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Recipients of grants approved by the U.S. bishops' Subcommittee on Catholic Home Missions range from migrant ministry in the Diocese of Stockton, California, to pastoral support to children and families on remote islands in the Diocese of Samoa-Pago Pago, American Samoa.

In a Dec. 12 announcement, the subcommittee said it had approved $9.5 million in grants to assist 79 U.S. mission dioceses and eparchies.

Subcommittee grants aid dioceses and eparchies that would otherwise struggle due to difficult geography, impoverished populations and limited resources. Catholic Home Missions funding supports various pastoral programs, including religious education and youth ministry, priestly and religious formation, prison ministries, and lay ministry training.

"Many dioceses and eparchies throughout the United States cannot provide basic pastoral services without outside assistance," said Archbishop Paul Etienne of Anchorage, Alaska, who was elected chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on National Collections during the bishops' fall general assembly in Baltimore Nov. 12-14.

"Through the generosity of Catholics to the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, we can help strengthen the church here at home," he said in a statement.

The subcommittee comes under the Committee on National Collections and oversees the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, an annual collection on the fourth Sunday of April. Donations to the collection fund the grants.

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At its Oct. 9-10 meeting in Spokane, Washington, the subcommittee approved projects for funding this year, including:

- Migrant ministry in the Stockton Diocese, to provide pastoral care and evangelization to thousands of farmworkers and their families.
- Manua Mission in the Samoa-Pago Pago Diocese, to provide missionary services and pastoral support to children and families who are isolated from the main island of Tutuila and live in the outlying islands of Manua.
- Seminarian education and formation in the Diocese of Amarillo, Texas, to develop vocations, provide personal assistance with discernment, and support current seminarians as they prepare for ordained ministry.
- Mission and ministry fund in the Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky, to help rural and mountain parishes develop their missionary presence and action in Appalachian Kentucky.
- Young adult ministry/community college outreach in the Diocese of Dodge City, Kansas, to extend outreach ministries to young people ages 18 to 39 through events, mission trips, and other programs for prayer and fellowship.