

- 4.2 Describe the specific geographic area/region of the state which will be served by your program. List regions, parishes, cities, neighborhoods, and etc. Indicate any grass-roots and/or rural outreach for the program.

Home Health & Supportive Services of the Thensted Center is located in Grand Coteau in St. Landry Parish, Louisiana. As the only social service outreach center that is open daily to residents of Southwest Louisiana, it primarily serves the small rural communities of Grand Coteau, Bellevue and Sunset. However, the Center has historically lent assistance to anyone who arrives at its doors in need, demonstrating no discrimination based on age, gender, race or religion. The Center is the outreach arm of St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church. It maintains an autonomous and separate not-for-profit identity.

The town of Grand Coteau is predominantly African-American with an unemployment rate hovering near 42% and a median income of \$19,943. Thirty-seven percent of the families are headed by single mothers with no husband present. Thirty-eight percent of the population's grandparents are responsible for raising their grandchildren. Only 37% of the population attains a high school education or equivalency. Thensted Center serves about an area with about a 12-15 mile radius, including Sunset, which is of comparable size and demographic characteristics and Bellevue, a much smaller, more isolated community.

Thensted Center was named to honor the pioneering civil rights and humanitarian efforts of Father Cornelius Thensted, SJ. When assigned to St. Peter Clavier Church in the 1950's, he immediately championed the right of the minority population to have free and equal access to public education, as well as other life-sustaining social services. Father Thensted subscribed passionately to the philosophy that one could not stand silently by as a passive witness to the abuse and neglect of an entire race of people. After his death, Sister Margaret Hoffman officially established the present location of the Center in his honor. Her goal was to continue his compassionate outreach to the people he had loved and served.

Father Thensted's legacy continues today as the center strives to meet the critical needs of the economically and socially disadvantaged population of the Grand Coteau area. To accomplish its task, a variety of services are offered including counseling for individuals, families and groups; after-school and summer educational programs; emergency food assistance; budgetary and literacy assistance; home visits to the homebound elderly and career guidance, peer support and recreation for youth.