

# Looking for ways to engage your parish on immigration issues?



## 1 Host a discussion group. Suggested materials include:

- CLINIC's collection of Catholic social teaching resources on immigration: [cliniclegal.org/cst](https://cliniclegal.org/cst)
- Just Matters immigration module (eight week series): [justfaith.org/programs/justmatters-module](https://justfaith.org/programs/justmatters-module)

## 2 Stay up to date on proposed legislation that would affect immigrants in your community. Push fellow parishioners to advocate for laws that honor the dignity of immigrants by:

- Signing up to receive action alerts through the Justice for Immigrants campaign at [justiceforimmigrants.org/take-action](https://justiceforimmigrants.org/take-action)
- Visiting [cliniclegal.org/state-and-local](https://cliniclegal.org/state-and-local) to learn about state and local immigration issues
- Subscribing to CLINIC's Parish and Local e-mail for more ideas to keep your community engaged on immigration issues: [cliniclegal.org/email](https://cliniclegal.org/email)

## 3 Partner with an immigration service provider:

- Host a presentation to keep immigrants in your community informed about current programs and services
- Offer your parish's event space as a venue for a naturalization workshop
- Have parishioners volunteer as organizers and interpreters for screening events

Locate a CLINIC affiliate near you at [cliniclegal.org/directory](https://cliniclegal.org/directory).

## 4 Plan a bilingual mass or activity for parishioners of different cultural backgrounds to get to know one another. Try a movie screening, poluck or holiday party.

Visit [cliniclegal.org/cst/parish](https://cliniclegal.org/cst/parish) for suggestions.

## 5 Help immigrant parishioners learn their rights. Visit [cliniclegal.org/KYR](https://cliniclegal.org/KYR) for guides, PowerPoint presentations, and emergency planning tools.



CATHOLIC LEGAL  
IMMIGRATION  
NETWORK, INC.

# Why Your Parish Should Care About Immigration



*"Migrants are our brothers and sisters in search of a better life, far away from poverty, hunger, exploitation and the unjust distribution of the planet's resources which are meant to be equitably shared by all. Don't we all want a better, more decent and prosperous life to share with our loved ones?"*

Pope Francis

Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Jan. 17, 2016

- 1** The Catholic Church is rooted in a history of migration. We are an immigrant church that embraces our call to "welcome the stranger" among us. We are encouraged by biblical teachings that remind us every human being is made in God's image and that our treatment of our neighbor is a reflection of God in us.
- 2** Existing immigration laws and policies undermine families and communities instead of keeping families together. More than 5 million children in the United States are in mixed-status families, where the children are U.S. citizens living with at least one undocumented parent.
- 3** There are global inequities and root causes that force the separation of families, such as extreme poverty and violence. Every person has an equal right to receive from the earth what is necessary for life—food, clothing and shelter.
- 4** The United States continues to detain immigrant families—mothers with children—who are fleeing violence in Central America. These families pose no threat to anyone and detaining them is inhumane and costly to taxpayers. Viable alternatives to detention exist, including community-based case management services that ensure families meet their legal obligations and also receive the help they need.
- 5** As people of faith, we know that each person matters and is sacred. During a time of increased immigration enforcement, our system should honor human dignity and ensure that every person is given due process.