



# Missionary Cooperative Program

## What is the Missionary Cooperative Program (MCP)?

Local diocesan participation in the missionary life of the church through:

- Formation experience for parishioners in missionary discipleship
- Financial support for national and international missionary groups in ongoing training, education facilities, operating expenses, and medical and food supplies.

## How does it work?

- Step 1: Starting in September of each year, missionary organizations apply online to be included in the MCP for the following year. The deadline is the first week of January. This year the deadline was **January 5, 2018**.
- Step 2: Parishes wishing to host missionaries also apply online with the preferences for missionary groups and available dates. The deadline this year is **March 16, 2018**. All subsequent years will have the same deadline as the missionaries--the first week of January.

## **How does it work? (Continued)**

- Step 3: Host parishes are matched with missionary groups based on their preferences and availability.
- Step 4: Missionary arrives and makes an appeal at all weekend masses, normally during the homily.
- Step 5: A second collection is taken up and remitted back to the diocese, who sends it directly to the missionary organization.

## **What are the responsibilities of the missionary?**

- Missionary is responsible for all travel expenses, including transportation and lodging.
- After the missionary is assigned, he or she is to contact the parish to confirm arrival time and mass schedule.

## **What are the responsibilities of the host parish?**

- Host parish is to assign a parish representative to greet the missionary upon arrival.
- Suggestions for places to stay and eat should be provided in advance to the missionary. Due to these expenses, consideration should be given to inviting parishioners to host the missionary.
- A room or designated place should be provided for the missionary to stay in between masses with water and snacks.

## **What are the responsibilities of the host parish? (Continued)**

- Parishioners should be spiritually and financially prepared at least one week prior to the missionary appeal.
- Host parish is to take up a second collection after each mass and send to the diocese. No money is to be given directly to the missionary or sent by the parish to the missionary organization.

## **Religious Orders and Lay Missionaries**

Many parishes, in their preferences, ask for a priest. The demand for priest missionaries is always high. We understand that priests often use the MCP as an opportunity to take a break from preaching or from presiding during that weekend. This is a national trend in other dioceses. So much good work is happening in organizations that need help and do not have priests. We are asking all host parishes wishing to participate to be open to hosting these other groups.

## **Bethlehem Groups, Cross Catholic International, and Frequency**

Currently, all groups from Bethlehem wishing to sell items are not authorized to come into the diocese. Other groups like Cross Catholic International that offer to cover masses are required to be authorized through the MCP. Also, [all MCP groups are only allowed once every 3 years.](#)