva and Sodus.

Sister Korn said her agency is looking for private donations and grants to fund operating expenses, which would run \$50,000 a year. This would cover the cost of hiring a staff person, as well as utility bills, food, miscellaneous items and, if necessary, rent or mortgage. Once the house is established, volunteers would be needed to perform such tasks as transporting guests to doctors' appointments, stores and schools, cooking, nursing, teaching English and grant writing.

Donors interested in supporting the migrant house may send checks to Catholic Charities, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY 14624. Donations should be sent to the attention of Sister Korn, and should indicate that they are intended for the "Migrant Safe House."

For information, call Sister Korn at 585/328-3228, ext. 287, or e-mail her at [skorn@odr.org](mailto:skorn@odr.org).

— Rob Cullivan

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