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SOC147: Our America

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St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish

The ministry at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception was first built in 1861. It came to be placed in this community because of the immigrants from Italy and Ireland who came here and built this Church. The history of the ministry reveals the goals of the ministry today because they are a diverse community who are there to welcome anyone into their community. The mission of the ministry is to witness the Gospel by praising God and sharing faith with one another. The denomination of this ministry is Catholic. Some aspects of their beliefs that distinguish them from other faith traditions are that they pray to Saints and Mary where most Christians do not. Another aspect that distinguishes them is the belief in the bread and wine becoming the Body and Blood of Christ during the act of transubstantiation. The role of the ministry in this community consists of many different activities put together to help share the Gospel and bring the community together. It consists of food pantries, Mass on Sundays, Adoration, and different nights dedicated to certain prayers. People here are impacted by this parish by offering the Sacraments and different ministries allowing them to grow in their faith together. The beliefs of this ministry impacts the needs of the community because those coming here are looking for a Catholic church and all of them offer the sacraments and Mass. When it comes to the faith tradition of Catholics these are their beliefs on the following topics. For economic disparity, the Catholic church calls everyone together to help promote the common good and dignity of every

person. On race and ethnicity, the church believes everyone is created in the image and likeness of God. This means no matter their race or ethnicity they should be treated with dignity and respect. When it comes to racial tensions the church realizes the harm it does to society. This is why they emphasize a need for reconciliation and communication between these groups.

Exploitation of women is not at all accepted in the Catholic Church. They believe that every person has dignity and worth and should be shown that by being treated with respect. The perspective of what the Pope and the Bible says is what is used to answer these questions. The faith traditions of the visitor I talked to were the Catholic beliefs and teachings. The visitor then explained how her life led her to following these traditions and beliefs. The basics of her beliefs are stated in the Nicene Creed. This is a doctrinal statement that summarizes and expresses all of the main beliefs of the Catholic Church. She told me that this was the simplest way to understand and compare this faith to others. These beliefs inform the student about economic disparity, race, ethnicity, and racial tension because along with the creed she follows and reads the Bible and listens to what the Pope has to say. In today's world, the Pope's statements are very important because they clear up major society issues like those ones. By using their faith tradition, the visitor viewed exploitation of women and victimization of sexual minorities basically as the same as the church follows. She described it as being wrong and wanting everyone to be treated with the same respect and opportunities. Their responsibility to their community in the simplest ways is just to be a part of the community. This includes attending Mass on Sundays, coming to events, donating, and actively participating in the Sacraments when they can. I learned at this church that everyone who comes here even if they are just visiting are welcomed with open arms into their community. Everyone has a place in the church no matter their race or ethnicity because they share a love for God and that is placed above all else. I learned that the role of

religion in people's lives is very big when it comes to their daily lives. A Lot of the things they do and why they do it is because of their faith and I feel that's why it is so important and special to them. I was surprised by how much of a community there was between people who did not know each other besides the fact that they go to the same church. Overall, I had a good experience visiting this church and exploring a different way people live their lives.