



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

June 21, 2013

Dear Colleagues in Ministry:

In 2010, the Diocesan Public Policy Committee invited parishes to participate in a postcard campaign in support of comprehensive immigration reform. Sadly, the issue had become so divisive and politicized that Congress was unable to pass a bill that would bring relief to the millions of undocumented people living in our country and enact new regulations that would meet labor needs without exploitation or unfair competition to American workers.

We are hopeful that 2013 will finally be the year that a just and fair immigration reform bill will pass. It looks likely that the Senate will soon pass a bill with the support of both New York Senators, but the struggle in the House is likely to be prolonged.

The United States Bishops, including our Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Sullivan, continue to support immigration reform that provides a clear, accessible path to citizenship, improved family reunification, legal paths for low-skilled workers to come and work in the U.S., restores due process protections to our enforcement policies and addresses the root causes of migration.

Our church leaders support immigration reform because they believe that the current system has often undermined the immigrants' rights and divided families. Ineffective border controls have increased the dangers for those who cross while years of active enforcement has divided families, created a culture of fear and economic hardship and made it extremely difficult for farmers to find a reliable source of labor. Our Scripture and Catholic social teaching compel us to speak out for those who are marginalized.

The Public Policy Committee is providing the enclosed resources to parishes in the hope that some effort will be made this summer to draw parishioners' attention to this very important issue. That may mean simply using the Prayers of Petition and bulletin articles, but additional resources are enclosed for those who choose to do more.

Please pray for the success of this campaign.

Your brother in Christ,

Rev. Brian Cool
Chairperson, Public Policy Committee, Diocese of Rochester

Comprehensive Immigration Reform Suggestions for Parish Involvement

- Using the themes of hospitality, welcoming and love of neighbor which are prevalent in many readings this summer, preach a homily that invites parishioners to step aside from partisan politics to see the human dignity in the struggling immigrants. See enclosed homily hints. Use music and prayers of petition from the enclosed materials.
- Create an advocacy page on your website where parishioners may find links to timely issues. Under Immigration Reform include the Justice for Immigrants(JFI) electronic postcard campaign (<http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/index.shtml>).
- Publish regular articles in your bulletin using the enclosed resources from Justice for Immigrants.
- Consider using one of the JFI resources as a bulletin insert or use resources from Our Sunday Visitor.
- Schedule the JustFaith immigration module for this fall or use the enclosed 4-week resource.
- Hold a book discussion. You might consider:
The Politics of Immigration by Jane Guskin and David L. Wilson
A Promised Land: Theological Perspectives on Migration by Daniel Groody
Globalization, Spirituality and Justice by Daniel Groody
- Have a movie night followed by discussion. Sr. Connie Derby has a number of immigration-themed movies available to loan from the AV library. In addition, there have been many thought-provoking films in commercial theaters that deal with immigrant issues. See the list at the end of this resource for some excellent films suitable for most audiences.
- Invite a speaker who is knowledgeable about immigration issues. Your regional Justice & Peace staff can be of help locating speakers.
- Pray *A Prayer for Immigrant Justice*

Blessed are You, Lord God,
King of all creation.
Through Your goodness, we live in this land
that You have so richly blessed.
Help us always to recognize our
Blessings come from You
and remind us to share them
with others, especially those who come
to us today from other lands.
Help us to be generous, just, and welcoming,
as You have been and are generous to us.



The Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform

Comprehensive Immigration Reform

"If a stranger lives with you in your land, do not molest him. You must count him as one of your own countrymen and love him as yourself—for you were once strangers yourselves in Egypt."
Leviticus 19: 32-34

Prayers of Petition

For an end to the violence and poverty that displaces so many people from their homes and homelands...

For our leaders, that they may implement policies that allow for safe migration, just migrant working conditions, and an end to the detention of asylum seekers, while protecting our national safety...

For migrant workers, that they may labor in safe and justice conditions, and that we who benefit from their labor may be truly grateful for what they provide...

For unaccompanied migrant children, that they may be protected from all harm and reunited with loving families...

For an end to human trafficking, that the dignity of all of God's children will be protected...

For migrants, refugees, and strangers in our midst, that they may find hope in our concern for justice and feel the warmth of our love...

For our community, gathered here today to celebrate our unity under the Lord and his mother, Mary, that we may come to greater understanding and acceptance of our differences...

Music Suggestions

"In Christ There Is No East or West" by John Oxenham

"One Spirit, One Church" by Kevin Keil

"Pan de Vida" by Bob Hurd

"Service" by Buddy Ceaser (NARL)

"They'll Know We Are Christians" by Peter Scholtes

"E Na Lima Hana" by David Haas and Joe Camacho

"We Are Many Parts" by Marty Haugen

"Weave One Heart" by Marty Haugen

"Diverse in Culture, Race and Nation" by Ruth Duck

"We Are Called" by David Haas

"Song of the Body of Christ" by David Haas

"Let There Be Peace On Earth" by Sy Miller and Jill Jackson

Homily Suggestions

Immigrants who come to the United States, particularly the undocumented, are among the voiceless who need someone to speak on behalf of their human rights and dignity. When the scriptural or liturgical texts address this point, the homily can be an effective moment for prophetic instruction and encouragement. The homily provides an opportune moment to highlight the Church's mandate and tradition of welcome, outreach and service, and to invite others to participate in this calling. -Justice for Immigrants

June 29/30 - Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading 1 [1 Kgs 19:16b, 19-21](#)

Reading 2 [Gal 5:1, 13-18](#)

Gospel [Lk 9:51-62](#)

Themes: migration, slavery, hateful speech, love of neighbor

There are places in the world where people are enslaved by their lack of economic opportunity. Workers are treated like other commodities, to be purchased at the lowest price possible, not at a wage that provides a true living. People are on the move all over the world seeking to work with dignity. The anti-immigrant arguments in the United States have been particularly hateful. We may disagree on how to solve the problem of illegal immigration, but we can never lose sight of the humanity of the immigrant. As Catholics we are called to love our neighbor - there is no room for racism or prejudice. When our immigrant ancestors arrived they often faced similar biases. We disrespect them when we join in hateful speech or stereotyping.

The essential story of our faith is one of emigration. People have been on the move since Adam and Eve left the garden. God called Abraham to leave his homeland and settle in a new land - one that was already settled by other people. Joseph invited his starving brothers to bring their families to Egypt where there was plenty of food. Many generations later, Moses led his people out of Egypt where they had become enslaved. Jesus' parents travel to Bethlehem then flee with him to Egypt. As an adult, he responds to God's call as Elisha did, he leaves his home and family behind to become an itinerant preacher. His followers travel the known world to spread the Gospel.

Life in a world of nation-states with strict borders would drastically change those stories if they were happening today, but people still experience hunger or persecution that motivates them to seek a better life for themselves and their families. Many of the 11 million undocumented people who live in the United States today came at great risk because they knew there were jobs if they got here. They risked their lives and left their families because the same border fence that says "keep out" has an invisible but very real sign that says "help wanted." As the border militarized, many who once came here legally, overstayed their visas because of the difficulty in getting back. Many who once came to do seasonal agricultural work, returning to their families for part of the year, also stayed because the border crossing had become too dangerous and too expensive. They live in the shadows, ever fearful of deportation, making them vulnerable to exploitation. They pick our crops, keeping our food among the least expensive in the world, they watch our children, clean our hotel rooms, mow our lawns and care for our elderly. Bringing them out of the shadows will require that we pay decent wages for those jobs, providing fair competition for job-seekers.

July 6/7 Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gospel [Lk 10:1-12, 17-20](#)

The Gospel themes of hospitality and mission work are similar to last weeks - See notes above. In addition, the literal meaning of "the harvest is abundant but the laborers few" and "the laborer deserves his payment" were situations that the disciple could understand. They still apply today, though many people are

disconnected from the source of the polished fruit and packaged meats they purchase at the grocery store.

July 14/15 Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading 1 [Dt 30:10-14](#)

Human laws are necessary for keeping order. Nations have a right to control their borders, but human beings also have a right to live with dignity and migrate in search of work and safety. How do we reconcile these conflicting rights. As Christians we work for laws that protects human life and dignity.

Responsorial Psalm [Ps 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36, 37](#)

The deep faith of many migrants sustains them in the face of great suffering. Their undocumented status deprives them of rights and protections enjoyed by others. How are we called to respond to those on the bottom rungs of our economy and our community?

Gospel [Lk 10:25-37](#)

"You shall love the Lord, your God...and your neighbor as yourself."

"And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus makes it clear that the stranger among us is the neighbor we are required to love.

July 20/21 - Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading 1 [Gn 18:1-10a](#)

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the terebinth of Mamre, as he sat in the entrance of his tent, while the day was growing hot.

...and Abraham welcomes the stranger with gracious hospitality

Responsorial Psalm [Ps 15:2-3, 3-4, 5](#)

R. (1a) He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

One who walks blamelessly and does justice;
who thinks the truth in his heart
and slanders not with his tongue.

R. He who does justice will live in the presence of the Lord.

Who harms not his fellow man,
nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor;
See July 7 notes.

Gospel [Lk 10:38-42](#)

Jesus enjoys the hospitality of Martha and Mary.

Hospitality, openness, welcoming the stranger are themes that run throughout the Scriptures - our lives are enriched when we approach newcomers with the open-hearted welcome of Abraham, Martha and Mary. We are invited to receive all of God's children with a spirit of hospitality and non-judgment in the belief that if our hearts are open we can find solutions that work for all people. Good-hearted people will disagree about how to fix our broken immigration system, but we can all agree to reject the mean-spiritedness that blocks meaningful dialogue. No matter where we stand on the issue of immigration, we will learn from each other if we come as Abraham, Martha and Mary, welcoming the opportunity to encounter God in one another. Then we'll find solutions that strengthen our borders, keep families intact, respects all workers and creates welcoming communities where people don't live in fear of being turned in by their neighbors or going to the Laundromat, grocery store or even Mass.

August 10/11 - Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

References Passover, Abraham's journey in faith - See June 29/30

August 17/18 - Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading 1: [Jer 38:4-6, 8-10](#)

The prophet Jeremiah fears for his life after telling the Israelites to reform their ways and turn back to justice - among their sins: worshipping false gods, shedding innocent blood and oppressing orphans, widows and **resident aliens**.

[Ps 40:2, 3, 4, 18](#)

Though I am afflicted and poor,
yet the LORD thinks of me.
You are my help and my deliverer;
O my God, hold not back!

[Lk 12:49-53](#)

Following Jesus is not always easy. Just as Jeremiah faced death for speaking out against injustice, Jesus tells us that his way may sometimes bring division.

August 24/25 - Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

No strong themes relating to this issue, but the images of nations gathering in the first reading and the Gospel may lead to thoughts on the plight of migrants throughout the world. Over 214 million people are currently migrants - for the same reasons that people have always migrated: safety, opportunity, security, human rights protection.

Bulletin Articles

The Hispanic Pew Forum estimates that at least eleven million undocumented immigrants live and work in the United States today. The motivations pushing immigrants to risk unauthorized entry into America are varied, but most come with the hope of reuniting with family members already here or to find work that will provide support for their family back home. The existing immigration system has resulted in a growing number of persons in this country in an unauthorized capacity, living in the shadows as they toil in jobs that would otherwise go unfilled. The Church believes that current immigration laws and policies have often led to the undermining of immigrants' human dignity and have kept families apart. The Catholic bishops of the United States have been strong supporters of comprehensive immigration reform, which includes:

- A broad based legalization (permanent residency) of the undocumented of all nationalities;
- Reform of our family-based immigration system to allow family members to reunite with loved ones in the United States;
- Reform of the employment-based immigration system to provide legal pathways for migrants to come and work in a safe, humane, and orderly manner;
- Addresses the root causes of migration, such as persecution and economic disparity.;
- Restoration of due process protections for immigrants.

Why does the church care about immigration policies?

The Catholic Church has historically held a strong interest in immigration and how public policy affects immigrants seeking a new life in the United States. Based on Scriptural and Catholic social teachings, as

well as her own experience as an immigrant Church in the United States, the Catholic Church is compelled to raise her voice on behalf of those who are marginalized and whose God-given rights are not respected.

The Church believes that current immigration laws and policies have often led to the undermining of immigrants' human dignity and have kept families apart. The existing immigration system has resulted in a growing number of persons in this country in an unauthorized capacity, living in the shadows as they toil in jobs that would otherwise go unfilled. Close family members of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents must wait years for a visa to be reunited. And, our nation's border enforcement strategies have been ineffective and have led to the death of thousands of migrants.

The Church has a responsibility to shine the message of God on this issue and help to build bridges between all parties so that an immigration system can be created that is just for all and serves the common good, including the legitimate security concerns of our nation.

Does the Catholic Church support illegal immigration?

The Catholic Bishops do not condone unlawful entry or circumventions of our nation's immigration laws. The bishops believe that reforms are necessary in order for our nation's immigration system to respond to the realities of separated families and labor demands that compel people to immigrate to the United States, whether in an authorized or unauthorized fashion.

Our nation's economy demands foreign labor, yet there are insufficient visas to meet this demand. Close family members of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents face interminable separations, sometimes of twenty years or longer, due to backlogs of available visas. U.S. immigration laws and policies need to be updated to reflect these realities.

Why Does the Church Care About Immigration? Our Care is Rooted in the Gospel.

One need not look further than the life and words of Jesus Christ to understand that persons on the move - refugees, migrants, immigrants - are special in the eyes of God. The baby child Jesus was a refugee who, along with the Holy Family, fled the terror of Herod into Egypt (Mt. 2:14-15). In His public ministry, Jesus was an itinerant, moving from place to place, "with nowhere to lay His Head." (Mt. 8:20). As we welcome the stranger into our midst, we welcome Christ Himself.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus instructs us to welcome the stranger: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me" (Mt. 25-35). Jesus Himself was not welcomed by His own people: "He came to what was His own, but His own people did not accept him."

Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration *We are one family under God*

Pope John Paul II reaffirmed the Church's basic teaching on immigration in an address in 1985: "Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of his own country. When there are just reasons in favor of it, he must be permitted to migrate to other countries and to take up residence there. The fact that he is a citizen of a particular state does not deprive him of membership in the human family, nor of citizenship in the universal society, the common, world-wide fellowship of men."

Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration
We are one family under God

The U.S. Catholic Bishops have taken the *Gospel* teachings and the teachings of the Popes and applied it to the immigration reality in the United States. In January, 2003, the Bishops issued the pastoral letter, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope*. In that document, the U.S. Bishops teach the following five principles that govern how the Catholic Church responds to public policy proposals related to immigration:

- Human persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.
- Human persons have the right to migrate to provide for themselves and their families.
- Sovereign nations have a right to control their borders.
- Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protections.
- The human rights and human dignity of undocumented migrants should be respected.

Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration
We are one family under God

Message from Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York

"Immigration reform is an issue close to Catholic hearts. America has wonderfully welcomed generations of immigrant families, and our parishes, schools and charitable ministries have long helped successfully integrate immigrants into American life.

Congress will soon debate the most comprehensive overhaul of our nation's immigration laws in almost 30 years. With the stakes so high, it's important that Congress craft legislation that balances the legitimate needs of security with our heritage of welcoming immigrants and the gifts they bring to our country.

We bishops call for practical and humane immigration reform grounded in the Catholic experience - family unity must be a cornerstone of immigration reform."

Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration
We are one family under God

Message of Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York
(continued from last week's bulletin)

"We also see up close the suffering caused by the broken immigration system. Our nation has deported more than 1.5 million people over the past five years, separating hundreds of thousands of parents from their U.S.-citizen children. Our detention system has exploded, incarcerating 400,000 a year, often in substandard conditions. And our brothers and sisters continue to die horrible deaths on both sides of the border. In 2012, the remains of 129 migrants were found in one Texas county alone.

Such fundamental humanitarian problems require a response. While addressing this complex problem raises tough questions about which good people can disagree, Americans have always brought faith to bear on public issues, and Biblical teachings provide principles to guide us. Given these teachings and experience, we've called for an earned path to citizenship to bring a generous number of people out of the shadows in a reasonable amount of time."

Commercial Films

A Day Without a Mexican (2004)

Directed by Sergio Arau. With Caroline Aaron, Tony Abatemarco, Melinda Allen

How do you make the invisible, visible? You take it away. One morning California wakes up to find that one-third of its population has disappeared. A thick fog surrounds the State and communication outside its boundaries is completely cut off. As the day goes by we discover that the characteristic that links the 14 million who disappeared is their Hispanic background. Misunderstandings and humorous situations abound, making this a comedic satire...a modern fable with a lesson included.

The Visitor (2007)

Director: Thomas McCarthy, with Richard Jenkins, Haaz Slkeiman, Danai Jekesai Gurira

In Connecticut, the widower and lonely Professor Walter Vale has a boring life. Walter is assigned to attend a conference about Global Policy and Development at NYU, where he is to give a lecture. When he arrives at his apartment in New York, he finds Tarek Khalil, a Syrian musician, and Zainab, a Senegalese street vendor living there. He sympathizes with the situation of the illegal immigrants and invites the couple to stay with him. After an incident in the subway, Tarek is arrested by the police and sent to a detention center of immigrants. Walter gets involved in trying to get a release for Tarek and finds new meaning in his own life.

Under the Same Moon (2008)

Director: Patricia Riggen with Adrian Alonso and America Ferrera

Nine-year-old Carlos aka Carlitos is one of the countless children left behind by parents who come to the U.S. seeking a way to provide for their families. His mother, Rosario, has worked illegally as a domestic in Los Angeles for four years, sending money home to her son and mother to give them a chance at a better life. When the death of his grandmother leaves young Carlitos alone, he takes his fate into his own hands and heads north across the border to find his mother. As he journeys from his rural Mexican village to the L.A. barrio, Carlitos faces seemingly insurmountable obstacles with a steely determination and unfettered optimism that earn him the grudging respect and affection of a reluctant protector, a middle-aged migrant worker named Enrique. The unlikely pair finds its way from Tucson to East L.A., where they hope to reunite the pair.

Videos/DVDs Available through the Diocesan AV Library

Dying to Live* **Highly recommended*

This program offers a look at the human face of the migrant worker. It considers who they are, why they leave their homes and what they face in their journey. Drawing on the insights of Pulitzer Prize winning photographers, theologians, church and congressional leaders, activists, musicians and the immigrants themselves, the film explores the places of conflict, pain and hope along the US-Mexico border.

33 minutes divided into segments that can be shown separately; Senior high-adult
Groody River Films. Produced by the Univ. of Notre Dame Institute of Latino Studies

A Treasure Revealed: Migrant Workers in Our Midst

In this program viewers will learn about the plight of migrant workers in western New York who have come to this area to make a better life for their families but who work long and hard in low-paying, difficult jobs. Viewers will see how the Catholic community is ministering to them and will be challenged to consider how they might welcome and assist these members of God's family living in their community.

20 minutes; Senior high-adult; Guide, Diocese of Rochester & AV8 Productions, 2003

The Line in the Sand: Stories from the US/Mexico Border (VCR)

In August of 2005, Catholic Relief Services sent a team of writers and actors to the Arizona-Mexico border to interview people affected by migration. They spoke with ranchers, government officials, activists and the migrants themselves and turned those interviews into a stage performance that is presented in this video.

49 minutes; Senior high-adult, Produced by Maryknoll, Baltimore, MD : Catholic Relief Services, 2006.

The Ties That Bind: Stories Behind the Immigration Controversy

This program roams both sides of the Texas-Mexico border to present the human face of immigrants and their families. The production unfolds in three twenty-minute segments. "Good Neighbors and Tall Fences" focuses on how U.S. **immigration** policies and transnational firms contribute to social and economic disparity between the U. S. and Mexico. "Just Between Us" documents the struggles of immigrants to become accepted U.S. citizens. "The Common Bond" explores shared faith, family and work values.

56 minutes; Senior high-adult; Guide, Maryknoll World Productions, 1996. Maryknoll, NY

Strangers No Longer (VCR)

This program examines the issues surrounding **immigration** in the United States. It is divided into four segments. "Call to Welcome" looks at the biblical mandate to welcome the stranger and recalls the migratory nature of our ancestors in faith. "Our Immigrant Heritage" reminds viewers that the United States is a nation of immigrants with a long tradition of struggling to incorporate people from many cultures. "New Realities" explores the tenacious condition of the current **immigration** system, tells some stories of individual immigrants and describes the U.S. Bishops' plan for immigrant reform. Finally, "Living the Faith" illustrates how some parish communities are attempting to live the call the welcome the stranger in their midst.

12 minutes; Senior high-adult, Groody River Films and University of Notre Dame, 2007