



# The Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform

DECEMBER 15, 2005

## About the Campaign

### ***Protecting the Homeland at the Expense of Our Ideals***

Shortly after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the admission of immigrants and refugees to the U.S. was severely curtailed, while responsible government agencies turned their attention to fixing the entry and security systems designed to detect those intending to come here to harm us. In a public statement at the time, the U.S. bishops called on the government to find ways to strengthen protocols for protecting against the admission of would-be terrorists, while preserving our heritage as a nation of immigrants and our responsiveness to the needs of immigrants and refugees. The bishops said that our nation is great enough to protect our nation from terrorists *and* remain true to our historical values of welcoming newcomers seeking a better life.



Apparently, members of the U.S. House of Representatives do not believe we can do both. With the introduction of HR 4437, the Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005, Congressman James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) and his supporters have made clear that they do not believe we can continue to be a nation of immigrants *and* safeguard the homeland. In one of the harshest immigration-related measures to be considered by the House, Congress is demonstrating hostility toward immigrants and, if successful, will turn back the clock to an earlier era that saw the anti-immigrant measures espoused by the nativist Know-Nothing party in the 1850's.

For members of Congress to characterize this legislative proposal as a means to protect the homeland is disingenuous at best. It utterly fails to recognize three essential aspects of the current immigration reality: (1) our nation's economy, ever more interdependent of the global economy,

requires the labor provided by foreign workers, (2) desperation and lack of opportunity compels many to leave their homelands for the opportunity afforded here, and (3) the availability of visas for workers and those desiring to reunite with family members have simply not kept pace with the demand. Thus, this harmful, enforcement-only measure will not only result in a hostile environment toward immigrants, but will not fix the fundamental problems associated with the nation's immigration system. This bill will do no more than to give restrictionists a long-sought victory.

The bishops' prescription for fixing our immigration system is comprehensive, as it needs to be. It addresses root causes, expands the availability of visas for employment and family reunification purposes, acknowledges the need for enforcement of our nation's immigration laws, and provides an opportunity for the millions here without proper documentation to come out of the shadows through an earned legalization program. Any legislation short of these elements is doomed to fail.

People of goodwill and especially Catholics need to be heard in this debate or we risk becoming a nation unrecognizable to the ideals we espouse.

*Written by Mark Franken, Executive Director  
Migration and Refugee Services  
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*

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## Action Alert Follow Up

The Justice for Immigrants Campaign held a nationwide phone conference call on Monday, December 12.

go back and listen to it. Call 1-888-203-1112 and follow the recorder directions. The conference information is as follows:



We want to express our gratitude to all those who joined the conference for your great work and commitment to the Justice for Immigrants Campaign. As we informed you during the call, we will continue to have these calls in a regular basis. We will

Conference:  
1689845

Replay Pass-code:  
63452049

Conference Date:  
December 12, 2005

let you know when the next one is.

Please feel free to contact our office with any questions you might have regarding our nationwide call.

If you were unable to join us, the conference recording is available for people to

“A Journey of Hope”

*“The Justice for Immigrants campaign has asked dioceses to activate their network in opposition to this punitive measure.”*

## Legislative Update

### USCCB opposes House enforcement measure.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued a statement on December 14 strongly opposing H.R. 4437, the Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 (see page 6 for copy of the statement). The legislation was scheduled to be considered by the full House of Representatives December 15.

The legislation contains many punitive provisions which would cause undue harm to legal immigrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees as well as

those who are in the country without legal status. Among the provisions which are most troubling are the expansion of expedited removal along the nation's borders; the mandatory detention of undocumented im-

migrants apprehended along the borders; the criminalization of unlawful presence; and the extension of criminal penalties to humanitarian groups who assist undocumented immigrants. The legislation does not include any provisions to reform our legal immigration system, as well, including an earned legalization program, a temporary worker program, or family-based immigration reform provisions.

The Justice for Immigrants campaign has asked dioceses to activate their network in opposition to this punitive measure. As of this writing, it is unclear whether the House of Representatives will complete debate on the bill before the end of the year. It is expected that the U.S. Senate will consider comprehensive immigration reform early in the new year.

Please take action at:

[www.justiceforimmigrants.org/action.html](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/action.html)



# Arizona Bishops Issue Pastoral Letter

## Arizona Bishops Urge Perspective, Prayer on Immigration Issues

By Robert DeFrancesco  
Catholic News Service

PHOENIX (CNS) -- Noting that their communities are increasingly divided as a result of immigration-related issues, the bishops of Arizona issued a pastoral letter calling for immigration reform and asking Catholics to respond to the mounting crisis with compassion, education, hospitality and prayer.

"We ... are deeply saddened by the death and suffering we see on our border," said the letter, issued Dec. 12. "We are aware that our communities have become increasingly divided as a result of the immigration in our state. We have seen mounting expressions of hostility and opposition to undocumented immigrants. We are concerned about the image that some may have of Arizona as a state which is hostile to immigrants. We do not believe this to be true."

The 4,000-word document, "You Welcomed Me," is an assessment of current public discourse, federal immigration policy, and immigration's cultural and economic impact on the state. In addition, it offers a history of the church's position on the right to migrate, explaining how it affects Arizona's Catholics today. It was developed and signed by the four bishops of Arizona: Bishops Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson and Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix; Bishop Donald E. Pelotte of Gallup, N.M., whose diocese includes northeastern Arizona; and Bishop William C. Skurla of the Byzantine Eparchy of Van Nuys, based in Phoenix. (The eparchy relocated to Arizona from Van Nuys, Calif., in 1994.)

The bishops' letter includes personal statements from people who are a part of the immigration struggle. They bring to life the hardships and sacrifices of migrants, challenges faced by a cattle rancher in the border town of Douglas, thoughts from Arizona employers and insights from local parish leaders. It also cites passages from Scripture and Catholic social teaching that call for defending human dignity and joining in global solidarity. The document was released to coincide with the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, a day celebrating Marian apparitions to St. Juan Diego in what is today Mexico in 1531. The Guadalupe image is central to the faith life of many Latin Americans and people of Latino heritage throughout the world. The letter's release also coincides with the resumption of debate in Congress over several bills that would address immigration problems through various measures.

The Arizona bishops said they "firmly support humane enforcement of our country's laws; however, as is the case with other issues, we believe that our immigration laws are outdated and no longer fit the economic realities and security needs of our times. Our nation's demand for labor and the increasing displacement of farmers and workers in Mexico and Central America call for a new approach to regulating immigration from those countries. "Economic globalization trends which allow capital and goods to flow freely across borders require a new approach to managing the flows of migrant workers across our borders," they continued. "Very few legal avenues are currently available to migrant workers who wish to enter the United States legally." The

document voices concern for the hundreds of migrants who die each year while trying to cross the Arizona desert and the difficulties they encounter by deciding to enter the United States illegally. It noted that in the 2005 fiscal year, at least 261 border crossing deaths were documented in Arizona, while 460 deaths were reported all along the U.S.-Mexico border.

"It is often easy to overlook the hardships that undocumented immigrants must endure to reach the United States, to cross the border, to live in a country in which they are not legally recognized and often subjected to discrimination and abuse," the letter reads. "For the vast majority, it is not a decision that is taken lightly. Parents, children, and grandchildren are separated, often for years on end."

Federal policy in the last decade included border enforcement programs in Texas and California that funneled much of the illegal border traffic into the inhospitable desert of southern Arizona. The state's bishops and the archbishop of the adjacent Mexican Archdiocese of Hermosillo have worked together on various efforts to shape the church's pastoral response to the flow of people across the border. "While we do not condone undocumented immigration, we recognize that it would not be feasible to deport all of these immigrants," the letter said. "We must find a way to bring them out of the shadows and incorporate them into society." It said immigration reform that embraces an honest and prayerful approach to the situation will lead to better national security, a stabilized labor market and higher living standards, and will encourage the nation's 10 million undocumented immigrants to become more active in society.

"We believe that Arizona can lead our country toward a solution to this crisis," the bishops said. "We can build on our common ground and our shared values as Catholics to develop, along with others in our community, a solution that protects the dignity of the migrants among us, strengthens our communities, makes us safer as a nation, and builds on the great immigrant heritage of our country."

Inspired by Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Catholic Bishops of Arizona, through the Arizona Catholic Conference, chose today for the issuance of our first joint pastoral letter on the moral dimensions of the immigration from Mexico into Arizona.

Entitled "You Welcomed Me," the pastoral letter includes Church teaching on migration and a call for Catholics in Arizona to support comprehensive reform of the nation's immigration system. The pastoral letter has been provided to all parishes in a special publication. It also is available on-line at our diocesan Web site, [www.diocesetucson.org](http://www.diocesetucson.org).

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December 15, 2005

# Local Justice for Immigrants Campaigns

The following is a list of Diocese that have officially appointed a Local Point of Contact to coordinate the Justice for Immigrants Campaign with the national office as of date of publication of this newsletter:

Archdiocese of Atlanta  
 Archdiocese of Chicago  
 Archdiocese of Cincinnati  
 Archdiocese of Denver  
 Archdiocese of Dubuque  
 Archdiocese of Houston-Galveston  
 Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas  
 Archdiocese of Los Angeles  
 Archdiocese of Miami  
 Archdiocese of Milwaukee  
 Archdiocese of Newark  
 Archdiocese of Omaha  
 Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Archdiocese of San Antonio  
 Archdiocese of Santa Fe  
 Archdiocese of Seattle  
 Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis  
 Archdiocese of Washington  
 Diocese of Allentown  
 Diocese of Austin  
 Diocese of Beaumont  
 Diocese of Brooklyn  
 Diocese of Charlotte  
 Diocese of Cleveland  
 Diocese of Dodge City  
 Diocese of El Paso  
 Diocese of Fall River  
 Diocese of Fresno  
 Diocese of Grand Rapids  
 Diocese of Green Bay  
 Diocese of Harrisburg  
 Diocese of Kalamazoo  
 Diocese of Knoxville  
 Diocese of Lexington

Diocese of Metuchen  
 Diocese of Nashville  
 Diocese of Oakland  
 Diocese of Orlando  
 Diocese of Owensboro  
 Diocese of Paterson  
 Diocese of Phoenix  
 Diocese of Pueblo  
 Diocese of Raleigh  
 Diocese of Sacramento  
 Diocese of San Bernardino  
 Diocese of San Jose  
 Diocese of Springfield In Illinois  
 Diocese of St. Augustine  
 Diocese of Syracuse  
 Diocese of Toledo  
 Diocese of Trenton  
 Diocese of Tucson  
 Diocese of Youngstown

*“An image  
 for the work  
 of our  
 committee?”*

*Digging in  
 our feet for  
 the long  
 haul!”*



## Justice for Immigrants In Green Bay

Before describing the local efforts of the Justice for Immigrants campaign, please allow me to describe the demographics of the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay. Located in northeastern Wisconsin, we have 183 parishes in 16 counties. The total population is 951,124; 39% are Catholics. We are primarily a rural/small town diocese; the diocesan center has 100,000 people. I guesstimate that the documented immigrant population of our 16 counties is three percent, but is growing tremendously. For example, the largest county of the diocese, Brown, had about 800 native Spanish speakers in 1990. Today, it has about 9,000 documented native Spanish speakers. There are also centers of immigrants in Appleton, Manitowoc County, and Winnebago County. All told, about ten parishes in our diocese offer mass in Spanish. Many of the immigrants work in the meat packing industry in Brown County or as farmhands on some of the larger farms in our diocese. Though we are thousands of miles from the United States-Mexican border, Spanish-speaking immigrants have stated that they favor northeastern Wisconsin because of job opportunities and safety (lower crime rate).

Our local Justice for Immigrants diocesan committee consists of nine staff from our Catholic Charities and Stewardship/Pastoral Services Department. Four are bilingual. Early successes included partnering with a local Catholic lawyer who is leading his bar association in providing *pro bono* legal services (office hours) to immigrants every week. Some of the committee appeared before parish social concerns leaders in two sections of our diocese in October and November. We addressed the background of the national campaign, the McCain-Kennedy bill, and the “human face” of immigration. We have used our diocesan legislative alert email system to educate about 80 persons on important immigration legislation at the national and state levels (McCain-Kennedy, reintroduction of the Dream Act, and a state bill that would prohibit ITIN

holders from applying for low income first time homeowner loans).

We are currently planning a letter of introduction to every parish education committee and social concerns committee chair in the diocese. Enclosed will be the USCCB Office of Migration and Immigration brochure “We are Strangers no Longer.” Timed to arrive for National Migration Week, the letter will describe the national campaign and our offer to provide speakers on immigration issues; provide guidance on legislative advocacy; a bibliography of diocesan videos, USCCB publications, Web sites, and periodical articles; references to liturgical resources; etc.

Our diocese is currently dealing with some very time and labor-intensive topics, such as reorganizing Catholic schools in 23 parishes. The administration is also in the planning stages of a major capital campaign. Non-related matters have a hard time getting administration attention. We are also limited by staff time. Though we have eight members on the committee, three are half time staff. My chairing is split by many other responsibilities to the diocese, including parish social ministry, Catholic Campaign for Human Development, rural life ministry, liaison to American Indian parish communities, and stewardship (and I am but one-half time overall!). A major external challenge is the unfriendliness toward immigrants of many elected officials in the largest county of our diocese. Almost every week, a local city councilman or county supervisor is quoted in the largest metropolitan newspaper of the diocese, spouting inflammatory remarks about immigration.

An image for the work of our committee? Digging in our feet for the long haul!

Submitted on December 7, 2005 by:  
 Br. Steve Herro, O. Praem.  
 Social Concerns Consultant  
 Catholic Diocese of Green Bay, WI

# Participating Organizations Showcase

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) is the domestic anti-poverty, social justice program of the U.S. Catholic bishops.

Its mission is to address the root causes of poverty in America through promotion and support of community-controlled, self-help organizations and through transformative education.

Founded in 1969, CCHD's pastoral strategy is empowerment of the poor through a methodology of participation and education for justice, leading toward solidarity between poor and non-poor as impelled by the Church's biblical tradition, modern Catholic social teaching, and the perva-

sive presence of poverty in the United States. This ministry for justice is rooted in our baptism and faith commitment.

The grants, economic development, and education for justice programs of the Campaign, implemented in collaboration with local dioceses, are supported from an annual collection in U.S. Catholic parishes.

**Catholic Campaign for Human Development**  
 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops  
 3211 Fourth Street, NE, Washington, DC 20017-1194



## Participating Organizations Include:

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), in particular:

- *Migration and Refugee Services,*
- *the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, (see preceding write up)*
- *Domestic Social Development,*
- *International Justice and Peace, and*
- *the Hispanic Affairs Secretariat;*
- Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC);
- Catholic Health Association (CHA);
- Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA);
- Catholic Relief Services (CRS);
- National Catholic Association of Diocesan Directors of Hispanic Ministry (NCADDHM);
- National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW);
- National Catholic Rural Life Conference;
- National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA);
- U.S. Jesuit Conference;
- Leadership Conference of Women Religious;
- Conference of Major Superiors of Men;
- National Association of State Catholic Conference Directors (NASCCD);
- Catholic Migrant Farmworker Network;
- The Irish Apostolate USA; and
- The Roundtable Association of Diocesan Social Action Directors.

## Participating Organizations

A number of Catholic organizations with national networks comprise the national Campaign. These organizations have committed themselves to mobilizing a growing network of Catholic institutions, individuals, and other persons of good faith in support of a broad legalization program and comprehensive immigration reform.







## USCCB Committee on Migration

c/o MIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICES

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WEBSITE: [www.usccb.org/mrs](http://www.usccb.org/mrs)

**Statement of Most Reverend Gerald R. Barnes  
Bishop of San Bernardino, California  
Chairman, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration in opposition to  
The Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005**

**December 14, 2005**

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) stands in strong opposition to H.R. 4437, the Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005, which the U.S. House of Representatives is scheduled to take up this week.

While the USCCB has great respect for the authors of H.R. 4437 and knows they are well intentioned, we believe that enactment of H.R. 4437 would bring about serious and severe consequences for immigrants and the nation. It is an extremely punitive bill which is far broader than illegal immigration and, if enacted, would unduly harm immigrants and their families, even those who are currently lawful residents. Moreover, the bishops are deeply disappointed by the bill's enforcement-only focus and absence of reforms in the U.S. legal immigration system that would address our current immigration problems more comprehensively.

Of particular concern to USCCB are provisions in the legislation that would:

- expand expedited removal;
- mandate the detention of aliens who are attempting to enter the United States illegally and are apprehended at a U.S. port-of-entry or along the international or maritime borders;
- expand the reach of offenses related to assisting persons who are unlawfully present in the United States and would subject these persons and entities, including humanitarian and church groups, to severe criminal and civil penalties;
- make it more difficult for long term residents to obtain citizenship and even restrict their ability to seek review of DHS actions or non-actions in District Court relative to their applications for citizenship;
- cause "unlawful presence" in the United States to be a crime, rather than a civil violation, as it is under current law; and
- bar refugees and asylum seekers from legal permanent residence and citizenship if they commit relatively minor offenses.

More specifically, the application of criminal penalties to individuals, including U.S. citizens, who assist aliens without legal status could jeopardize church programs which provide basic needs and life-saving assistance to these individuals. Current federal law does not require humanitarian groups to ascertain legal status of an individual prior to providing assistance. However, in our view, the provisions in Section 202 of the legislation would place parish, diocesan, and social service program staff at risk of criminal prosecution simply for performing their job. It also could apply to health care personnel or U.S. citizens who provide urgent or life-saving assistance to an undocumented individual.

H.R. 4437 has been presented as an antidote to our nation's immigration crisis. It is just the opposite. In reality, this legislation will only exacerbate the problem by driving immigrants further underground and compelling migrants in search of work to rely on ever-expanded smuggling networks to cross the border. A comprehensive solution to our immigration crisis, which includes legal status for migrants and legal avenues for migration, is needed to fix a broken immigration system that exists in our country today.

Ultimately, H.R. 4437 would not only harm communities and businesses, but it also would undermine our country's proud heritage as a nation of immigrants. USCCB asks that members of the House of Representatives oppose this measure when it comes to you on the floor. We also ask President Bush to publicly oppose the legislation and to request that Congress begin work on a comprehensive immigration bill which all Americans can support.



JUSTICE FOR  
IMMIGRANTS

*a journey of hope*

The Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform

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Migration and Refugee Services  
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In June 2004, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Migration and The Catholic Legal Immigration Network, INC. (CLINIC) Board of Directors resolved to make comprehensive immigration reform, with special emphasis on legalization, a major public policy priority within the Church. Many other national Catholic institutions have also made legalization a policy priority.

As part of the Church's response, a diverse group of Catholic organizations with national networks have decided to join the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' *Justice for Immigrants: A Journey of Hope* campaign designed to unite and mobilize a growing network of Catholic institutions, individuals, and other persons of good faith in support of a broad legalization program and comprehensive immigration reform. Its goal will be to maximize the Church's influence on this issue, consistent with the immigration reform principles enunciated in the bishops' pastoral letter.

[www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org)

## Public Education & Training Materials for JFI

The Justice for Immigrants Campaign created materials for use by Catholic agencies for conducting public education outreach to the undocumented community on how undocumented people can begin now to prepare for a future earned legalization program.

The five handouts are intended to help staff and volunteers of CBOs discuss legalization issues with the undocumented community. They advise immigrants that there is not yet a legalization law and warn immigrants about unscrupulous immigration consultants. They also provide an explanation of legalization and a description of what a future earned legalization law may require them to prove: identity, continuous physical presence in the United States, and good moral character.

- *General information about legalization and a warning that there is no yet a legalization law:* This handout explains that undocumented people may be able to eventually apply for legal status, but that proposals introduced in Congress

have not yet been passed.

- *Warning against unscrupulous immigration consultants:* This handout provides information about Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) recognized agencies and accredited representatives who are authorized by the BIA to provide immigration legal services. It cautions against unauthorized immigration consultants, often referred to as "notarios," who are known to take advantage of undocumented people.
- *Explanation of identity:* This handout includes examples of the kind of documentation that might be required to prove identity (any legalization law will require that the applicant prove that s/he is who s/he claims to be).
- *Explanation of continuous physical presence:* This handout provides guidance on the documents that undocumented immigrants should start to gather and save to prove physical presence in the United States (as will be required by any legalization law).

- *Explanation of good moral character:* This handout provides guidance on how to prove good moral character. All applicants for legalization will most likely have to prove good moral character; this generally means that they do not have a criminal record but it might also include proving such things as provision of child support.

These handouts are located on the Justice for Immigrants website at:

[www.justiceforimmigrants.org/immigrants.html](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/immigrants.html)

These materials are already being translated into Spanish. In order to make these materials useful to a wide range of communities, CLINIC is seeking volunteer translators to translate the handouts from English to other languages, such as Arabic, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, etc.

If you can volunteer time to translate the materials from English into another language, then please contact Tom Shea at [Tshea@cliniclegal.org](mailto:Tshea@cliniclegal.org).