IMMIGRATION REFORM

Crossing Borders: Signs of the Times

Biblical themes

Care for the stranger: “You must not oppress the stranger; you know how the stranger feels, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 23:9)

Families on the move

Neighbor love: who is my neighbor?

Catholic Social Thought

Priority of human life and dignity // policies abetting death, dehumanizing practices

Call to social solidarity // commodification of labor(ers), family separation

Justice and the common good // trade imbalances, interdependence beyond borders

Ethical directives

“Strangers No Longer” principles regarding human rights and national sovereignty

Balancing competing rights:
- The needs of the poor take priority over the wants of the rich.
- The freedom of the dominated takes priority over the liberty of the powerful.
- The participation of marginalized groups takes priority over the preservation of an order which excludes them.

Policy implications

- A path to legalization that ensures that undocumented immigrants have access to full rights.
- A path to legal work for future workers.
- Expedited family reunification and emphasis on family unity for all immigrants.
- Assistance to and fair competition with developing countries.
• Enforcement that is humane, safe, and proportional.

Pastoral Implications:

As a pilgrim people, how is our community called to minister to migrants in San Jose in terms of outreach, welcome and advocacy?

What blocks or challenges our receptivity to a Catholic message of justice for immigrants and hospitality to strangers?

PRAYER FOR MIGRANTS

For all those who see "home" and all it means
   Disappear behind them;
For all those who cannot see a home
   In the days ahead of them;
For all those who dwell in
   Daily insecurity;
For all those who are weary and
   Without a safe place to rest their heads;
For all families in migration we pray.
May the image of the Holy Family
   Fleeing oppression ... 
   Stay with us each night
   As we are blessed
With returning to a home.
May we also be blessed
With compassion for those
   Still weary, still seeking,
   Still with so far to go.

-by Jane Deren, 2007