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Be a “Pilgrim of Hope” for the Immigrant Community

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In a time when the rhetoric towards immigrants sends a message of hate and creates fear within the immigrant community, we as Catholics must remember our Church teachings and our call to stand in solidarity. Immigrants make up almost 15% of our country’s population and more than a quarter of our Church. As we begin this year of Jubilee, take time to reflect on how you can be a “Pilgrim of Hope” for the immigrant community.

Our Holy Father has called it a “grave sin” to intentionally drive away migrants. Pope Francis said. “[God] does not remain at a distance, no; he shares in the migrants’ tragedy, God is there with them, with the migrants, he suffers with them, with the migrants, he weeps and hopes with them, with the migrants.” <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/258957>

“Together, we must speak out on behalf of the “huddled masses yearning to breathe free” and ask our government to provide fair and humane treatment for our beloved immigrant brothers and sisters.”
From the statement of pastoral concern of Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, president of the USCCB, Bishop Mark J. Seitz, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Migration, and Bishop Jaime Soto, chairman of the board for Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.

<https://www.usccb.org/news/2024/we-stand-firm-solidarity-our-immigrant-brothers-and-sisters>

Matthew 25:35 I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

What can I do?

Educate

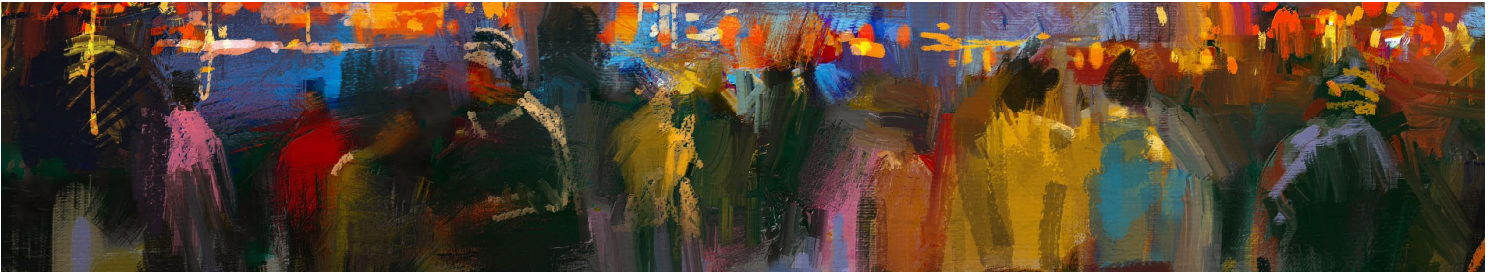
Advocate

Accompany ...

Immigrant Accompaniment Program

The Immigrant & Refugee Ministry will be taking on a new immigrant accompaniment program, an initiative which provides a way to walk with our immigrant sisters and brothers and show support as they go through their immigration process. Accompaniment teams help our immigrant neighbors navigate a difficult and confusing immigration system by providing transportation, translation, and community support as they attend required check-ins with immigration enforcement.

We are currently seeking volunteers. **Call IRM office Kevin Kuehl at 314 772 1525 ext 204 to register.** No foreign language required and commitment is flexible. ***Once you register, we will follow up with you about further training.***



Catholic Principles of Migration

Our approach to migration is rooted in the Gospel and in the rich tradition of Catholic social teaching. A recent example of this teaching is in [Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope](#), a pastoral letter concerning migration from the Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States.

I. Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.

All persons have the right to find in their own countries the economic, political, and social opportunities to live in dignity and achieve a full life through the use of their God-given gifts. In this context, work that provides a just, living wage is a basic human need.

II. Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.

The Church recognizes that all the goods of the earth belong to all people. When persons cannot find employment in their country of origin to support themselves and their families, they have a right to find work elsewhere in order to survive. Sovereign nations should provide ways to accommodate this right.

III. Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.

The Church recognizes the right of sovereign nations to control their territories and their borders. However, wealthier nations, which have the ability to better protect and feed their residents, have a strong obligation to

accommodate migration flows.

IV. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.

Those who flee wars and persecution should be protected by the global community. This requires, at a minimum, that migrants have a right to claim refugee status without incarceration and to have their claims fully considered by a competent authority.

V. The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.

Regardless of their legal status, migrants, like all persons, possess inherent human dignity that should be respected. Often they are subject to punitive laws and harsh treatment by enforcement officers from both receiving and transit countries. Government policies that respect the basic human rights of the undocumented are necessary.

