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**Archdiocese of Milwaukee 175th Anniversary**

**High School Unit Plan - Grades 11 or 12: Church as Cultural and Social Agency**

**Possible Courses: US History, Church History, Sociology, Geography, Psychology, Humanities, Current Events, American Literature**

**Essential Question: How did the Catholic Church navigate the challenges of cultural diversity while carrying out its mission among immigrants in Milwaukee?**

**Key Understandings:**

* **To effectively carry out its mission of evangelization and ministry, the Church must respond to the needs of its members.**
* **Immigrant populations have specific and unique needs that demand the Church’s response.**
* **There is a tension between cultural preservation and assimilation that can cause unhealthy divisions between diverse groups of people.**

**Suggested Activities:**

**Define the Mission of the Church in working with immigrants**

* **Think / Pair / Square / Share: Have individuals compose answers to the question: What is the Mission of the Church? Partner to combine and revise ideas. Partner again in groups of four. Share back to large group.**
* **Compose an agreed upon large group response to define the Church’s mission**
* **Brainstorm ideas about what the Church would need to do differently or specifically to carry out its mission with immigrant populations. Consider a fishbowl discussion or Socratic Seminar.**

**Explore the “iceberg” metaphor for “culture”**

* **Ask students to name the ways that they notice, or are able to recognize cultural differences. Brainstorm as long a list as possible.**
* **Have students read a scenario of cultural disconnect (see examples at** [**http://www.mic.usi.ch/case-studies-intercultural-communication**](http://www.mic.usi.ch/case-studies-intercultural-communication)**)**
* **Ask students to discuss and then share an explanation of why the cultural disconnect happened.**
* **Consider and discuss whether a better understanding of the cultural differences or aspects from the original brainstormed list would have helped prevent the problems that occurred in the case studies.**
* **Consider and discuss what kinds of cultural knowledge might help.**
* **Share the cultural iceberg concept (using resources such as:** [**https://www.languageandculture.com/cultural-iceberg**](https://www.languageandculture.com/cultural-iceberg) **)**

**Create student teams to research specific separate immigrant populations.**

* **Assign specific immigrant populations,**
* **Have teams brainstorm what information they would want to find if they are researching the work the Church did to minister to different immigrant groups.**
* **Have all teams report out and come to consensus on the list.**
* **Determine who/what/where they will seek the needed information.**
* **Assign research tasks to members of teams.**
* **After completing some research, identify some of the unique challenges that faced their particular immigrant population. Research how the Church helped (or failed to help) that group address those problems.**

**OR, Create student teams to research separate sectors of the Archdiocese.**

* **Assign divided sectors of the Archdiocese to each group,**
* **Research to find out what immigrant groups founded the original parishes in their region.**
* **Research to find out how the parishes changed over time and why.**
* **Use primary documents, such as letters and newspaper articles to find out what kinds of problems arose related to issues of diversity and/or cultural assimilation.**

**Determine “work products” and criteria for assessment.**

* **Discuss who the audience might be for the information.**
* **Determine (by teams, or as a class, or as individuals) how their research will be shared with the target audience. This can be done collaboratively, or you may have predetermined options.**
* **Provide clear criteria (rubric) for the final product. Correlate the criteria to history, ELA, and CST standards outlined in the unit plan.**

**Conduct interviews of individuals who will have insights regarding the immigrant experience in the Church.**

* **Brainstorm a list of individuals who will have unique perspectives.**
* **Decide on a common list of questions to be asked.**
* **Working with a partner, conduct an interview of assigned individual(s).**
* **Use the resources at** [**https://storycorps.org/discover/education/**](https://storycorps.org/discover/education/) **to learn interview skills.**

**Review and report on the Church’s official documents (Encyclicals, Pastoral Letters, USCCB materials) that provide guidance and recommendations regarding immigration.**

**Direct students to consider the ways that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching apply to the topic of immigration.**

* **Have students apply the principles independently** [**http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm**](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm)
* **Examine the debates of church leaders and scholars**
* **This website has excellent resources:**

[**http://cmsny.org/cms-research/catholicintegration/**](http://cmsny.org/cms-research/catholicintegration/)

[**http://cmsny.org/wp-content/uploads/Kerwin-Catholic-Church-and-Immigration-Gans.pdf**](http://cmsny.org/wp-content/uploads/Kerwin-Catholic-Church-and-Immigration-Gans.pdf)

[**http://cmsny.org/wp-content/uploads/JFI-Kerwin-11.17.15.pdf**](http://cmsny.org/wp-content/uploads/JFI-Kerwin-11.17.15.pdf)

**Attend a Mass that is clearly and deliberately reflective of a particular culture. (Congregation of the Great Spirit, All Saints, St. Anthony, St. Michael)**

* **List observations of similarities and differences.**
* **Reflect on and share feelings experienced.**
* **Research and report on specific cultural elements.**

**Read excerpts of novels, poems, short stories written by immigrants that reference their experiences of the Church and/or the tension between diversity and assimilation, such as: My Antonia, by Willa Cather, The House on Mango Street, by Sandra Cisneros, “Americans at Yad Vashem” by Amanda Hawkins, “The Lower East Side of Manhattan” by Victor Hernandez Cruz, “things that shine in the night”, by Rigoberto Gonzalez, “Before Your Arrival”, Ellen Hagan**

**Research works of art by immigrants, such as murals, especially those throughout the Milwaukee area, to examine the uses of religious imagery.**

**Trace the installation of, and changes in, the iconography in selected parishes, especially those that have undergone significant cultural changes. (St. Adalbert, St. Michael?)**

**Assessment Ideas:**

**Comparative analysis of the Church’s work with two different immigrant populations. (Essay, Speech, Video)**

**Comparative analysis of the Church’s work with immigrants in two separate eras (for example, 1870’s and 2010’s)**

**Op-ed article on the challenges of immigration and its relationship to Catholic Social Teachings.**

**Create a timeline that traces the historical developments related to cultural diversity in a select region of the Archdiocese.**

**Analyze how a work of literature present the ways that Religion / Church acts as a force for cultural preservation and/or assimilation. (Essay, Speech, Video)**

**Write a first-person narrative that describes how a fictional (or historical) figure experienced the Church in Milwaukee during their first years in the United States**

**Write a poem, short story or diary entry that expresses a personal or communal struggle with cultural assimilation.**

**Design a mural that portrays EITHER the tension between cultural assimilation and diversity OR the call of the Church to respond to the needs of immigrants**

**Create a “Story Corps” library of people sharing their stories of immigration and the support they received from their parishes and the Catholic Church.**

**<https://storycorps.org/discover/education/>**

**Reflection:**

**Name some possible unintended consequences of a group’s attempts to preserve its cultural identity and/or to assimilate into the dominant culture.**

**Consider how the principles of Catholic Social Teachings call for Church institutions response to the particular needs of immigrants.**

**Resources:**

[**"The Catholicisms of Wisconsin" Rev. Steven Avella *In the Richness of the Earth***](https://www.archmil.org/ArchdioceseofMilwaukee/history/Avella-049-050-Catholicisms-of-WI.pdf) **[pp. 49-50.](https://www.archmil.org/ArchdioceseofMilwaukee/history/Avella-049-050-Catholicisms-of-WI.pdf)**

**[Historical Overview of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee including articles and archival documents.](https://www.archmil.org/AboutUs/175th-Anniversary.htm)**

[**https://storycorps.org/discover/education/**](https://storycorps.org/discover/education/)

[**http://www.mic.usi.ch/case-studies-intercultural-communication**](http://www.mic.usi.ch/case-studies-intercultural-communication)

[**https://www.languageandculture.com/cultural-iceberg**](https://www.languageandculture.com/cultural-iceberg)

[**http://cmsny.org/cms-research/catholicintegration/**](http://cmsny.org/cms-research/catholicintegration/)

[**www.themakingofmilwaukee.com**](http://www.hemakingofmilwaukee.com)

[**www.themakingofmilwaukee.com/people/stories.cfm**](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com/people/stories.cfm)

Neighborhood map and Archdiocesan maps **(**[**www.themakingofmilwaukee.com/classroom/map\_game.cfm**](http://www.themakingofmilwaukee.com/classroom/map_game.cfm)**).**

[**Catholic Social Teachings**](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm)

[**Pope Francis - Share the Journey**](https://www.sharejourney.org/)

**[Archdiocese of Milwaukee 175th Video Submission Application](https://schools.archmil.org/CentersofExcellence/DOCsPDFs/175th/ArchdioceseofMilwaukee175thVideoSubmissionApplication.pdf)**

**[Video Guidelines and Submission Process](https://schools.archmil.org/CentersofExcellence/DOCsPDFs/175th/VideoGuidelinesandSubmissionProcessFinal5.18.pdf)**

**[Video Rubric](https://schools.archmil.org/CentersofExcellence/DOCsPDFs/VideoRubric.pdf)**