

Immigration Reform

Our country was founded and has been built by immigrants. Yet, at times during our history we have struggled with new waves of immigrants who have come to the United States of America seeking the same freedoms that brought our ancestors to these shores.

Our country's economy is currently linked through globalization with the economies of other countries. Such globalization has brought about benefits but also some losses. Free trade that allows the duty-free movement of goods between countries has lowered prices on many products and made a wider variety of goods available to us. However, some trade agreements, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement between Canada, the USA, and Mexico, do not permit the free movement of people to go wherever they can find employment. Thus, when the trade agreements or protectionist measures of a country cause people to lose their livelihood in their homeland, they necessarily migrate in order to provide basic needs for their families.

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, people have a right to employment and the right to leave their country for another when no work is available to them in their home country. Countries also have the right to control their borders. These rights may conflict with each other, as is occurring in the USA today. Our present immigration laws are not equipped to handle the changing circumstances created by the global economy. This is why we need comprehensive immigration reform at the federal level.

What you can do:

- **Pray** for our country and for honest and hard-working immigrants who seek to meet the basic needs of their families.
- **Learn** the facts about immigration so as to be an informed citizen. Internet resources that provide balanced information are provided below.
- **Assess** your attitudes and values with respect to welcoming the stranger in our midst.
- **Act** so as to transform any personal attitudes and values that may be negative or sinful.
- **Advocate** for comprehensive immigration reform at the national level through your communications with legislators.

Resources:

1. Our Catholic Bishops of the United States call for comprehensive immigration reform. The Website, Justice for Immigrants, presents the Catholic perspective about the issue and suggests actions you might take: <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/>.
2. Another informative Website with Myths and Facts related to immigration reform appears on Media Matters: <http://mediamattersaction.org/factcheck/201004140002>.
3. The National Immigration Forum presents balanced and current coverage of this issue: <http://www.immigrationforum.org/>.