These materials have been prepared to support candidates in the Diocese of California in the task of becoming more sensitive to cultural diversity and better equipped to do ministry in a Church and society becoming more diverse every year. The requirements for Multicultural Sensitivity are described on pp. 6, 8-9 of *Guidelines for Those Seeking Holy Orders*. (see also Form D2).

August 2011  (check www.Diocal.org for latest version of this document)
“Culture is the way things are done around here.” This is a nice neat definition of culture which hints at the problems inherent in intercultural situations. Culture is all learned behavior, passed down as by tradition. It includes obvious things such as religion, how society is organized, political and economic institutions, rules for proper social behavior, and language; and less obvious things such as ingrained and unexamined attitudes about the world and life, what constitutes “common sense,” how far we stand from one another when we talk, and how often and for how long we make direct eye contact.

Culture is like an iceberg, 92% below the surface. Our cultural assumptions and perceptions are so basic and unconscious that we trip over them without realizing they are there. For example, I almost was hit by cars several times during my first few days in Costa Rica a couple of years ago, because in Costa Rica, cars have the right of way, not pedestrians. I've always been a cautious pedestrian, never assuming that a car would yield to me—that's the only thing that saved me because I had a terrible time becoming aware of my tendency to step off curbs with the expectation that the cars would at least notice me, if not yield to me. Not true!

How many of you remember your mothers teaching you that you should stand 18 inches away from another person when involved in a non-intimate social conversation? And yet, researchers can demonstrate that this is so for Americans—somehow we have learned it, and when our boundaries are not observed by others, we are uncomfortable. The classic intercultural relationship visual joke has a Mexican man chasing an English man around the room as each one tries to accommodate their unconscious comfort zones, with the Mexican taking a step forward and the Englishman taking a step back! These differences in culture are real and even when we aren’t really conscious of them, we feel them.

Attitudes about time can be another area of intercultural conflict. There are notorious differences in how long you can make someone wait without causing undue irritation, as the following chart illustrates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CULTURE</th>
<th>EXCUSED</th>
<th>TENSION</th>
<th>HOSTILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yap Island</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Intercultural contacts are further complicated by gender differences in how men and women relate to one another, how you show respect and to whom respect is due, how leaders function, when to be silent and when to speak..... In such intercultural situations there are land mines of misunderstanding underlying our efforts to reach across cultural boundaries.

Intercultural situations always involve hidden expectations which don’t always match. Two basic failures in intercultural communication arise from misunderstandings of needs: ascribing our needs to others or not recognizing others’ needs because they are not seen as needs in our culture.

For example: What about a team from the Diocese of California participating in a Vacation Bible School on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona? A child being reprimanded by the authority figure keeps looking down despite teacher’s demand: “Look at me when I’m talking to you.” Finally the child turns his back on the teacher. How are these behaviors interpreted in ”mainstream” American culture? For the Navajos they are traditional submissive behaviors.

Another example: You are at coffee hour after church. The room is full of maybe 15 or 20 adults—all of whom you know pretty well. You need to leave, how do you leave? I would tend to say good-bye to the people I was talking with, perhaps a special friend or two, maybe the vicar, and probably wave from the door “Bye-bye, everybody.” However, if I did this in a Latino or Indian congregation, people would feel slighted. I would be expected to go around and personally say good-bye with a handshake (a loose handshake if Navajo) to everyone in the room. Only then would my social obligations be fulfilled. So if I just waved goodbye from the doorway, how would I leave people feeling (all unintentionally?) How might they interact with me next time—and how would I interpret it? Such misunderstandings can escalate and seriously hamper our attempts to reach across cultural boundaries.

The difficulties of cross-cultural communication are further explored in the next article by The Rev. Jerry Drino.
CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Excerpted from Cultural Sensitivity and the Ordination Process 1992 Jerry Drino)

(Note: an aging resource, but still relevant)

One of the greatest stumbling blocks to understanding other peoples within or without a particular culture is the tendency to judge other’s behavior by our own standards.

(James Downs, Cultures in Crisis)

CONTEXT OF PRESENT NEED: THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

In the past most human beings were born, lived, and died within a limited geographical area, never encountering people of other races and/or cultural backgrounds. In the 1970's Marshall McLuhan described our world as becoming a “global village” because of the accelerated development of the communications industry. Whereas traditionally only a handful of metropolitan areas in our country had a diverse cultural population, now hundreds of communities have become global villages with the phenomenon of worldwide migration. In many of these cities and towns, it is quite common to encounter 10 to 20 different cultural or ethnic groups within a few blocks of where one lives. The 1990 Census reveals that the populations of 22 metropolitan areas are now over 50 percent “minority” - a term that begins to lose its meaning under such circumstances. A whole profession of cross-cultural consultancy in industry has arisen in the last ten years, whose primary concern is the development of effective cross-cultural communication among employees. If the worlds of industry and education are concerned with cultural sensitivity, then we as the church need to assess our own household.

THE CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH

A bishop comes to visit one of the Native American communities of his diocese. A group gathers to meet him. He soon becomes engaged in conversation with one or two people. Sitting silently in the room is a scholar who has much to offer in understanding his people’s religious concerns. The bishop has not met this man and knows nothing of his background. He seems not to notice anyone but those who are talking with him. After an hour the scholar leaves, feeling that the bishop is too busy. The likelihood of the two men meeting again is not high.

What Happened Here?

First, there was a missed window of opportunity for both people. The bishop, operating out of a Western, extroverted mode, engaged in a conversation that made him feel at home. The scholar
on the other hand, was present in a more traditional native mode which begins in silence as the two or more people settle into the relationship. From this “settled place,” conversation can begin.

Second, there was a misreading or misinterpretation which multiplied. When we relate to people of our own culture there is the high possibility that we will pick up certain non-verbal cues and “read between lines.” If the bishop had been a part of the native culture, he probably would have become aware of the others sitting in the room silently for over an hour. He would have known that they were not there out of idle curiosity. He might have sought some way to make contact with them.

When we are communicating with a person from another culture we must recognize that there will be cultural differences and that misinterpretation is almost inevitable.

One Asian-American priest spoke of waiting five years before the Caucasian rector of the parish asked him to consider studying in seminary. Both knew that he had a vocation, but the rector assumed by the layman’s silence that he was not interested in pursuing his calling. The man, on the other hand, assumed that the priest was not concerned about his ministry. He was operating out of a cultural background which holds that the individual must be invited by someone of authority into the process. In his culture an individual would never be openly assertive. One does not want to risk being seen as arrogant or risk losing face if rejected. The rector on the other hand was operating out of his cultural background. He interpreted the silence as meaning that the man was shy and lacked initiative, thus raising questions about his suitability for priesthood, even though the man was a leader in the parish.

Unconscious Behavior

Much of what makes up communication happens at an unconscious level. In the above examples the roots of misunderstanding were probably barely conscious. Neither side asked what the silence was all about. Each was operating on a different set of assumptions. Neither side may have known that there was a cultural conflict going on. There is neither a right nor a wrong set of values in communication. But if we are not aware of differences we will assume that we and the other person are coming from the same place.

WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?

Communication is an immense topic with hundreds of variables to consider. For the sake of our study, let us at least say that communication is making known to another person something about our own life. At the core of being a person is the desire and ability to communicate. We use symbols to communicate: words, inflections in our voice, facial expressions, gestures, punctuated silences. At a most basic level we see the nature of sacramental theology being revealed in our communications. The symbols we use consciously or unconsciously are the outward and visible
signs of something hidden within our being. If we are trying to communicate something that is vital, then we will take great pains to be sure of the precision of our words. On the other hand, when we become threatened by a situation we become guarded and will withhold what really is in our hearts.

To illustrate the nature of intercultural attributions let us use an example from an interview with an Asian seminarian and a rector who was the field education supervisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Attribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rector:</strong></td>
<td>I ask him to participate in the plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long will you take to finish this report?</td>
<td><strong>Asian:</strong> His behavior makes no sense. He is in charge. Why doesn't he tell me? He has been supervising seminarians for a long time. He should know how long it will take.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Rector:</strong> You are in the best position to know how much time you will need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Asian:</strong> This is confusing. I had better give him an answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Rector:</strong> I offer a contract.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two weeks.</td>
<td><strong>Asian:</strong> These are my orders. Three weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take three weeks.</td>
<td><strong>Rector:</strong> He lacks the ability to estimate time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it agreed?</td>
<td><strong>Asian:</strong> These are my orders. Three weeks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Already the rector is misreading the seminarian's behavior which is intended to show respect to an elder and not a lack of initiative. In fact the report needed over a month to complete, because
it required several meetings with the Asian members of the parish. So the Asian seminarian worked at trying to get people together, gave up his days off and tried to make the deadline. He still needed two more weeks by the time the deadline arrived.

**Rector:** Where is the report?  
**Rector:** I am making sure he fulfills his contract, a contract that he fully participated in creating.

**Asian:** I will be ready in a week.  
**Asian:** He is asking for the report.

**Rector:** But we had agreed that it would be ready today.  
**Rector:** I must teach him to fulfill a contract. He will never make it in the church if he does not meet deadlines.

**Asian:** He never once asked me why I couldn’t get the report in on time. I would have told him about the problems of getting the people together and the fact that more time was needed for reflection.

**CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS**

As stated earlier, when relating with people of our own culture there is a higher possibility that we will be able to pick up certain non-verbal cues and “read between the lines.” However, at times even our closest friends and members of our family can remain an enigma to us. If this is true with people of our own background, the complexities multiply when we enter into cross-cultural communications.
The Church is being called to embrace more fully the ethnic diversity and the potential wealth of ministries that come from peoples who have been marginalized in leadership or who have not participated at all in our communities. In order to “meet on new ground,” the Church must name and take ownership of the pull toward being culturally exclusive. It must struggle with racism, classism, and the subtle ways in which barriers have evolved and been maintained.

The pull toward exclusion has deep roots in our souls and tradition. J. Philip Newell, a leading theologian of Celtic spirituality, has said that when the Mediterranean mission under Augustine of Canterbury came to the British Isles, they built fortress-like churches and monasteries to protect the Christian faith from the heathen world. This understanding of Church and worship was in sharp contrast to the older Celtic mission, which preferred to gather and worship outside in God’s creation where everyone and everything was sacred, including those who were not baptized. Reexamining ancient attitudes and norms of the Church is not easy but necessary. The new ground where we are called to meet is outside of the fortress mentality that has defined our understanding of the Church. We seek a new perspective of what it means to be rooted in the context of mission in our society.

As [Jesus] came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying,
“If you had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace...
But now they are hidden from your eyes...because you did not recognize
the time of your visitation from God.” (Luke 19:41-44)

The vast cultural diversity that surrounds us is a prophetic disclosure causing us to ask, do we know the time of our visitation, not in the inherited fortress orientation from the past, but in the wide-open embrace of the world as God is giving us the full diversity of the human family?

Diversity has been in our communities since the inception of our nation. With the exception of the indigenous peoples, we are a nation of immigrants—each wave bringing greater diversity,
gifts, and perspective—building an ever-vibrant society. Many of our ancestors were the outsiders in their generations. If they were interested in the Episcopal Church, they often had hurdles of language, culture or class to overcome. Today we are experiencing the largest patterns of migration and displacement that the human family has ever known. Some are relocating to find a better life, away from the suffering of war, famine, or oppression. This relocation provides the opportunity for evangelism, but evangelism is dependent upon leaders, apostles who see the ripe fields for mission. Such leaders need to build the necessary bridges to connect the Episcopal Church to the diversity of our society.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE SKILLS

In culturally competent listening, participants first should not assume that they know the full content of what a person is saying from another ethnic or cultural group. Cross-cultural listening is highly influenced by the subtle nuances that are distinct to each culture. Underlying assumptions and experiences go beyond the simple use of words. Communications begin with the tone and inflection of voice, and energy in the delivery, which may not be comprehended outside of the culture. The dynamics of communication often includes deference to other people in the conversation because of the power differential between them. There are degrees to which self-disclosure is considered culturally appropriate. For example, the age and status of the persons involved in the conversation will determine the degree of transparency that can be expected. Discerning spiritual experiences may be undervalued or not even recognized unless the listener has acquired sufficient knowledge of the other persons’ culture to appreciate what is being offered.

Second, the dynamics of communication change in a cross-cultural encounter. Additional filters are in place based on the history between the cultures of the people involved, especially regarding how power was or is experienced between groups. For example, those who come from historically marginalized or oppressed groups may have an instinctive protective reflex. Conversely, those who come from the historic oppressor’s group may deny any responsibility for the attitudes and decisions of people of their group in the past and resist any potential problems inherent in a cross-cultural encounter.

Third, successful cross-cultural communication is based on respect, humility, and genuine interest in each of the participants.

Meeting on New Ground...mandates that each diocese provide opportunities for persons in the ordination process to be immersed in cultures other than their own in order to ensure that all persons in the ordination process are cross-culturally competent.
SKILLS IN CULTURAL COMPETENCE INVENTORY

From Resource for a National Dialogue on Anti-Racism, The Episcopal Church, 1996

10 (highest) to 1 (needs improvement)

Personal Attributes

_____ Personal qualities that reflect genuine, accurate empathy, non-possessive warmth and a capacity to respond with flexibility to a range of possible situations.

_____ Acceptance of ethnic/cultural/racial differences between people.

_____ Willingness to work with people of different cultural/ethnic/racial groups.

_____ Ability to recognize and articulate one's own cultural biases and the other's ethnicity – how they can either be accommodated or be the source for potential conflict.

_____ Personal commitment to change racist attitudes and stop discrimination.

_____ Resolution of feeling about the history of the Church's exclusion of any group or person from full participation and leadership in the Church.

Knowledge

_____ of the culture (history, traditions, values, family systems, artistic expressions) of diverse racial and/or ethnic groups.

_____ of the impact of class and ethnicity on behavior, attitudes, and values.

_____ of the language, speech patterns and communication style of ethnically distinct communities.

_____ of power relationships within the community and in relationship to the dominant culture.
Skills

_____ techniques for learning the culture of other peoples.

_____ ability to communicate accurate information on behalf of ethnic minority persons and their community.

_____ ability to openly discuss racial and ethnic differences and issues and to respond to culturally-biased cues.

_____ ability to recognize and combat individual/personal and institutional racism, racial stereotypes and cultural myths.
GUIDELINES FOR BILINGUAL LITURGY

General Notes:

1). When working in a bilingual situation, keep it short and straight forward. Remember that everything takes twice as long.

2). If you are doing prayers or readings in only one language at a bilingual service, put the translation in the service bulletin.

Unscripted Homilies, Announcements, “Thank You” Speeches, etc. with a Translator:

Speak in short sentences or meaningful phrases of no more than a dozen words. The flow and the pace will improve greatly if you can agree before hand with the translator on cues to signal one another that it is time to move on. For example, when you finish your phrase, you turn and look the translator in the eye. When the translator finishes translating that phrase, the translator turns and looks you in the eye.

Sermons with a Translator:

It works best if you have a written version of your sermon for the translator to look at, preferably ahead of time, but even if it is only available at the time, it will help the translator keep on track. Break up your sermon into short paragraphs of only a couple of sentences. Keep it simple and short. Repeat your main points and from time to time reorient your audience, keeping in mind that bilingual people will have your sermon reinforced by the translation, but monolingual people will tend to have their minds wander during the part they don’t understand.

Bilingual Sermons:

When you preach a bilingual sermon, or work with a partner who is preaching in another language, you have several options. If the sermon is very short, especially if you have a high percentage of bilingual people present, you can do the sermon in one language and then do it in the other. However, most of the time, it is still best to alternate languages between short paragraphs. If you are doing a sermon with someone else, make the same kind of pre-arrangements regarding how to signal the completion of a paragraph as you would when working with a translator.
MULTICULTURAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Butler, Shakti. *The Way Home.* (VIDEO) World Trust, Oakland, CA.  [www.world-trust.org.](http://www.world-trust.org)  (Conversations about the experience of oppression through the lens of race. Over the course of 8 months, 64 women share in eight ethnic councils around issues of identity, oppression and resistance.)

Commins, Gary. 2007 *Becoming Bridges: The Spirit and Practice of Diversity.* Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications.  (An Episcopal priest with many years experience in multicultural ministry invites us to become more awake to others, to step into and beyond compassion, to encounter one another as equals, and to experience the divine in our human diversity).

Delany, Sarah and A. Elizabeth with Amy Hill Hearth.  1993 *Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters’ First 100 Years.* New York: Kodansha America, Inc.  (Two African American women, daughters of an Episcopal Bishop, share their family history and their observations on the changes they have witnessed over the past 100 years).

Foster, Charles R.  1997 *Embracing Diversity: Leadership in Multicultural Congregations.* New York: Alban Institute.  (Analysis and exercises designed to sensitize congregations to the personal, cultural, and political dynamics in their interactions as they engage diversity and work toward inclusive outreach).

Haizlip, Shirlee Taylor.  1994 *The Sweeter the Juice: A Family Memoir in Black and White.* New York: Simon and Schuster.  (The true story of Shirlee Haizlip's tracking down of her family history and the complicated racial diversity of her heritage. It is a story of the tragic divisions caused by race and ultimately of reconciliation within a family)

Law, Eric. H.F.  1993 *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community.* St. Louis: Chalice Press.  (One of several excellent books by Episcopal priest Eric Law on how to achieve true multiculturalism)

Lewis, Harold T.  1996 *Yet with a Steady Beat: The African American Struggle for Recognition in the Episcopal Church.* Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International.  (A history of African-American Episcopalians from the Colonial period to the present that challenges every Episcopalian to respond to the ultimate missionary opportunity, putting the church's “Catholic principles of love and universal brotherhood into action.”)


 Reflexion Questions to Start You Thinking About Your Intercultural Experiences

1. How can we BE to be inclusive? (our attitudes/the preconditions for inclusivity)
   a. We must be aware of our own cultural conditioning and be willing to suspend it as we can. We have to recognize that our “taken for granted worlds” are not alike, and common sense is anything but common.
   b. We must be able to go beyond our expectations that people from other cultures should assimilate to the dominant American culture.
   c. We must be willing to become as a little child, to become a learner, willing to feel foolish, risking new things, or familiar things done in new ways. We must be willing to make mistakes and endure being uncomfortable.
   d. We must recognize ahead of time that there is bound to be misunderstanding—and be prepared to deal with it.
   e. If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again. (Persistence) We must realize that it takes effort to include people, creativity to provide openings for welcoming other people, and the patience to allow other people to get to know us in their own way.
   f. We must be prepared to deal with the issue of power; which includes recognizing our own power and finding ways to give it up or share it; true hospitality is making room for the other.

2. What can we DO to be inclusive? (intercultural icebreakers—keeping in mind individual and cultural diversity for these generalizations)
   a. It’s scary when you can’t be anonymous; there is security in numbers; so, try to deal with larger groups of people who can support one another rather than individuals. (For example, sending one Latino teenager to the diocesan youth camp will be less successful than sending five.)
   b. Language barriers are difficult to overcome, but bilingual, bicultural people can help bridge this barrier and efforts at language are usually appreciated, especially in our often strongly “English only” society.
c. Smiling helps, but can be misunderstood. (Smiling for Asians often means embarrassment). When speaking to people whose English is not fluent, “pause, smile, yes” usually means “NO.” You will also find yourself doing the same thing when you haven’t quite understood and are too embarrassed to admit it.

d. Relating to children is often easier than with adults and children can be a common subject of interest to begin a conversation. Also, if you are not a fluent speaker of their other language, children can often be easier to understand. (But be sensitive to status issues and different rules about interacting with children, especially regarding touching or staring).

e. Nothing works so well at breaking down barriers as actual human contact, getting to know individuals. Sharing a meal and talking about how food is prepared and eaten in the various cultures is almost always successful. People usually love to eat and talk about food, although getting people to intermingle at tables can be tricky (see #1 above re: security in numbers).

3. When you visit a congregation of another ethnicity, notice:

- physical environment, art, music
- differences in ritual and private devotions
- use of space (where people sit)
- the role of children in the service, and the disciplining of children
- who does what, who participates
- leadership style
- how do the people socialize, what efforts do they make to be welcoming and hospitable to visitors
- and very important, be aware of your own reaction to all that you experience
THE MULTICULTURAL DIOCESE OF CALIFORNIA

(Note: information valid for June 2011)

St. Cyprian’s Church (African American)
2097 Turk St San Francisco
415-567-1855
The Rev. Will Scott
Sunday Eucharist 10:00 am

St. Augustine’s Church (African American)
Telegraph at 29th St. Oakland
510-832-6462 www.staugepiscopal.org
The Rev. Monrelle Williams
Sunday Eucharist 8 & 10:30 am

Christ Church Sei Ko Kai (Japanese)
2140 Pierce St. San Francisco
415-921-6395
The Rev. Stina Pope
Sunday Eucharist 10 am English

True Sunshine Church (Chinese)
1430 Mason St. San Francisco
415-956-2160 www.truesunshine.org
The Rev. Franco Kwan
Sunday Eucharist 9 am English
Sunday Bilingual Bible Study 10:15 am
Sunday Eucharist 11 am Cantonese
Weekdays after school program

Incarnation Church (Chinese)
1750 29th Ave San Francisco
415-564-2324 www.incarnationsf.org
The Rev. David Lui
Sunday Eucharist 10:00 am Cantonese/English
Sunday 11:30 am Cantonese
Weekdays after school program

Our Savior’s Church (Chinese)
1011 Harrison St. Oakland 510-834-6447
The Rev. Merry Chan Ong
Sunday Eucharist 9:30 am Cantonese/Mandarin
11:00 am English
Weekdays after school program

St. Patrick’s Mission (Korean)
at Our Savior’s Church, 1011 Harrison St.
Oakland 510-893-2646
The Rev. Nak-Hyon J. Joo
Sunday Eucharist 1 pm

Holy Child & St. Martin’s (Filipino & Latino)
777 Southgate Daly City 650-991-1560
The Rev. Leonard Oakes
Sunday Eucharist 10:30 am English/Tagalog/Spanish
La Iglesia del Buen Samaritano (Latino)
At St. John the Evangelist,
1661 15th St. San Francisco
510-685-3336
The Rev. Gloria Del Castillo
Sunday Eucharist 12:30 pm Spanish
Wednesday 6 pm Bilingual Eucharist

St. James’ Church (Latino & Multicultural)
1540 12th Ave. Oakland 510-533-2136
The Rev. John Rawlinson
Sunday Eucharist 9:30 am Spanish
Sunday Eucharist 11:00 am English

Holy Trinity Church/Santísima Trinidad (Latino)
555 37th St. Richmond 510-232-7896
The Rev. Javier Torres (Associate)
Sunday Eucharist 12 noon Spanish

El Buen Pastor/Good Shepherd (Latino)
At St. Peter’s Church
178 Clinton St. Redwood City
650-245-7759 or 408-559-7430
www.elbuenpastor.madreanna.org
The Rev. Anna Lange-Soto
Sunday Eucharist 12:30 pm Spanish