

JSRI

Catholic  
Teach-In on  
Immigration

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# In This Toolkit / Supplies Needed

1-2 Welcome/Overview

## SAMPLE MATERIALS

3-4 Sample Agenda: Spanish and English\*  
5-6 Sample Questions for Facilitators  
7-15 Sample Script for Speaker 1 and Speaker 2  
16 Sample Bulletin Announcement

## PREPARED HANDOUTS

17 Opening Prayer (bilingual)\*  
18-19 Church Principles on Migration: Spanish and English\*  
20 Immigration Myths and Facts\*  
21 Catholic Social Teaching and Migration by Fr. Fred Kammer, S.J.\*  
22-23 Listening Guidelines: Spanish and English\*  
24 Ideas for Action\*  
25 Sign-up for Emails  
26 Closing Prayer (bilingual)\*  
27-28 Evaluations: Spanish and English\*

## OTHER MATERIALS/SUPPLIES NEEDED

- **Congressional Contact Info** (Create your own contact sheet by identifying your state's 2 Senators and your district's Representative.)\*
- **Letter to Congress** (Create your own or contact Ignatian Solidarity Network at [info@ignatiansolidarity.net](mailto:info@ignatiansolidarity.net) for the most up-to-date advocacy letter)\*
- **A/V:** PowerPoint (download sample power point coinciding with sample script at [bit.ly/immdialogueppt](http://bit.ly/immdialogueppt)), LCD projector, screen, microphone
- **Supplies:** Nametags (numbered), pens for evaluations, table numbers
- **Light refreshments**

**\*Place a copy of this document in each participant's folder. Provide separate folders for English and Spanish speakers.**

# Welcome/Overview

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Welcome and thank you for your interest in the Catholic Teach-In on Migration (CTOM). The CTOM aims to create a “culture of encounter” that leads to greater understanding and empathy on the issue of undocumented immigration by bringing together undocumented immigrants and U.S.-born Catholics in a prayerful, intimate, and safe place. Developed by the Jesuit Social Research Institute (JSRI) in New Orleans, Louisiana, there is also an explicit advocacy goal for these events: to engage more Catholics in the pews and in our schools in the struggle for immigration reform.

The first half of the toolkit contains samples of all the documents you will need to conduct a CTOM at your parish or school. The second half of the toolkit includes prepared handouts that should be provided to all of your participants. You will need to develop two additional advocacy-focused handouts for your participants: an immigration advocacy sign-on letter (you may wish to have participants craft their own letters instead) and a page with your area’s Senators and Representative contact info.

An ideal location for a CTOM is a large room, such as a parish hall or school cafeteria, with tables that can each seat eight to ten people, including one or two brave undocumented immigrants willing to tell their stories, a bilingual interpreter, a table facilitator who will ask prepared questions and moderate the discussion, and five to eight U.S. born parishioners or students. (Everyone should have a nametag, first names only. You may want to number nametags so that people who come together sit at different tables.)

The CTOM organizers will be responsible for engaging and recruiting key CTOM “personnel”:

- 1. Undocumented immigrants (at least 2 people to share with the entire group and an additional 1-2 people per table):** willing to tell their personal and often painful migration stories during small group listening sessions. JSRI often works with undocumented immigrant members of a local community-based organization, The Congress of Day Laborers. El Congreso seeks to empower their undocumented members from Central America and Mexico to speak out and organize for immigrant justice. Other undocumented immigrant participants who have been recruited to speak at JSRI’s Teach-Ins include adult ESL students from one of the organizer’s ESL class. The Peace and Justice Commission of the Archdiocese of St. Louis has worked closely with the local Catholic Charities to engage their immigrant teen clients (with parental permission) to share their stories with Catholic high school students.
- 2. Interpreters (1 per table):** JSRI was able to recruit bilingual Spanish/English speakers

## Welcome/Overview (Continued)

through local social justice organizations and universities to interpret at Teach-Ins.

- 3. Table Facilitators (1 per table):** JSRI initially used a list of Just-Faith graduates to recruit table facilitators. Table facilitators should receive a brief training in the basics of facilitating discussions and how to ask the “Questions for Facilitators” (included in this packet) to the immigrants at their assigned table. The questions provided in this toolkit for facilitator use are intended to help the immigrant tell his or her story. Table facilitators should be advised to use the questions only as prompts. If the immigrant is comfortable telling their story without prompts, then the facilitator should let the immigrant speaker tell her story in his or her own way.
- 4. Co-Leaders:** Two individuals comfortable in public speaking and facilitating large groups need to be recruited to lead the Teach-In. The co-leaders are identified as Speaker One and Speaker Two in the CTOM script. Ideally at least one of the co-leaders is Latinx.

A typical Catholic Teach-In on Migration lasts two hours, and most to date have been held in a church parish on a weekday evening from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. Outreach in the host parish/institution is essential to guaranteeing a good turnout. This packet contains a sample bulletin announcement to promote a CTOM.

Evaluations of CTOMs have been overwhelmingly positive. Immigrants have often expressed how supported and affirmed they felt by the process, while U.S.-born participants have frequently expressed gratitude for the opportunity to engage in such moving face-to-face encounters. (Evaluation forms are included in this packet.)

JSRI staff have used the contact information from U.S.-born participants they have collected at the Teach-Ins in several immigrant advocacy campaigns, including sign-on letters to support immigration reform legislation, emails to Congress to advocate for the resettlement of refugees from Syria, and to urge Teach-In alumni participation in public actions and media events that JSRI has organized to promote immigrant justice.

*For more information on the Catholic Teach-in on Migration, view this video by the Loyola Institute for Ministry which further details how to host a Teach-In: [bit.ly/immdialogues](http://bit.ly/immdialogues)*

*You are also welcome to contact the co-developers of the CTOM, Sue Weishar at [sweishar@loyno.edu](mailto:sweishar@loyno.edu) or Mary Baudouin at [mbaudouin@jesuits.org](mailto:mbaudouin@jesuits.org) with any questions you might have.*

*Here are two articles from JSRI that describe actual Catholic Teach-Ins on Migration: [bit.ly/immdialogues2](http://bit.ly/immdialogues2) and [bit.ly/immdialogues3](http://bit.ly/immdialogues3)*

# El Diálogo Católico Sobre Migración

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6:40 Bienvenida y Propósito de la Noche  
Oración de apertura

6:50 Breve discusión de nuestra crisis de inmigración y un video explicando el aumento de migrantes menores de América Central

7:00 Testimonio personal de un inmigrante.

7:05 Enseñanzas de la Iglesia sobre la migración y el tratamiento de los refugiados

7:15 Testimonios personal de un inmigrante

7:20 Breve discusión de los Mitos Migratorios y Pautas para Sesión de Escucha

## SESIÓN DE ESCUCHA DE GRUPOS PEQUEÑOS

7:25 Introducciones, El/la facilitador(a) del grupo entrevista el/la inmigrante de su grupo de su experiencia migratoria

8:10 Oración Silencio y reflexión de lo que acaba de haber escuchado

## COMPARTIMIENTO DEL GRUPO

8:15 Ver hoja informativa "Ideas para acción"

## ORACIÓN FINAL

8:25 Oración Final

## EVALUACIONES

8:30 Evaluaciones y la oportunidad de firmar la carta a miembros del Congreso de EE.UU.

# Catholic Immigration Dialogue Agenda

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6:40 Welcome and Purpose of the Evening  
Opening Prayer

6:50 Brief discussion of our nation's broken immigration system and short video on the border crisis

7:00 Personal testimony from local immigrant(s)

7:05 Church teachings on migration and the treatment of refugees

7:15 Personal testimony from local immigrant(s)

7:20 Immigration Myths  
Listening Session Guidelines

## SMALL GROUP LISTENING SESSIONS AND Q&A

7:25 Introductions, Facilitator interviews immigrant(s) in her/his group, facilitates Q&A with group

8:10 Quiet prayer and reflection on what they have heard/experienced (Lead by Leader 1—see Prayer handout)

## GROUP SHARING

8:15 See "Ideas for Action" handout

## CLOSING PRAYER

8:25 See "Closing Prayer"

## EVALUATIONS

8:30 Evaluations and opportunity to sign advocacy letters and sign up for advocacy emails

# Questions for Facilitators

## (Questions for teens are in bold)

The point of the questions is to help your interviewee(s) tell their story. Feel free to ask follow-up questions as needed to help listeners understand the immigrant's story.

- "Hello, everyone. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you all for being here today for this very special event. Let's start with introductions. Please say your name, where you grew up, where you live now, and as an ice-breaker, please tell us what is your favorite food or dish. (MODEL THIS FOR THE GROUP).
- Thank the immigrant (and his/her parents) for being willing to talk with us today: "We are grateful to you \_\_\_ for your coming here today to help us better understand your experience as an immigrant and the migration experience in general."
- To the group: "So that we can give \_\_\_\_\_ our total attention, please turn off your cellphones. Also, please hold your questions until the end of the listening session."
- QUESTIONS: "Now, \_\_\_\_\_, I would like to ask you a few questions so we can better understand your life experiences."

"My first questions are about your journey to the U.S.":

- When did you come to the U.S.? (**FOR TEENS: How old were you when you came to the United States?**)
- (**FOR TEENS: Did you come with your parents?**) How did you get here (bus, train, car, walking)? How long did it take? Were you ever afraid? Hungry? What was the hardest part of the journey?

**FOR TEENS IF DID NOT COME WITH PARENTS: "Now I'd like to ask you some questions about what it was like being apart from your parent(s)":**

- **How long were you apart from your mother/father? How old were you when your mother/father left your country? Who looked after you? Did you miss your mom/dad? Could you talk to them on the phone or by computer? What was the hardest part of not having your mom/dad with you those years when he/she was in the U.S.?**
- **What is it like being together again with your mom or dad after \_\_\_ years? What are some fun things you have done with your mom/dad since being reunited?**

# Questions for Facilitators

## Continued

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CRIME: "I understand crime is a problem in [NAME OF COUNTRY OF ORIGIN]. Were you or other family members victims of crime in your country?"

- Could you please describe what happened and when it happened?
- (Gently prod) Who do you think was responsible for this crime?
- Did you (or your family or friend) call the police after the crime was committed? Did the police help bring the perpetrators to justice and improve safety in the area where the crime occurred?
- How has fear of crime changed how people live their lives in your country? E.g. can people go out at night?

ECONOMIC: "What was the economic situation like for you (or your parents) in your home country? Did you have regular work and enough to eat? What is your economic situation like now in [NAME OF YOUR CITY]?"

"Now I would like to ask some questions about your life in the U.S.":

- What does it mean to be with your children (mom/dad) in the U.S.? Do you like living in the U.S.? What is difficult about your life in the United States?
- What would it mean to you if you (**or your mom or dad**) were deported? Do you worry about being separated from your children? parent(s)? What worries you the most about that? Do you know of any families that lost a father or mother to deportation? What happened to that family?
- What are your hopes and dreams for you and your family?
- Is there anything else you think it is important for others to know to better understand your situation and the situation of many other immigrants (**immigrant teens**) in [NAME OF YOUR CITY]?

IF TIME REMAINS: Questions for U.S. participants

- Do you have any questions for [person's name]? What most surprised you about [person's name] story? If you were in the same situation as [IMMIGRANT'S NAME], what do you think you might do?
- Were you aware of the Church's teachings on migration? Why does the Church say that persons have a God-given right to migrate when they cannot support themselves and their families or when their lives are in danger? Is that consistent with other teachings of the Church you are aware of?
- Is there anyone who would like to share when and why your ancestors came to the U.S.? [after hearing the stories] What is similar in the stories of you just hear and the story of [IMMIGRANT'S NAME]? What is different?



# Catholic Teach-In on Immigration Script (1)

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**[This script was developed for 2 speakers; Ideally one of the two Speakers is Latinx]**

## **Speaker 1**

**[Thank You slide]** (Introduce self, welcome and thank all the sponsors.)

**[Goals of CTOM slide]** Here are the goals of tonight's Catholic Teach-In on Migration:

- 1) To provide an opportunity to listen and learn about the migration experience of local immigrants from Latin America.
- 2) To learn what the Church teaches on migration and seeking refuge.
- 3) To discern how one is being called to respond to our nation's immigration crisis.

**[Opening Prayer slide]** (Read prayer slide in Spanish and English.)

### **Speaker 1: (Introduction):**

The theme of migration and what our faith teaches about this phenomenon is the focus of tonight's event. We are so fortunate that we have with us this evening \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, brave immigrants willing to tell us their migration stories.

As we hear their stories we should remember that migration has always been a part of human history. Because of widespread changes caused by globalization, however, migration has become a hotly debated topic around the world.

**[Slide of Overcrowded Boat]** The International Organization for Migration reports that 5,079 migrants died trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea in 2016. That number is expected to greatly increase this year.

**[Slide of Cross in Desert]** Over 320 migrants died trying to cross the U.S./Mexico border in 2016, nearly seven thousand have perished in the desert since 1998.

# Catholic Teach-In on Immigration Script (2)

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**[Slide of Pope Francis]** Because of the often harsh responses that migrants meet in their destination countries, Pope Francis has called for a “globalization of charity” to protect migrants.

**[Slide of Pope’s Message]** “A change of attitude towards migrants and refugees is needed on the part of everyone, moving away from attitudes of defensiveness and fear, indifference and marginalization—all typical of a throwaway culture—towards attitudes based on a culture of encounter, the only culture capable of building a better, more just and fraternal world.”

The Holy Father understands that migration is not just an important political or social issue, it is at the heart of the Judeo-Christian scriptures.

**[Slide of Leviticus 19: 33-34]** In Exodus in the Old Testament we see the flight of the Israelites, who escape oppression in Egypt and wander in the desert for 40 years, until the Lord leads them to a new land, Israel. This experience leads to God’s admonishment to the Israelites in Leviticus: “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien ....You shall love the alien as yourself, as you were once aliens in the land of Egypt.”

**[Slide of Holy Family]** In the New Testament, exile and homelessness mark the life of Christ as well. In Matthew, the child Jesus and the Holy Family flee as refugees to Egypt to escape the threat of Herod. As an adult, Jesus is an itinerant preacher who travels throughout Galilee and Judea to spread his message.

There is no coincidence here—Christ lived as a migrant and a refugee for a reason: In order to live with his people in solidarity, and to provide an example to all generations, even to this day.

For many complex reasons our country is experiencing an immigration crisis. [Speaker 2 and her/his title] will now lead us in a discussion for some of the reasons why.

# Catholic Teach-In on Immigration Script (3)

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**Speaker 2:** A major cause of our nation's immigration crisis is a global economy that pushes people out of their homelands while at the same time pulling them toward places of greater opportunity like the U.S

**[Slide of Violence in Central America]** Also three countries in Central America (Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala) are experiencing a wave of unprecedented violence, a consequence of many complex factors, including a global war on drugs and a long history of U.S. policies that undermine social and economic development in these countries. This violence, coupled with the desire to rejoin family members in the U.S., has led to an increase in the number of unaccompanied children and families crossing the border in recent years.

**[Slide of Our Nation's Immigration Crisis]** Our nation's immigration crisis is most evident in the fact that 11 million people are living in undocumented status in the U.S. with almost no way to legalize their status. Yet, undocumented immigrants play a key role in our economy and often work in difficult-to-fill jobs. For example:

**[Farmworker Slide]** Over half of all farmworkers in the U.S. are undocumented. That delicious apple you had for lunch or the oranges in the juice you had for breakfast were probably picked by undocumented immigrants.

**[Construction Worker slide]** 15% of the U.S. construction workforce is composed of undocumented workers.

**[Food Preparer Slide]** Approximately 9% of the U.S. service industry workers are undocumented.

**[Slide of Reconstruction Worker]** No one should better understand the important role that undocumented immigrants play in the economy than New Orleanians. Undocumented workers composed 25% of the Recovery Workforce at the height of disaster recovery following Hurricane Katrina. It is hard to imagine how we could have come as far as we have since Katrina without the hard work of undocumented laborers.

# Catholic Teach-In on Immigration Script (4)

**[Slide of Immigrant family]** Many unauthorized immigrant adults have deep roots in our communities—two thirds (66%) have lived in U.S. for 10 or more years. Almost 40% of adult undocumented immigrants are parents of U.S. citizen children. Now Speaker 1 will discuss some migration policy issues.

## **Speaker 1:**

### **[Slide on Why Didn't They Just Coming Legally]**

Some ask, "Well why didn't they just come legally? Of course people would prefer to come legally, but there exists hardly any employment visas for the so-called "low-skilled" work that undocumented immigrants are performing. And unless someone has a close family member who has a green card or who is a U.S. citizen, they cannot obtain a family-based immigrant visa. (Sponsorship by an employer or a close family member is required for almost all immigrant visas to the U.S.)

**[Slide on Polls]** Although you would never guess this by what you hear in the media, poll after poll show that the vast majority of Americans want Congress to pass legislation that would provide a path to legalization to undocumented immigrants currently living in the U.S. However, efforts for reform have been stalled in Congress.

**[Slide on Decrease of Undocumented Immigrants in the U.S.]** Also despite what you may hearing recently, the number of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. has been dropping since 2007, and is now at its lowest point since 2004

**[Slide on Deportations]** Meanwhile, even though deportations reached an all-time high during the Obama Administration, President Trump's Executive Orders on Immigration indicate an even more aggressive and destructive policies towards immigrants living in the U.S. without authorization.

### **[Slide on Trump Executive Actions]**

Here is a summary of the some of the most harmful aspects of Trump's Executive Orders:

- They rescind Obama immigration enforcement priorities– almost every undocumented immigrant is now a priority for deportation [regardless of how long one has lived in the U.S. and whether they are caring for their U.S. citizen children.]

# Catholic Teach-In on Immigration

## Script (5)

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- They promote a massive expansion of deportation enforcement, including deputizing local law enforcement to do work of federal immigration agents (which will undermine the public safety of everyone and make our nation less secure as immigrants will be reluctant to report crimes)
- They require the detention of everyone seeking asylum at U.S./Mexico Border (which is a violation of international human rights principles and laws)
- Calls for the immediate deportation (called expedited removal) for anyone who cannot prove they have been in the U.S. for 2 or more years (which will result in a gross violation of due process rights and protections.)

**[Slide on Testimony of Local Immigrant]** Now we will hear the migration story of \_\_\_\_\_, an immigrant from \_\_\_\_\_.

[TESTIMONY]

Now **Speaker 2** will discuss what the Church teaches about migration.

**Speaker 2:**

### **CHURCH'S TEACHINGS ON MIGRATION [Show title of this slide only]**

Catholic Social Teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Modern Catholic social teaching is rooted in the Scriptures and has been developed through encyclicals and the statements of Catholic bishop conferences, beginning with Pope Leo XIII's encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, in 1891. In 2003 the bishops of the United States and Mexico articulated five principles on migration that have emerged from over 100 years of Church teaching on this topic in their pastoral letter, *Strangers no Longer, Together on the Journey of Hope*.

Before we look at these five Church principles on migration, it is important to understand the foundational principle of all Catholic Social Teaching, which is the dignity and sanctity of the human person.

# Catholic Teach-In on Immigration

## Script (6)

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Because each and every one of us is a Child of God, made in God's image and likeness, every human person is of inestimable value and worth and therefore has the right to life and the conditions worthy of life.

Ok—Now let's look at the first principle of Catholic Social Teaching on Migration (By the way, copies of these principles are in your folder):

***[Show and Read First Principle on Slide: 1) Persons have the right to find opportunity in their homeland.]***

The Church teaches that 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. Another way to say this is that persons have a right NOT to migrate—people should not have to leave everyone they know and love, their family, their friends, and all that is familiar to them because they cannot live lives of dignity in their home countries.

***[Show (but don't read yet) Second Principle on Slide: 2) Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.]***

That leads to the second church principle on migration, which is "Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families." When persons cannot find employment in their country of origin to support themselves and their families, then the Church says they have a God-given right to migrate to find work elsewhere in order to survive because, again, of that foundational principal: All people have the right to life and the conditions worthy of life.

***[Show and Read Third Principle on Slide: 3) Sovereign nationals have the right to control their borders.]***

The Church also recognizes the right of sovereign nations to control their borders, a right arising from their responsibility for the common good, but this right is not absolute. As the bishops note, more powerful economic nations have a stronger obligation to accommodate migration flows.

# Catholic Teach-In on Immigration Script (7)

**[Show and Read Fourth Principle on Slide: 4) Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.]**

The Church teaches that those who flee wars and persecution, such as refugees and asylum seekers, should be protected by the global community and have a right to have their asylum claims fully considered.

**[Show and Read Fifth Principle on Slide: 5) The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be protected.]**

As the bishops note, “Regardless of their legal status, migrants, like all persons, possess inherent dignity that should be respected. Immigrant workers without documentation do not lose their status as human persons made in God’s image.

[Pause]

As I mentioned, a summary of these principles is in your packets, with a link to the joint pastoral letter, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope*, where these principles are articulated and annotated. Thank you.

**Speaker 1:**

**[Slide on Testimony of Local Immigrant]** Now we will hear the migration story of \_\_\_\_\_, an immigrant from \_\_\_\_\_.

**[Slide on Immigration Myths]** Sadly, there are a lot of myths and untruths about immigration. We have included information addressing those myths in your packets. We do not have time to go over those now, but we ask that you please review those afterwards.

**[Slides on Listening Session Guidelines]**

Now the time has arrived for Listening Sessions, the heart of tonight’s program.

# Catholic Teach-In on Immigration Script (8)

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Listening session guidelines are in your packet, and I will go over them now with you on the PowerPoint:

- 1) Listening is an act of love and care. I will listen respectfully and constructively (i.e., no side conversations, no interruptions).
- 2) God frequently speaks through the unfamiliar and different. I will listen intently in order to fully understand a different point of view, realizing how this will help with my own evolving journey.
- 3) If asked to keep something confidential, I will honor the request. In conversations outside the group I won't attribute particular statements to particular individuals by name or identifying information without permission.
- 4) I will remember that we are in a faith-based setting, and that our purpose is to build understanding among members of the Body of Christ, and I will participate in a way that builds the Christian community.

## **SMALL GROUP LISTENING SESSIONS FOR AT LEAST 35 MINUTES.**

### **Speaker 1**

**[Slide on Sharing Feelings]** I want to thank the immigrant speakers for sharing their powerful stories with us tonight. To the Americans who listened to their stories, could you please say in a sentence or what you feeling right now?

### **[Slide on Ideas for Action]**

Please see the handout *Ideas for Action*. What is one thing you feel called to do to respond to the crisis we have learned about tonight? If you are so moved, please share with others at your table.



# Catholic Teach-In on Immigration Script (9)

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[LATER mention: ]

- 1) Please Sign Letter to your state's Congressional Delegation
- 2) Don't forget to sign the email list for us to contact you for calls to action

**[Slide on Church Teaching from Pope Francis]** Let's hear what Pope Francis is saying to us Catholics about our response to migrants, the strangers in our midst:

*Every human being is a child of God! He or she bears the image of Christ! We ourselves need to see, and then to enable others to see, that migrants and refugees do not only represent a problem to be solved, but are brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected and loved. They are an occasion that Providence gives us to help build a more just society, a more perfect democracy, a more united country, a more fraternal world and a more open and evangelical Christian community.*

**[Slide of Closing Prayer]**

*(Pastor and Latinx speaker take turns reading the prayer in Spanish and English.)*

**[Slide on Evaluations]** (Request that EVERYONE please complete an evaluation).

# Sample Bulletin Announcement

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TITLE: Catholic Immigration Dialogue, [DATE/TIME]

[NAME OF INSTITUTION AND/OR OFFICE] is sponsoring a Catholic Immigration Dialogue on [DATE/TIME] in [LOCATION]. The purpose of the dialogue is to learn from immigrants themselves why they and their families have fled violence and impunity in Central America [ADAPT LANGUAGE TO APPROPRIATE CIRCUMSTANCES] and to discuss what the Church teaches about migration. Other co-sponsors include [LIST IF APPLICABLE]. Please contact [CONTACT NAME] for more information at [PHONE/EMAIL].

# Opening Prayer

## Oración Inicial

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### Prayer for Those Who Migrate

Mary knew the weariness  
of the journey;  
To Bethlehem, To Egypt,  
Back to Nazareth.  
She knew the weariness,  
The fear, the longing for home,  
The need to continue moving, moving,  
The longing for journey's end,  
the longing for at least  
a semblance of a home.

To Mary we entrust  
The mothers, the fathers, the children  
who today are holy families  
Migrating in hope, in fear, in longing,  
for peace, for some security,  
For something like a home.  
May they find their journey's end  
as we open ourselves to their stories,  
their seed, their spirits;  
We ask for mercy  
for all migrants  
and for our communities  
who are challenged to welcome them,  
to give them hope for a new life.

*Edward Gross, S.J.*

### Oración por quienes migran

María sabía el cansancio  
Del viaje;  
A Belén, A Egipte,  
De vuelta a Mazaret.  
Ella sabía el cansancio,  
El miedo, el anhelo de la casa,  
La necesidad de seguir moviendo,  
moviendo,  
El anhelo de la final del viaje,  
el anhelo por al menos  
una apariencia de un hogar.

A María le encomendamos  
Las madres, los padres, los niños  
que hoy son santas familias  
Migrando en la esperanza, en el miedo,  
en anhelo,  
por la paz, por un poco de seguridad,  
Por algo parecido a un hogar.  
Que puedan encontrar el final de se  
jornada  
ya que nos abrimos a sus historias, sus  
necesidades, sus espirituales.  
Pedimos misericordia  
para todos los migrantes  
y para nuestra comunidades  
que sean retados a darles la bienvenida,  
para darles esperanza para una nueva  
vida.

*Edward Gross, S.J.*

# Values Foundational to the Catholic Church's Teachings on Migration

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The rich tradition of the Church's teachings with regard to migration surface five principles which guide the Church's view on migration issues.

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

34. 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.**

35. 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.**

36. The Church recognizes the right of sovereign nations to control their territories but rejects such control when it is exerted merely for the purpose of acquiring additional wealth. More powerful economic nations, which have the ability to protect and feed their residents, have a stronger obligation to accommodate migration flows.

## **IV. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.**

37. 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.**

38. 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 from enforcement officers from both receiving and transit countries. Government policies that respect the basic human rights of the undocumented are necessary.

*(from Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, 2003, <http://bit.ly/strangersnolonger>)*

# Valores Fundamentales de las Enseñanzas de la Iglesia Católica Sobre Migración

La rica tradición de las enseñanzas de la Iglesia con respecto a las superficies de migración emerge cinco principios que guían la opinión de la Iglesia sobre temas Migratorios.

## **I. Las personas tienen el derecho de encontrar oportunidades en su tierra natal**

34. Toda persona tiene el derecho de encontrar en su propio país oportunidades económicas, políticas y sociales, que le permitan alcanzar una vida digna y plena mediante el uso de sus dones. Es en este contexto cuando un trabajo que proporcione un salario justo, suficiente para vivir, constituye una necesidad básica de todo ser humano.

## **II. Las personas tienen el derecho de emigrar para mantenerse a sí mismas y a sus familias**

35. La Iglesia reconoce que todos los bienes de la tierra pertenecen a todos los pueblos. 15 Por lo tanto, cuando una persona no consiga encontrar un empleo que le permita obtener la manutención propia y de su familia en su país de origen, ésta tiene el derecho de buscar trabajo fuera de él para lograr sobrevivir. Los Estados soberanos deben buscar formas de adaptarse a este derecho.

## **III. Los Estados soberanos poseen el derecho de controlar sus fronteras**

36. La Iglesia reconoce que todo Estado soberano posee el derecho de salvaguardar su territorio; sin embargo, rechaza que tal derecho se ejerza sólo con el objetivo de adquirir mayor riqueza. Las naciones cuyo poderío económico sea mayor, y tengan la capacidad de proteger y alimentar a sus habitantes, cuentan con una obligación mayor de adaptarse a los flujos migratorios.

## **IV. Debe protegerse a quienes busquen refugio y asilo**

37. La comunidad global debe proteger a quienes huyen de la guerra y la persecución. Lo anterior requiere, como mínimo, que los migrantes cuenten con el derecho de solicitar la calidad de refugiado o asilado sin permanecer detenidos, y que dicha solicitud sea plenamente considerada por la autoridad competente.

## **V. Deben respetarse la dignidad y los derechos humanos de los migrantes indocumentados**

38. Independientemente de su situación legal, los migrantes, como toda persona, poseen una dignidad humana intrínseca que debe ser respetada. Es común que sean sujetos a leyes punitivas y al maltrato por parte de las autoridades, tanto en países de origen como de tránsito y destino. Es necesaria la adopción de políticas gubernamentales que respeten los derechos humanos básicos de los migrantes indocumentados.

# Immigration Myths and Facts

***Myth: Many immigrants cross the border illegally and are overrunning the country.***

Fact: 72% of the foreign born population is authorized immigrants, including naturalized citizens, legal permanent residents, and legal temporary residents. Net migration from Mexico was negative for 2009-2014, and the number of undocumented migrants in US peaked in 2007.

***Myth: Immigrants take jobs and opportunity away from Americans.***

Fact: Immigrants stimulate economic growth and there is no evidence that growth takes place at the expense of US workers. Over 40% of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children. Congressional Budget Office analysis shows that offering a pathway to legalization for the undocumented would strengthen the economy by creating certainty, stability, and opportunity — not the opposite.

***Myth: Immigrants bring crime to US communities.***

Fact: Even though the past two decades have shown increases in immigrant populations, crime rates have dropped in the same period. Immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than native-born.

***Myth: Immigrants don't pay taxes.***

Fact: Immigrants pay taxes, including income, property, sales or other. All undocumented immigrants pay sales taxes that stimulate our state and local budgets, and many pay federal taxes as well. However, undocumented immigrants are not eligible for most public welfare benefits, so they contribute more to our public budgets than they receive, creating a positive net fiscal impact.

***Myth: Deporting all undocumented immigrants will strengthen our economy.***

Fact: Removing millions of long-term members of our communities from the United States would cost an estimated \$600 billion and substantially harm our productivity, particularly in industries such as agriculture, construction and hospitality. It would also require the creation of a huge deportation force that would sow fear and guarantee an increase in racial profiling and incarceration of people of color.

***Myth: We have no idea who is coming into our country as a refugee.***

Fact: The screening done for our refugee resettlement program is extremely rigorous. On average, candidates wait nearly two years for approval of their applications to enter through our humanitarian programs.

(source: Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New York, [bit.ly/immmythsfacts](http://bit.ly/immmythsfacts))



Seal of the Society of Jesus

## Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and Migration

by Fr. Fred Kammer, S.J.

The rights of migrants (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, migrant workers, and internally displaced persons-IDPs) begin with the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching, namely, the dignity and sanctity of the human person. The right to life and the conditions worthy of life—when threatened by poverty, injustice, religious intolerance, armed conflict, and other root causes—give rise to the right to migrate.<sup>1</sup> As Pope John XXIII explained:

*Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of his own country; and, when there are just reasons for it, the right to emigrate to other countries and take up residence there. The fact that one is a citizen of a particular state does not detract in any way from his membership in the human family as a whole, nor from his citizenship in the world community.<sup>2</sup>*

This is a right to both emigrate from one's own country and immigrate into another country.

In 2003, the bishops of the United States and Mexico named five principles<sup>3</sup> that have emerged from the "rich tradition of church teachings with regard to migration":

**First, persons have a right to find opportunities in their own homeland.** This principle reflects the responsibilities of all citizens and governments for the common good, creating the political, economic, and social conditions for persons to live in dignity, raise their families, use their God-given gifts, and find employment that provides a living family wage—a fundamental principle of CST dating back to the 19th century. Wealthy and powerful nations are

obliged to assist less developed nations in creating the conditions for people to live dignified lives.

**Second, persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.** Pope Pius XII declared in 1952 that both natural law and devotion to humanity required that international migration be opened to people forced from their countries by revolutions, unemployment, or hunger. He explained, "For the Creator of the universe made all good things primarily for the good of all."<sup>4</sup> When people cannot find adequate work, they have a natural right to work elsewhere to attain the means of survival for themselves and their families.

**Third, sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.** Our tradition recognizes the right of nations to control their territories, a right arising from their responsibility for the common good. However, as Pope Pius indicated, this right is not absolute. State sovereignty "cannot be exaggerated to the point that access to this land is, for inadequate or unjustified reasons, denied to needy and decent people from other nations..." Balancing rights then becomes critical.

The U.S. and Mexican bishops note that individual rights and state responsibility for the common good are complementary.

*While the sovereign state may impose reasonable limits on immigration, the common good is not served when the basic human rights of the individual are violated. In the current condition of the world, in which global poverty and persecution are rampant, the presumption is that persons*

*must migrate in order to support and protect themselves and that nations who are able to receive them should do so whenever possible.<sup>5</sup>*

In 2000, the U.S. bishops, reflecting on the tension between border control and the individual right to fundamental dignity, declared the latter to "give rise to a more compelling claim to the conditions worthy of human life."<sup>6</sup>

**Fourth, refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.** Those who flee wars and persecution have a greater claim for protection from the global community. As the U.S. and Mexican bishops urged, "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."<sup>7</sup>

**Fifth, the human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.** As the bishops note, "Regardless of their legal status, migrants, like all persons, possess inherent dignity that should be respected."<sup>8</sup> This applies to punitive laws, enforcement practices, detention conditions, abuse and neglect, and policies that tear families apart.

Even undocumented workers, often subject to inadequate wages and demeaning conditions in a shadow economy, are entitled to basic human rights in terms of wages and working conditions. Immigrant workers, even ones without documents, do not lose their status as human persons made in God's image. Demeaning wages, inhuman conditions, and the denial of workers' natural rights assault the dignity and sanctity of the human person.

1 Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope*, joint pastoral letter concerning migration, January 2003, Nos. 28-29.

2 Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 1963, No. 25.

3 *Strangers No Longer*, op. cit., Nos. 33-39.

4 Pope Pius XII, *Exsul Familia*, Apostolic Constitution, Vatican City, 1952.

5 *Strangers No Longer*, op. cit., No. 39.

6 U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity*, Washington, D.C., 2000, p. 11.

7 *Strangers No Longer*, op. cit., No. 37.

8 *Ibid.*, No. 38.

## LISTENING SESSION GROUP GUIDELINES

1. Listening is an act of love and care. I will listen respectfully and constructively (i.e., no side conversations, no interruptions).
2. God frequently speaks through the unfamiliar and different. I will listen intently in order to fully understand a different point of view, realizing how this will help with my own evolving journey.
3. If asked to keep something confidential, I will honor the request. In conversations outside the group I won't attribute particular statements to particular individuals by name or identifying information without permission.
4. I will remember that we are in a Church setting, and that our purpose is to build understanding among members of the Body of Christ, and I will participate in a way that builds the Christian community.

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## ACUERDOS DE DIALOGO

1. Para escuchar es un acto de amor. Voy a escuchar con respeto y no voy a interrumpir a nadie.
2. Frecuente el Dios habla por lo que es desconocido o diferente. Voy a escuchar con cuidado un punto de vista diferente que mi. Entiendo que en ese manera mi viaje personal va a desarrollar y mejorar.
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4. Recordemos que estamos in un ambiente de la Iglesia, y que nuestro propósito es edificar el entendimiento entre los miembros del Cuerpo de Cristo, y que participaremos a la edificación de la Comunidad Cristiana.

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# Ideas for Action to Support Justice and Compassion for Immigrants in Our Community

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- Pray for the safety and well-being of the children and families fleeing violence in Central America and for a compassionate response to our nation's immigration crisis from our elected leaders.
- Write your Senators and Representative asking that Congress pass humane and comprehensive immigration reform legislation.
- Accompany local undocumented immigrants to their ICE check-in appointments.
- Submit a personal reflection for publication about what you learned here tonight that can be inserted into our church bulletin.
- Write a letter to the editor voicing opposition to legislative proposals that would roll back humanitarian protections for children and families fleeing violence and persecution and in favor of increased funding for the care of unaccompanied children.
- Join in local advocacy efforts to work for just and humane comprehensive immigration reform so that families can be reunited in an orderly and safe manner and millions of undocumented immigrants can be freed of the burden of being undocumented.
- Join Ignatian Solidarity Network <https://ignatiansolidarity.net/advocacy> or Justice for Immigrants advocacy mailing lists <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/take-action/join-us/>
- Volunteer (especially if bilingual) to assist other local organizations with outreach to families of unaccompanied immigrant children.
- Other Ideas? Please share in group discussion.



# Closing Prayer

## Oración Final

**Call to Prayer** As a way of entering into our prayer, call to mind a particular story, person, statistic, policy, or church teaching that touched your heart tonight.

What do you want to say to God about that?

What is God saying to you?

Sit with the conversation between you and God for a minute in silence.

**Llamada a la oración** *Como una manera de entrar en nuestra oración, recuerde una historia particular, persona, estadística, política o enseñanza de la iglesia que tocó su corazón esta noche.*

*¿Qué quieres decir a Dios sobre esto?*

*¿Qué está diciendo Dios?*

*Siéntese con la conversación entre usted y Dios durante un minute de silencio.*

**Church Teaching** Let us hear what Pope Francis is saying to us as Catholics about our response to the migrants, the strangers in our midst. Every human being is a child of God! He or she bears the image of Christ! We ourselves need to see, and then enable others to see, that migrants and refugees do not only represent a problem to be solved, but are brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected and loved. They are an occasion that Providence gives us to help build a more just society, a more perfect democracy, a more united country, a more fraternal world and a more open and evangelical Christian community.

**Group Sharing** What is one thing you feel called to do to respond to the crisis we have learned about tonight? (See also the handout—Ideas for Action) If you are moved to do so, share that in a few words with others at your table.

**Compartimiento del grupo** *¿Qué es una cosa que te sientes a hacer para responder a la crisis que hemos aprendido esta noche? Vea también el folleto - ideas para acción. Si usted es movido a hacerlo, comparten unas palabras con los demás en su mesa.*

**Closing Prayer** Jesus, friend of the Stranger, Inspire us to be ministers of the Gospel and to see our neighbors in the strangers we meet. Teach us what it means to love the strangers as we love ourselves. Forgive us for our selfishness, for our silence when we witness someone being mistreated. Grant us open arms and open hearts to receive your children trying to find the way to a new life-giving home. Help us end the misery of children separated from family, of mothers separated from husbands by man-made borders, but not by love. May they arrive, as you did, to joy and to the benediction of a loving embrace. Amen.

**Oración conclusiva** Jesús, amigo del extranjero, nos inspiras a ser ministros del Evangelio y a ver a nuestros vecinos en los extraños que nos encontramos. Enséñenos lo que significa amar a los extraños como nos amamos nosotros mismos. Perdónanos por nuestro egoísmo, por nuestro silencio cuando vemos a alguien siendo maltratados. Concédanos brazos abiertos y corazones abiertos para recibir a sus hijos que tratan de encontrar el camino hacia una nueva casa vivificante. Ayudarnos a acabar con la miseria de niños separados de sus familias, de las madres separadas de sus maridos por la frontera artificial, pero no por el amor. Que puedan llegar, como lo hiciste, a la alegría y la bendición de un abrazo.

## **CATHOLIC TEACH-IN ON MIGRATION EVALUATION**

1) Did you find this evening's Teach-in worthwhile? Circle: Yes or No.  
Why or Why not?

2) What are some of the most important things you learned or experienced this evening?

3) How could future Catholic Teach-Ins on Migration be improved?

**Thank you!**

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**Thank you!**

# **EVALUACIÓN DEL DIALOGO SOBRE LA MIGRACIÓN**

1. ¿Encontró el dialogo valioso? Circule Si o No  
¿Por qué si o no?

2. ¿Cuál es la cosa más importante que aprendió o experimento este día?

3. ¿Cómo podríamos mejorar futuros diálogos católicos sobre la migración?

**Gracias!**

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**Gracias!**