



Many Journeys, One Family

(Source: National Migration Week 2018 Publication
of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops)

Unfortunately, in our contemporary culture we often fail to encounter migrants as persons, and instead look at them as unknown others, if we even notice them at all. We do not take the time to engage migrants in a meaningful way, as fellow children of God, but remain aloof to their presence and suspicious or fearful of them.

MIGRATION FACTS

The Catholic Bishops and the Catholic Church support humane immigration reform. We must reform our broken system that separates families and denies due process.

FACTS:

- Since 2010, 3.6 million immigrants have become naturalized U.S. citizens.
- Unauthorized immigrants also pay a wide range of taxes, including sales taxes where applicable and property taxes—directly if they own and indirectly if they rent. Estimates are that undocumented migrants pay **\$11.64 BILLION** every year in state and local taxes.
- In many cases, it can take over a decade for legal permanent residents to reunify with immediate family members from Mexico, the Philippines, and other countries.

Refugee protection

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops supports protection, humanitarian support, and durable solutions for refugees and other forcibly displaced people. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Migration and Refugee Services in collaboration with local Catholic Charities across the United States form the largest private U.S. refugee resettlement network, and has helped welcome and resettle over one million refugees since 1975.

FACTS:

- The United States resettled 53,716 refugees in Fiscal Year 2017 including 20,232 from Africa, 5,173 from East Asia, 5,025 from Europe, 1,688 from Latin America, and 21,418 from the Near East.

The top six population resettled during FY2017 were from Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Burma, and Ukraine.

- An estimated 21,027 Syrian refugees have been resettled in the United States since the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011.
- According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, more than 65.6 million persons were displaced in the world at the end of 2016.

UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM CENTRAL AMERICA

The position of the Catholic Church in the United States is that the USA should provide child welfare protection, refugee protection, and safe humane durable solutions for unaccompanied children arriving at our borders without their parent or legal guardian. In recent years, many of these children have been from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Most are fleeing grave, life-threatening violence and gang recruitment and are seeking to reunify with family in the United States.

FACTS:

Immigrant Detention

The position of the Catholic Church in the United States is that the USA should fix our broken immigration system instead of taking an enforcement-only approach to dealing with irregular migration. Immigrant detention is a growing industry in this country, with Congress allocating as much as \$2 billion a year to maintain and expand it. The Administration's FY2018 budget requests even more funding for detention. Due to mandatory detention laws people who are not flight risks or risks to national security and are extremely vulnerable, such as asylum-seekers, families, and victims of human trafficking, are being held unnecessarily in detention. There are alternatives to detention that are more human, more cost-effective, and more consistent with American values.

FACTS:

- In FY2015 the Department of Homeland Security detained 406,595 immigrants compared to 486,651 in FY2014.
- Over 200 county and city prisons contract with the federal government to detain immigrants and account for 67% of the population.
- Community-based alternatives to detention programs cost on average \$10.55 per person per day, as compared to \$164 per person per day for detention.



HUMAN TRAFFICKING

It is the position of the Catholic Church in the United States that the USA must not only hold human traffickers accountable for their crimes, but also work to prevent trafficking and provide protection and healing to victims of trafficking.

Human trafficking is defined as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion, for the purpose of subjecting that person to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. The Catholic Church as long condemned this practice as an affront to human dignity.

FACTS:

- Estimates vary, but as many as 17,500 persons are trafficked into the United States annually.
- Although sex trafficking remains a serious problem, the two largest trafficking cases in the United States involved labor trafficking, in Guam and New York.



Bishop giving Holy Communion at Mass celebrated at US/Mexico border

Points to ponder...

- Catholics are called to stand with immigrants and refugees as our brothers and sisters. This is who we are. This is what we do.
- Pope Francis invites us to be part of a culture of encounter as we welcome, protect, integrate, and promote immigrants and refugees in our midst.
- For all people of Catholic faith, we belong to the same Church no matter where we're from. Our Catholic identity isn't based on where we live but on our faith in Jesus Christ. We are one family, and the Catholic Church is always our home.
- For newcomers who are not of the Catholic faith, Catholics recognize their human dignity and welcome them as new neighbors and friends.
- In Pope Francis, we have a leader from Argentina, a country of immigrants. He is the son of immigrants and a native Spanish speaker. Issues for immigrants coming from Latin America to the United States are close to his heart.
- Immigration is about real people who are trying to find a better life and a new beginning. As Pope Francis stated, "Each migrant has a name, a face and a story."
- Welcoming immigrants is part of Catholic Social Teaching and reflects the Biblical tradition to welcome the stranger.
- The Catholic Church has been welcoming immigrants and refugees to the United States since the nation's founding and has been integral to helping them integrate into American culture.
- In addition to welcoming and caring for those in need, the Church continues to uphold the centrality of family reunification as a critical component of our immigration and refugee systems.
- America is a better country due to the contributions of immigrants and refugees.
- Forced displacement of people is at the highest level since World War II, with more than 65 million people displaced around the world and over 22 million refugees.
- Refugees are the most rigorously screened population coming into America. This screening happens before they ever set foot in our country. The United States has the most thorough background checks of immigrants of any nation in the world.
- The Administration recently determined that only 45,000 refugees could come to the United States in the coming Fiscal Year 2018. That is the lowest refugee determination in U.S. history. We can and must do better by ensuring that all 45,000 be welcomed in 2018 and also that the U.S. welcome at least 75,000 refugees in 2019.

