

# MEMO

## CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

Office for Lay Ministry 715 Nazareth Street, Raleigh, NC 27606-2187 Tel. 919/821-9715 Fax 919/821-9705 [callery@raldioc.org](mailto:callery@raldioc.org)

To: All Priests, Pastoral Administrators, Deacons, Lay Volunteer Prison Ministers  
From: Bea Callery  
Re: Non-English Speaking Services  
Date: December 7, 2006

At present non-English speakers entering the North Carolina correctional system are assigned to units which offer classes in English as a second language. Spanish speaking inmates may be assigned to the following facilities in the Diocese of Raleigh:

Dan River Prison Work Farm	Eastern Correctional Institution
Greene Correctional Institution	Harnett Correctional Institution
Lumberton Correctional Institution	North Carolina Correctional Center for Women
Pender Correctional Institution	Raleigh Correctional Center for Women
Scotland Correctional Institution	

In theory, after taking these courses the inmates are able to function in English and do not need spiritual care in Spanish.

Over the past several months the Division of Prisons of the North Carolina Department of Correction has re-evaluated its policy of providing religious services only in English. The new guidelines for permission to offer non-English religious services and programs include:

- ◆ an assessment of need for non-English services when the services are requested in writing by an inmate
- ◆ an assessment of need following a request by a non-English ministry or outside agency wanting to conduct or sponsor a non-English religious service or program
- ◆ submission to the facility head of the recommendation of the chaplain or staff member who conducted the assessment

The facility head (or a designee) then considers the recommendation and other factors such as facility resources and security issues in order to determine the feasibility of providing non-English religious services.

While there may remain instances when a facility head will refuse permission for non-English service, something as simple as providing the facility with a bilingual copy of a worship aid or faith-sharing resource (e.g., the Paulist “Let’s Talk!/¡Hablemos!”) will ease concerns and lead to permission for ministry in Spanish.

As the diocesan representative to the North Carolina Advisory Committee on Religious Ministry in Prisons, I would be happy to provide you with any assistance you may need in your prison ministry. I would suggest that if at all possible, you maintain a file of written requests and queries to the staff of a correctional facility—and their responses. Please feel free to e-mail ([bea.callery@raldioc.org](mailto:bea.callery@raldioc.org)) or phone (919-821-9715) me should you have questions or difficulties.