



# The Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform

FEBRUARY 15, 2006

## About the Campaign

### Ignorance is Our Strongest Adversary

By: Mark Franken

Someone asked recently, "How will you know if the *Justice for Immigrants* Campaign is successful?" This is a critically important question and if we take the time to answer it for ourselves, we have a much better chance of achieving success. It helps us keep our eyes on the ball; to stay focused on the most essential aspects of the efforts we are pursuing on behalf of the Campaign.

My inclination was to respond to this question by saying that if Congress passes, and the President signs into law, comprehensive immigration reform legislation that comports to the bishops' proposal, then we will have achieved success. There is no doubt that this outcome would be a tremendous success, especially in light of today's political environment and the recently passed House-bill. But, this Campaign is more than just achieving positive legislative reforms.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of this initiative is the impact we hope to have on people's attitudes toward immigrants and about immigration laws. After all, if we are unable to change hearts and minds, we will not have created the political climate necessary for positive immigration law reforms. The importance of the Campaign's educational goals, therefore, cannot be overstated. The Campaign's ultimate success relies on giving people information they need to make informed and Gospel-inspired decisions about immigrants and immigration law.

Unfortunately, the restrictionists have been quite effective in spinning the immigration debate. For instance, appealing to Americans' appreciation for the rule of law, they have characterized undocumented immigrants as criminals. "They broke our immigration laws, what other laws won't they break?" Of course, the Church does not condone illegal entry or remaining in the country past one's visa expiration, but it also recognizes there are not adequate alternatives for prospective immigrants who come here for jobs and to be with family. As long as the conditions in the countries from which migrants come actually compel them to leave and as long as there are inadequate legal means to enter this country to be with family or to obtain jobs, illegal entries will continue, no matter how high the fence.

Then there's the spin that goes along the lines of "...these illegals coming from Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America are not like us; they won't learn English and they're changing our culture." (As someone who traces his heritage to the German and Irish immigrant experience, I am reminded that the same was said of my ancestors as they arrived here.) Those who dispense this "wisdom" seem not to care about the fact that today's immigrants are learning English and pursuing citizenship faster than earlier generations of immigrants.

And, so it goes. The restrictionists have made this debate one of myths versus facts. With the facts and objective arguments on our side, we should be able to prevail. But, we will only do so if we mount an aggressive outreach to parishioners and others in order to engage them in a discussion and study of the facts and to counter the myths.

### Sampling of Educational Efforts Across the Country

Before the Archdiocese of **Washington** launched its *Justice for Immigrants* Campaign, the leadership determined that an educational program for archdiocesan staff was an essential first step. The staff studied the bishops' pastoral letter, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope*, and familiarized themselves with the Campaign's goals for achieving the vision contained in that letter. They then reviewed the various materials available from the national campaign, particularly educational resources. These included such materials as homily suggestions, fact sheets, highlights from Catholic Social teaching and Scripture, and a parish resource kit. As the archdiocesan staff organized to mount the Campaign, targeting parishes, immigrant communities, and other community groups, a solid foundation of support for the effort had been laid within.

In **Brooklyn**, diocesan staff convened informational sessions for parish leaders to explain the Campaign, emphasizing Church teachings, and how the parishes can become involved. In **Houston**, the Archbishop sent an open letter to subscribers of the archdiocesan paper explaining why the Church is working toward just laws for immigrants and calling on the faithful to become actively involved in the effort. In early January, the **Florida** Catholic Conference disseminated practical tips for observing National Migration Week and otherwise participating in the *Justice for Immigrants* Campaign. They called on parishioners and others to study the issues so that facts replace myths.

The **Knoxville** diocese convened an immigration reform information session for parishioners to learn not only what reforms are necessary and should be promoted, but also why the Church's voice is so critical to this. Bishop Tafoya of **Pueblo** has declared 2006 *Migration Year* for the Diocese of Pueblo. This announcement will be followed by a series of in-service education/information sessions for diocesan employees and parishioners. On February 1, leaders of the Archdiocese of **Los Angeles** held a press conference to announce a month-long effort to raise public awareness, including fasting and praying for comprehensive immigration reform.

These initiatives and the many others happening around the country are critically important and should inspire us and give us hope. Each person we can help to better understand that our failed immigration system, and not the desperate immigrants coming to be with family and to work, is the problem, means one more potential voice for positive reforms to our laws.

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# Legislative Update

**The U.S. Senate is to begin considering immigration reform legislation in early March**

**“...only comprehensive legislation will fix the ills of the current system and that an enforcement-only approach is ineffective and unacceptable.”**

The U.S. Senate is expected to take up immigration reform proposals beginning in early March. In the wake of the House-passed version of immigration “reform,” which would criminalize undocumented immigrants and those who assist them, while not addressing the inadequacies of the current legal immigration system, it is critically important to actively engage the Senate at this time.

To learn more about the House-passed legislation (H.R. 4437), please visit our web site at: <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/HR4437.html>.

Your Senators need to hear from you now. Your Senators need to be convinced that only comprehensive legislation will fix the ills of the current system and that an enforcement-only approach is ineffective and unacceptable.

**Please contact your Senators today!**

Please write your Senators to encourage support for comprehensive immigration reforms, as embodied in the “McCain-Kennedy” proposal (S.1033, The Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act.) The Justice for Immigrants Campaign has issued an action alert regarding this important legislation and you can take advantage of our interactive website to communicate with your elected officials. Please visit <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/action.html> to send your Senator a letter.

You should also consider using the occasion of the Senate’s Presidents’ Day recess (February 17 - 26, 2006) to arrange constituent visits with members of the Senate.

## **Influencing the Political Winds**

As was evidenced in the passage of the House version of immigration “reform” (H.R.4437), the anti-immigrant and restrictionist voice has made itself felt. The proponents of that proposal, who are now directing their energies toward the Senate, are well organized, on-message, and very vocal. If we are to succeed in bringing about a more positive legislative outcome, our networks need to be even more organized, on-message, and vocal. Moreover, we will need to do this in the coming weeks and months.

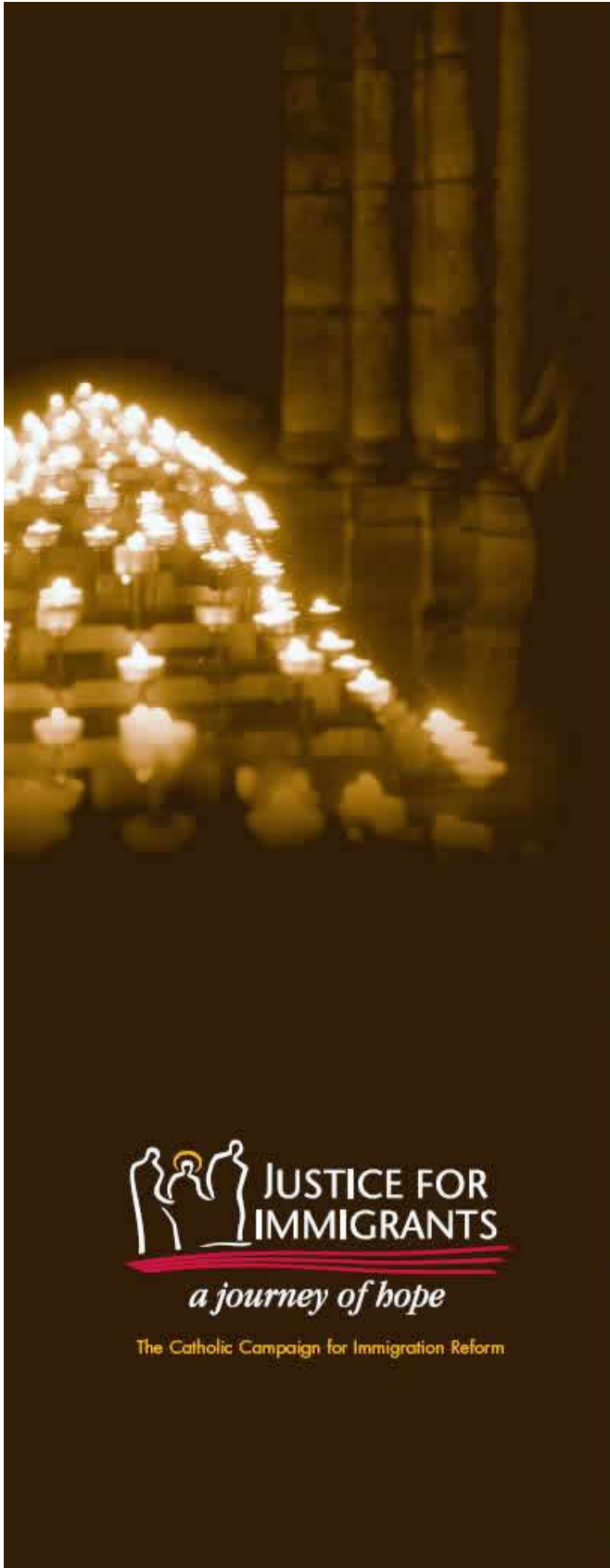
In discussions with Senators and their staffs in Washington, we are told that they are receiving considerable communications from constituents calling on the Senate to adopt the House version. One Senator’s office estimates that the constituent mail is running 99% “restrictionist.”

Although some Senators have already determined what immigration reform proposals they will support, there are still a number who will decide based on constituent input in the coming weeks. They need to hear from you and everyone you can recruit in this effort.

We can have an impact. And we can achieve real reforms that fix the immigration system, protect the homeland, and have a more orderly legal immigration system, while maintaining our ideals as a nation of immigrants. But, it will take a concerted, grass-roots effort to influence the political winds.



**“A Journey of Hope”**



Implementing a  
*Justice for Immigrants*  
Campaign in the Parish



<http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/ParishKit/ImplementingJFI.pdf>

February 15, 2006

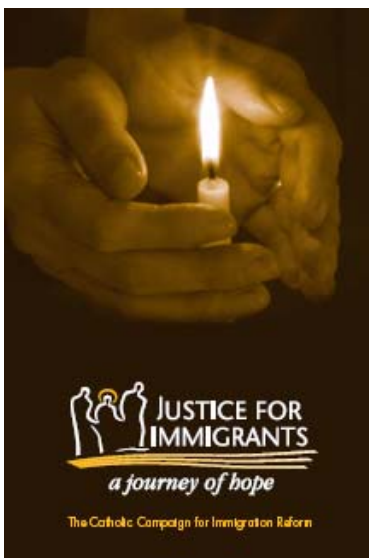
# Parish Kit

*You must not oppress the stranger;  
you know how a stranger feels, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt.*  
**Exodus 23: 9**

The *Justice for Immigrants* recently released the hardcopy version of the campaign's parish kit designed to provide diocesan leaders, parishes, and individuals with resources necessary to engage in the *Justice for Immigrants* campaign.

The Parish Kit included hints for homilies, prayer petitions, talking points, and curriculum for study on the topic of immigration in light of Catholic social teachings as well as different tools to organize within your dioceses. Such tools will enable you to lead focused dialogue, build sustainable coalitions, and provide you with resources for working with the media.

Hardcopies were made available to parishes within Diocese working in the establishment and development of the local *Justice for Immigrants* campaigns by contacting the appointed diocesan Justice for Immigrants Local Point of Contact. If you have not received a copy of the entire kit and would like to order one or reprints of



some of the contents, please visit our website at <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/parishes.html> and find the corresponding order form.

The parish kit is also available by visiting our web site [www.justiceforimmigrants.org/parishes.html](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/parishes.html).

For a list of materials included in the Parish Kit, see the write up that follows.

## Parish Lit Content:

### Education:

- Catholic Bishops Call for Immigration Reform
- Liturgy and Prayer Suggestions
- Suggestions for Homilists
- Relevant Scriptural Passages
- Catholic Social Teachings on Migration
- Understanding Catholic Social Teachings as it Relates to Migration
- Quotes from Catholic Teaching on Migration
- Ideas for Schools, Religious Education, and Youth Programs

### Action:

- Interfaith Statement in Support of Comprehensive Immigration Reform
- Tips for Legislative Advocacy
- Communicating with Elected Officials
- Media Outreach Tips
- Starting a Justice for Immigrants Speaker's Bureau
- Guide to Communicating With the Media

### Additional Resources:

- Implementing JFI
- Poster
- Immigration Basics
- FAQ's
- Myths – Learn the Facts
- What Leaders are saying
- Response to Undocumented Immigration: The Arguments
- Economic and Migration: The Facts
- Enforcement of Immigration Laws: Important Principles
- Resource Bibliography
- Clip Art for Parish Bulletins and Other Publications
- Pledge Card
- Prayer Card
- Brochure



# Local Justice for Immigrants Campaigns

The following is a list of (Arch)dioceses 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 Louisville  
 Archdiocese of Miami  
 Archdiocese of Milwaukee  
 Archdiocese of Newark  
 Archdiocese of Omaha  
 Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
 Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon  
 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 Jackson  
 Diocese of Kalamazoo  
 Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph  
 Diocese of Knoxville  
 Diocese of Lansing

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 Richmond  
 Diocese of Sacramento  
 Diocese of San Bernardino  
 Diocese of San Diego  
 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

## JFI In the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, CA

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles comprises three counties in the southern part of the State of California. There are approximately 4.5 million Catholics among a population of about 11,258,600 with 288 parishes located in 120 cities throughout the Archdiocese.

With Bishop Oscar Solis' continuous support and commitment, a steering committee has been established that consists of key leaders representing Catholic Charities, some CCHD funded groups, parishes, priests, women religious, deacons, the Justice and Peace Commission and a local catholic college. Our campaign was launched at the Migrants' Mass at the Cathedral on January 14<sup>th</sup>. There was extended media coverage following the launching.

The committee has drafted two work plans:

1. A long-term plan that consists of three years focusing on:
  - o **Educating** our constituents in the parishes and purposely highlighting CST connections to Justice for Immigrants Campaign.
  - o **Organizing** in parishes so that justice and peace committees are working on the Justice for Immigrants Campaign and its relation to CST.
  - o **Advocating** for just immigration laws and at the same time involving parishes and parishioners in other key legislation matters.
2. A short-term plan that addresses current legislation such as HR4437 and other immediate action as needed. A number of prayer vigils and press conferences have taken place in the last two weeks and continue to happen to inform and involved the community to take action. A coalition of various community groups and labor unions along with parishes and our office has coordinated a number of actions to call to the attention of legislators and the media the implications of HR4437 and at the same time calling for Comprehensive Immigration Reform.

Cardinal Roger Mahony along with the bishops have called for a "Season for Prayer and Fasting for Comprehensive Immigration Reform" throughout our diocese. This will officially begin on March 1<sup>st</sup> and continue throughout Lent. We expect to issue a press release on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday to launch this campaign. There are a number of parishes that have already started. Dolores Mission has 600 parishioners committed to prayer and fasting for the month of February.

Information packets are being sent out along with useful resources for parishes and a letter from Cardinal Mahony calling for support in this campaign. On March 26<sup>th</sup> the annual mass honoring Cesar Chavez will focus on the Justice for Immigrants Campaign. Brochures, prayer cards, wristbands and other information will be distributed along with commitment cards.

One of the chapels at the Cathedral will be devoted to the Justice for Immigrants Campaign throughout Lent. It will include the JFI banner and a display of pictures and pertinent information on migrants and the campaign.

Our office will have a booth at the Religious Education Congress, approximately 30,000 participate. Bishop Barnes along with Leo Anchondo will conduct a workshop and will refer participants to our booth for additional information.

One of our pastors has found someone that makes banners with the JFI logo in English and Spanish. We expect to distribute them to parishes throughout the diocese to display outside churches and schools.

These are some of the activities our Diocese has been involved in. We expect even more involvement once the packets are distributed and Lent begins.

Submitted by:  
 Maria Elena Perales  
 Office of Justice and Peace  
 Archdiocese of Los Angeles

ARCHDIOCESE OF  
 LOS ANGELES

"One of the chapels at the Cathedral will be devoted to the Justice for Immigrants Campaign."

# Participating Organizations Showcase

Catholic Relief Services was founded in 1943 by the Catholic Bishops of the United States. Our mission is to assist the poor and disadvantaged, leveraging the teachings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to alleviate human suffering, promote development of all people and to foster charity and justice throughout the world. Working through local offices and an extensive network of partners,



CRS operates on 5 continents and in over 90 countries. We aid the poor by first providing direct assistance where needed, then encouraging these people to help with their own development. Together, this fosters secure, productive, just communities that enable people to realize their potential. As the official international relief and development agency of the US Catho-

lic community, CRS is also committed to educating the people of the United States to fulfill their moral responsibilities toward our global brothers and sisters by helping the poor, working to remove the causes of poverty, and promoting social justice.

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

**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.

## 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.





*a journey of hope*

The Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops  
Migration and Refugee Services  
3211 Fourth Street NE  
Washington, D. C. 20017-1194

Phone: (202) 541-3245  
Fax: (202) 722-8755

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 website includes handouts for local JFI Campaigns to use when conducting public education to the undocumented community on how the undocumented can begin *now* to prepare for a future earned legalization program.

At this point, no one knows for sure what requirements will be included in a law on earned legalization but, based on the previous legalization law in the 1980s, an undocumented person most likely will have to prove that s/he has been *continuously physically present* in the United States for a certain period of time; that during this entire period s/he has been a person of *good moral*

*character*, and that s/he is who s/he claims to be (i.e., *identity*).

The handouts on the JFI Campaign website help explain these issues and list some of the documentation that undocumented people can start collecting now and saving. For example, the handout on *physical presence and residency in the United States* advises undocumented people to start gathering and saving documentation that proves *when and how* they arrived in the United States, including bus or plane tickets or receipts for the tickets. It also provides a lengthy list of documents that undocumented people should gather to prove that they have been physically present in the United States for purposes of qualifying for an earned legaliza-

tion program. For example, the list includes documents such as paycheck stubs and payroll records; lease/rental agreements; proof of security deposit payment; birth certificates of children born in the United States; marriage certificates if married in the United States, etc.

This particular handout can be found at:

[http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/Physical\\_presence.html](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/Physical_presence.html)

Submitted by:

Tom Shea  
[tshea@cliniclegal.org](mailto:tshea@cliniclegal.org)

