

Exiles Always Find Church Door Open

By LOUISE LEYDEN
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The Rev. Daniel Rodriguez, Spanish pastor at Flagler Street Baptist Church, sat in his office going over some records of recent arrivals from Castro's Cuba.

Suddenly there was a knock at the door and a young Cuban woman entered and sat down at the desk across from him.

"What can I do for you?" the minister asked.

"My babies need food and clothing," she replied. "And beds to sleep in," she quickly added. "Also their grandmother and I need help too. We haven't a thing to our names."

The woman explained how she had sent the children and their grandmother out of Cuba and how she had stayed on for a while hoping to get her husband out of prison. But when the Castro government began demanding the death penalty for him, she herself had to flee to this country.

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THE YOUNG minister, himself a Cuban refugee, set to work to get the food, clothing and the baby beds for

"My babies need food and clothing . . . and beds to sleep in," the young mother said. She told of her struggle to keep her family together in a strange land while her husband awaits the death sentence in a Castro prison camp.

She is only one in thousands who come to our churches for help. Here — in the third of a series of articles on Miami as a mission field — is how the church fulfills this vital function.

the mother, who is trying to adjust to her new life despite her worries about her husband.

This is only one of the many cases which come almost each day to the attention of the pastor.

Everyone has problems, some more than others, but Cuban refugees are weighted down with them.

"One of the questions I'm most frequently asked," Rev. Rodriguez said, "is 'where can I get a job?' The Cubans don't want to take hand-outs, they want to pay their way. So we try to get jobs for them.

"Many of the people attending the church had pro-

perous businesses back in Cuba. But they lost everything when Castro took over. And they were not allowed to bring out but one suitcase. Consequently they need household goods and a place to live as well as food and clothing."

"In the past we have helped families who were being resettled. They don't need our help now, but others have come in their place."

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WHILE PHYSICAL needs appear to be the most urgent especially with new arrivals, the refugees are desperately in need of spiritual help.

purpose of the church," Rev. Rodriguez, reminded, "to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Spanish children attend Sunday school classes at Flagler Street Church right along with the English-speaking children, as they like to be with the children and at the same time learn to speak English.

With the adults it is more difficult, so they attend classes in Spanish.

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ALTHOUGH THE Spanish church was just started Sept. 1, the two classes — one for men and one for women — are well attended each Sunday.

The Spanish department is the newest branch of Mission Service at the church. For a long while, Flagler Street Church has been conducting special services in Chinese for the many Chinese residents of the area.

On World-Wide Communion Sunday Oct. 1, members of the three departments took communion together with the three pastors, the Rev. James Copeland, Rev. Rodriguez and the Rev. Joseph Yim conducting the service in their respective languages.

Group Moves To New Church

A "farewell" service for the Spanish-language congregation of the Flagler Street Baptist Church, 3501 W. Flagler St., will be held at 8:15 p.m. Sunday with the American and Chinese congregations joining in.

The Spanish group, led by the Rev. Daniel Rodriguez, will be moving into their own new church, the Gethsemane Baptist Church at 53rd Ave. at NW Seventh St., next week.

8-A Fort Myers (Fla.) News-Press, Thursday, July 18, 1967

A GROUP of Cuban refugees who are now members of the Spanish Department of Flagler Baptist Church, Miami, accompanied their pastor, Rev. Daniel Rodriguez to Immokalee Friday where they visited Rev. Enrique Pina of the Baptist Spanish Mission. After a special meeting at the mission, the group held a picnic at the Immokalee Park.

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NEWS OF Flagler Street Baptist Church's work among Spanish-speaking people has been ably told in a story, "You Can Preach, Reno," in Home Missions, a magazine published by the Home Mission board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

It centers around Reno Garcia, who was drafted into preaching translated sermons to Spanish people.

When The **Rev. Daniel Rodriguez**, a Cuban exile, took over the task of preaching, Reno continued to serve as Sunday school superintendent.



D6—Palm Beach Post-Times, Saturday, February 14, 1976

The new building of the First **Spanish** Baptist Church of the First Baptist Church, 1101 S. Flagler Drive, will be dedicated at 3 p.m. Sunday.

The service will feature the Jubilee Choir and the Coro Hispano directed by Norma Sanchez. Dr. Jess Moody, pastor of the Flagler Drive church, will deliver the dedication sermon. Translation will be by the **Rev. Daniel Rodriguez**, pastor of the **Gethsemane Spanish** Baptist Church, Miami.