



The Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform

MARCH 15, 2006

About the Campaign

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The full Senate is poised to debate immigration reform legislation at the end of March. Sadly, some in the Senate leadership want to replicate legislation passed by the House (H.R.4437) last December. Therefore, the coming weeks are going to be critically important, not only for immigrants, but for the nation as a whole.

Though the issues being debated are complex and the array of advocates on all sides of the debate diverse, there are essentially two sides, each advocating dramatically different visions of reform. On the one side are those who believe the first (and for some the only) order of business is to dramatically increase enforcement and getting tough on illegal immigration. Many arguing this approach believe that sealing our borders and creating intolerable conditions in the U.S. for someone here without authorization will stem the flow of future illegal entries. Generally, those on this side of the debate view any steps to deal with the millions of undocumented in the country, other than deporting them, as an "amnesty." Equally unacceptable to this side is the notion of creating more legal avenues for foreign labor. Simply put, the motto of this side could be characterized as "seal the border" and "report to deport."

The other side of the debate, which has a growing and diverse following, sees true immigration reform as not only getting control over a broken immigration system, but fixing the causes of the current ills. This side acknowledges that immigrant laborers are an economic necessity and that the current legal immigration system is woefully outdated and inadequate to today's realities, keeping families separated for years and providing very few legal options to fill the jobs requiring foreign labor.

Generally, those on this side of the debate also recognize that all too often the conditions in the migrants' home countries actually encourage emigration for lack of viable options there in which to raise a family and that this reality needs to be addressed, as well. The voices on this side call for comprehensive reforms that, if employed in tandem, will stem the flow of illegal en-

tries. This side calls for the expansion of legal visas, both permanent and temporary, for foreign workers to fill jobs that cannot be filled by American workers. These advocates call for the elimination of unacceptably long backlogs in the availability of visas so that families can be together. As for the undocumented in the country, this side says that they should be given the opportunity to earn legalization over time if they are otherwise admissible. The motto of this side could be "rational reforms will regain control" and "immigrants are good for the country."

Like few other legislative debates, the immigration reform debate has become a highly charged, emotional one. Both sides of the debate believe strongly that their prescriptions for reforming our immigration laws are the correct ones.

Seems to me, though, that at its very essence this debate is about whether or not America will be a welcoming nation that takes pride in its diversity and takes strength from the renewing spirit of each new generation of immigrants. In many ways, the soul of our nation is at stake.

Perhaps the late Holy Father, John Paul II, had a prophetic vision of this current debate when he last visited the United States. Within sight of that great symbol of welcome, the Statue of Liberty, the Holy Father said,

Is present-day America becoming less sensitive, less caring toward the poor, the weak, the stranger, the needy? It must not! Today, as before, the United States is called to be a hospitable society, a welcoming culture.

If America were to turn in on itself, would this not be the beginning of the end of what constitutes the very essence of the "American experience"?

In the coming weeks, the U.S. Congress will provide an answer to this question about who we intend to be as a nation in the future. I pray that their decisions will be informed by the values we have long held dear as a nation and not by those who would have us close the doors.

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Legislative Update

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

U.S. Senate to take up immigration reform March 27

The U.S. Senate will begin considering comprehensive immigration reform the week of March 27. The debate on the bill is likely to last at least two weeks, as various amendments are offered by Senators.

It is unclear whether the Senate will be taking up a Senate Judiciary bill sponsored by Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) or enforcement-only legislation recently introduced by Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn). The Senate Judiciary Committee is expected to complete its consideration of the committee bill the morning of March 27.

Prior to adjournment for a week-long recess, Judiciary Committee members discussed potential compromises on providing permanent status to the 11 million undocumented in the country and the creation of a temporary worker program. Amendments addressing these areas will be considered by the committee on March 27.

Nationwide Conference Call

The Justice for Immigrants Campaign held a nationwide Legislative Update Conference Call on Friday, March 17th, 2005. There were over 160 participants in the call. Mr. Kevin Appleby, Director of Public Policy with the USCCB Migration and Refugee Services provided those who joined with a detailed legislative update regarding the Senate debate on comprehensive immigration reform. If you were unable to join the call, you can dial in to listen to the recorded version by following these steps:

Please dial toll free: 1 888 203-1112, enter the replay passcode: 62524572 and follow the recorded directions.

We will be having more of these calls as information becomes available.



“A Journey of Hope”



Catholic Social Teaching and Migration

BACKGROUND. In advocating on behalf of migrants, immigrants, and refugees, it is important to understand that the Catholic position is based on Catholic social teaching, which is derived from the Gospels and the words of Christ; statements and encyclicals of the Popes; and statements and pastoral letters of bishops around the world, including the U.S. bishops. Understanding these teachings, which support the U.S. bishops' public policy positions on immigration, is helpful in understanding and defending these positions, especially within Catholic audiences.

GOSPEL FOUNDATIONS. 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)

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." (Jn. 1:11)

As we welcome the stranger into our midst, we welcome Christ Himself, for in the face of the migrant, immigrant, and refugee, we must see the face of Christ. In the Gospel of Luke, this is made clear in the experience of the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24: 13-15), as they become witnesses to the Truth by welcoming the stranger, who is Christ.

PAPAL TEACHINGS. In the first social encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (On the Condition of Labor), Pope Leo XIII established that persons have a right to work to survive and to support his or her family. Pope Pius XII, in the apostolic constitution *Exsul Familia* (On the Spiritual Care of the Migrant), reaffirms that migrants have a right to a life with dignity, and therefore a right to migrate toward that end: "Then, according to the teachings of *Rerum Novarum*, the right of the family to a life worthy of human dignity is recognized. When this happens, migration attains its natural scope..."

In the encyclical, *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), Pope John XXIII clearly articulates the right to migrate and the right not to migrate: "Every human being has the right to the freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of their country; and, when there are just reasons for it, the right to emigrate and take up residence elsewhere." Pope John Paul II reaffirmed this basic teaching in an address to the New World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Immigrants 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 to the human family, nor of citizenship in the universal society, the common, world-wide fellowship of men."

STATEMENTS OF THE U.S. BISHOPS. The U.S. 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 U.S. bishops issued the pastoral letter, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope*. In that document, the U.S. bishops articulated the following five principles that govern how the Church responds to public policy proposals relating to immigration.

Catholic Teaching

Parish Kit

Catholic Social Teaching and Migration

For the complete document please visit www.justiceforimmigrants.org/ParishKit/CatholicSocTeaching.pdf or find it within your Parish Kit.

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five principles that govern how the Church responds to public policy proposals relating to immigration.

1. Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.
2. Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.
3. Sovereign nations have a right to control their borders.
4. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.
5. The human rights and the human dignity of undocumented migrants should be respected.

For the complete document please visit www.justiceforimmigrants.org/ParishKit/CatholicSocTeaching.pdf or find it within your Parish Kit.

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 New York
 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 Columbus
 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 Yakima
 Diocese of Youngstown

JFI In Colorado

The Bishops of Colorado, Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver, Bishop Sheridan of Colorado Springs and Bishop Tafoya of Pueblo have joined together to ignite a state-wide campaign calling for comprehensive immigration reform. The Bishops' Campaign is designed to unite and mobilize a growing network of Catholic institutions, individuals, and other persons of good faith in support of immigration reform. The Bishops of Colorado call for immigration reform that includes principles consistent with those articulated in the bishops' pastoral letter, *Strangers No Longer: A Journey of Hope* and the National Campaign for Immigration Reform. As a follow up to the Bishops' Immigration Forum today on March 18, each Bishop will participate in at least two Bishop Town Hall Meetings at parishes in their dioceses encouraging dialogue on the issue of immigration reform. The location, date and time of those events are to be determined.

DIocese OF PUEBLO

Bishop Tafoya Declares 2006 Migration Year in the Diocese of Pueblo

"Before we can change laws we must also change attitudes, including those of many of our own flock. And because I believe the Church's voice on behalf of immigrants is more critically needed than ever before, I have declared the entire year 2006 to be Migration Year in the Diocese of Pueblo. Therefore our diocesan Justice for Immigrants Steering Committee will be working with individual parishes to develop education gatherings so everyone can learn. It gives us all the opportunity to get to know each other and hear each other's stories. In doing so, we will know our Christ all the more. So, I invite you to join these efforts as we, the body of Christ, learn to be a church together with mutual hospitality and education." ~ Bishop Tafoya of Pueblo

Diocese of Pueblo: Justice for Immigrants Steering Committee

Bishop Tafoya put together a diocesan steering committee of experts on the issue of immigration to develop an educational strategy, based on Catholic Social Teaching, which promotes the Bishops' call for comprehensive immigration reform. The steering committee has developed various programs and events that are currently taking place in parishes across the diocese raising awareness about the issues facing migrants today. The educa-

tional programs encourage Catholics to contact their elected officials and voice their concerns about the current immigration system. The steering committee provides leadership and resources to all concerned community members and organizations hoping to organize on the issue of immigration.

Diocese of Pueblo: White Ribbon Campaign

DIALOGUE is a call for prayer, reflection, and dialogue to advance a constructive debate on immigration reform in the United States. Individuals committed to wearing white ribbons demonstrate strong support for achieving a thoughtful, rational, and respectful debate on the complex issue of immigration reform which leads the country toward solutions rather than further division and frustration. The white ribbon campaign deplores the use of violence, intimidation, threats, and the spread of fear, hatred, and divisiveness as tools and tactics on immigration or any issue. Others are encouraged to join the White Ribbon Campaign as a demonstration of the value of reflection and thoughtful dialogue as a way to advance this debate in a manner that strengthens our country, rejects fear and hate, and helps Americans arrive at solutions to complex problems. For more information on the white ribbon campaign or the Justice for Immigrant Steering Committee in

Pueblo call Ron Roybal toll free at 1-800-354-2729 ext 110 or, e-mail Roybal at rroybal@dioceseofpueblo.com.

ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER AND DIOCESE OF COLORADO SPRINGS

The **Archdiocese of Denver** has also put together a committee on immigration. Leadership from across the Archdiocese including Catholic Charities, the Office of Hispanic Ministry, the Office of Social Ministry/Concerns and Centro San Juan Diego have formed a working committee to coordinate a speaker's series on immigration in parishes across the Archdiocese. The speaker's series provides catechesis on Catholic Social Teaching as it pertains to the issue of migration. The speaker's series also includes education on the current broken immigration system and encourages Catholics to become involved in grassroots advocacy efforts for comprehensive immigration reform. Members of Bishop Sheridan's pastoral council in the **Diocese of Colorado Springs** also plan on forming a similar committee using the resources and expertise of the committees established in the Diocese of Pueblo and the Archdiocese of Denver.

"...a call for prayer, reflection, and dialogue to advance a constructive debate on immigration reform in the United States."

Participating Organizations Showcase

Catholic Charities USA is the membership association of one of the nation's largest social service networks.

Our members-more than 1,300 local agencies and institutions nationwide-provide help and create hope for nearly seven million people a year regardless of religious, social, or economic backgrounds. For more than 275 years, local

Catholic Charities agencies have been providing a myriad of vital

services in their communities, ranging from day care and counseling to food and housing.

In 2003, local Catholic Charities agencies served more than 377,000 immigrants and refugees, offering such services as legal aid, citizenship classes, counseling, case management, legalization assistance, English classes, job placement and training, and much more.



www.catholiccharitiesusa.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

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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

Public Education & Training Materials for JFI

The Justice for Immigrants Campaign has created materials that can be used by Catholic agencies when they conduct public education outreach to the undocumented community on how undocumented people can begin now to prepare for a future earned legalization program.

Because there is no law yet providing a pathway to legal status for undocumented foreign nationals, we do not know what specific requirements the government will impose on undocumented people in order for them to qualify for lawful permanent residence in the United States.

Based on current immigration law, however, it is clear that applicants for any new immigration benefit will have to prove that they are who they claim

to be. In other words, they will have to prove their *identity*. Applicants for legal status in the United States have always had to prove their identity, but this requirement has undergone increased scrutiny since 9/11.

The JFI Campaign's Web site contains a handout intended to help staff and volunteers of community-based organizations to discuss the concept of *identity* with the undocumented community. This handout includes examples of the kind of documentation that might be required to prove identity, such as an expired or un-expired valid passport from the foreign national's home country; an original birth certificate or a certified copy from the foreign national's home country, or other valid photo identification issued by the home country, such as a national identity card.

This handout also warns undocumented

people about unscrupulous agencies that offer to obtain identity documents for them. Such agencies are generally engaged in illegal document production. Foreign nationals who use fake documents are subject to deportation from the United States. We therefore try to warn undocumented people from purchasing "papers" on the street.

This handout is located on the Justice for Immigrants Campaign Web site at www.justiceforimmigrants.org/prepare_legalization.html. This handout is also provided in Spanish at www.justiceforimmigrants.com/es/prepare_legalization.html

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