

**FROM THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS:
NATIONAL MIGRATION WEEK 2018**

January 7-13, 2018

Many Journeys, One Family

<http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/national-migration-week/index.cfm>

For nearly a half century, the Catholic Church in the United States has celebrated National Migration Week, which is an opportunity for the Church to reflect on the circumstances confronting migrants, including immigrants, refugees, children, and victims and survivors of human trafficking. The theme for National Migration Week 2017, "Many Journeys, One Family," draws attention to the fact that each of our families have a migration story, some recent and others in the distant past. Regardless of where we are and where we came from, we remain part of the human family and are called to live in solidarity with one another.

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. During this National Migration Week, let us all take the opportunity to engage migrants as community members, neighbors, and friends.

**A Message from the President of the USCCB
Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston**

On Sunday, the Catholic Church across the United States will celebrate the beginning of National Migration Week. For nearly 50 years, this week has been a time of prayer and reflection on our history as a migrant Church and nation. In these five decades, the face of the immigrant may have changed – European, Asian, South American, and elsewhere -- but their faces reveal a common desire to secure the great blessings of American opportunity.

Pope Francis, in his statement on the World Day of Peace on January 1, 2018, advises us that if we view the situation of migrants and refugees through the wisdom of our faith 'we discover that they do not arrive empty-handed. They bring their courage, skills, energy and aspirations, as well as the treasures of their own cultures; and in this way, they enrich the lives of the nations that receive them.'

This week, I invite everyone to reflect on the Holy Father's words as well as on your own family's immigration story. Please also join me in prayer for all families, as together, we 'Share the Journey. . . ' toward a better life."

A Book of Prayers for Migrants

A colorful booklet that will appeal to all ages!

<http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-and-refugee-services/national-migration-week/upload/Booklet-of-Prayers-2.pdf>

Migration Facts:

Immigration Reform Position: 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 (See Congressional Research Service).

Refugee Protection Position: USCCB supports protection, humanitarian support, and durable solutions for refugees and other forcibly displaced people. USCCB's Migration and Refugee Services in collaboration with local Catholic Charities across the United State form the largest private, U.S. refugee resettlement network, and has helped welcome and resettle over one million refugees since 1975.

Facts: • The U.S. resettled 53,716 refugees in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 including 20,232 from Africa, 5,173 from East Asia, 5,205 from Europe, 1,688 from Latin America, and 21,418 from the Near East. • The top six populations resettled during FY 2017 were from : Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Burma, and Ukraine. Id. • An estimated 21,027 Syrian refugees have been resettled in the United States since the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011. Id. • According to the United Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees, more than 65.6 million persons were displaced in the world at the end of 2016. (UNHCR) **Unaccompanied Children and Families from Central America Position:** The United States 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: • In FY 2015, Mexico deported 165,000 Central Americans. The number detained in Mexico has tripled in the past four years amid growing pressure and economic support from the US to stem the flow. (The Guardian) • In calendar year 2016, the United States and Mexico returned 216,872 people to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Immigrant Detention Position: The United States 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 FY 2018 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 humane, 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. (Department of Homeland Security) • Over 200 county and city prisons contract with the federal government to detain immigrants and account for 67 percent 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. (GAO)

Human Trafficking Position: The United States 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 has long condemned this practice as an affront to human dignity.

Migration Prayers

Good and gracious God,

We pray for all people who are migrating particularly those who are forced from their homes or separated from their families because of threats of violence and persecution. We ask that you protect and keep them safe.

Although we come from different countries, and have our origins in different cultures, we were all created by you, and are made in your image, and therefore we all share an inalienable dignity that is deserving of respect.

Lord, we ask that you give us the strength to defend those who are marginalized, to give aid to those in need, to come to the defense of those who are poor or vulnerable, and to welcome those who are on the move into our homes and into our hearts.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Dios bueno y clemente,

Oramos por todas las personas que inmigran, especialmente, por aquellas que son forzadas a dejar sus hogares o a separarse de sus familias debido a amenazas de violencia y persecución. Te pedimos que las protejas y las pongas a salvo.

Aunque vengamos de distintos países, y nuestro origen se encuentre en diferentes culturas, todos hemos sido creados por ti y hemos sido hechos a tu imagen y semejanza, por lo tanto, todos compartimos una dignidad inalienable que merece respeto.

Señor, te rogamos que nos des las fuerzas para defender a los marginados para ayudar a los necesitados, para salir en defensa de los más pobres y vulnerables, y para acoger a aquellos que llegarán a nuestros hogares y a nuestro corazón.

Por nuestro Señor Jesucristo, tu Hijo, que vive y reina contigo, en la unidad del Espíritu Santo, un Dios, por los siglos de los siglos.

Amén.

Suggested Prayer Petitions

On Slavery

For Pope Francis, that our Heavenly Father may gift him with deep wisdom as he calls the Church to struggle against the evil of human trafficking, we pray to the Lord,

For all bishops in the Church, that they continue to be leaders in the fight against modern day slavery, both domestically and abroad, we pray to the Lord,

For our priests and deacons, that they may boldly proclaim Church teaching on human dignity and the Church's teaching on human trafficking, we pray to the Lord,

For our religious brothers and sisters and all the lay faithful, that God inspire them with the continued commitment to fight the evil of human trafficking, we pray to the Lord,

For everyone who is trapped in a situation of slavery, that God will help to liberate them from their chains, we pray to the Lord,

For perpetrators of slavery, that they repent of their evil ways and turn to God for forgiveness, we pray to the Lord,

For Migrants

For all bishops in our Church, that they may be encouraged by our prayers and support to lead God's people in building a culture that respects the human dignity of all migrants, we pray to the Lord,

For all Catholics, that God inspire them to take action in their local communities to support and protect migrants and to advocate on their behalf, we pray to the Lord,

For unaccompanied migrant children, that God protect them on their journey and safely reunite them with their families, we pray to the Lord,

For our neighbors, coworkers, friends, fellow Christians, and all people, that they may grow in their awareness of the issue of migration and become a voice in the public square calling for greater protections for these populations, we pray to the Lord,

For migrant workers, that they may labor in safe and just conditions, and that we who benefit from their labor may be truly grateful for what they provide, we pray to the Lord.

For migrants, refugees, and all other strangers in our midst, that they may find strength in our concern for justice and feel the warmth of our love, we pray to the Lord.

For Refugees

For all bishops, that they will continue in their commitment to refugee resettlement and provide in their communities a place of welcome, we pray to the Lord,

For all refugees who are forced to flee from their homes, that God bring peace to them and their country of origin, we pray to the Lord



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network

UNITED STATES | CANADA

<http://popesprayerusa.net/popese-intentions/>

2018

JANUARY **Evangelization: Religious Minorities in Asia**

That Christians, and other religious minorities in Asian countries, may be able to practice their faith in full freedom.

FEBRUARY **Universal: Say “No” to Corruption**

That those who have material, political or spiritual power may resist any lure of corruption.

MARCH **Evangelization: Formation in Spiritual Discernment**

That the Church may appreciate the urgency of formation in spiritual discernment, both on the personal and communitarian levels.

APRIL **Universal: For Those who have Responsibility in Economic Matters**

That economists may have the courage to reject any economy of exclusion and know how to open new paths.

MAY **Evangelization: The Mission of the Laity**

That the lay faithful may fulfil their specific mission, by responding with creativity to the challenges that face the world today.

JUNE **Universal: Social Networks**

That social networks may work towards that inclusiveness which respects others for their differences.

JULY **Evangelization: Priests and their Pastoral Ministry**

That priests, who experience fatigue and loneliness in their pastoral work, may find help and comfort in their intimacy with the Lord and in their friendship with their brother priests.

AUGUST **Universal: The treasure of Families**

That any far-reaching decisions of economists and politicians may protect the family as one of the treasures of humanity.

SEPTEMBER **Universal: Young People in Africa**

That young people in Africa may have access to education and work in their own countries.

OCTOBER **Evangelization: The Mission of Religious**

That consecrated religious men and women may bestir themselves, and be present among the poor, the marginalized, and those who have no voice.

NOVEMBER **Universal: In the Service of Peace**

That the language of love and dialogue may always prevail over the language of conflict.

DECEMBER **Evangelization: In the Service of the Transmission of Faith**

That people, who are involved in the service and transmission of faith, may find, in their dialogue with culture, a language suited to the conditions of the present time.

What is the process in the preparation of the prepared prayer intentions? The faithful from around the world suggest papal prayer intentions to the international office of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network in Rome. Through prayerful discernment the international office selects a large number of them and submits them to the Vatican for further selection, with the Pope making the final selection. The Vatican then entrusts to the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network the official set of monthly prayer intentions, which are then translated into the major world languages and published in print and digital formats.