

Resolution on Immigration Reform

Whereas Jesus taught that when we receive a foreigner, we receive him, "...I was a stranger and you welcomed me..." (Mt 25);

Whereas the current immigration system is so broken that it denies immigrants basic human and civil rights,

Whereas the current immigration system is incapable of balancing our nation's need for labor and the labor supply;

Whereas one of the peace and justice priorities of the Dominican Order is to stand in solidarity with "people on the move," i.e., people migrating to obtain livelihood, security and family integrity.

Therefore be it resolved that the Dominican Leadership Conference supports and will actively promote comprehensive immigration reform by the U.S. Congress that includes:

1. Provides a path to permanent residency for immigrants currently residing in the United States.
2. Assures family unity for immigrant families.
3. Expands the number of visas available to respond fairly to the demands of applicants as well as the needs of the U.S. economy.
4. Respects the safety and security of the U.S. borders.
5. Extends to immigrant workers the same protections that U.S. citizen workers enjoy, such as minimum wage, job portability, benefits, and right to organize.
6. Balances quantity of visas with our country's need for additional workers in order to ensure that U.S. workers are not displaced from employment.
7. Creates mechanisms with resources to enforce worker's rights.
8. Guarantees workers mobility within and between the U.S. and their homeland.
9. Provides a path to citizenship for immigrant workers.
10. Guarantees basic human and civil rights of immigrants in the U.S., such as education, health care, language training, and assistance with cultural integration.
11. Protects the rights of refugees and asylum seekers.
12. Promotes long range solutions to the increasing demands on our immigration system.
13. Collaborates with sending countries that ensures economic development to benefit unskilled workers.
14. Withdraws federal monies from states which are presently being used to train local law-enforcement personnel as immigration agents.

Be it further resolved that the Dominican Leadership Conference commits to the following actions:

1. Include the plight of immigrants and the call for justice for immigrants in our preaching.
2. Expand social services and pastoral ministry to immigrants and migrants as much as possible.
3. Work collaboratively with other people of good will to achieve comprehensive immigration reform
4. Urge local and national leaders to support comprehensive immigration legislative reform.
5. Teach, write and speak about the need for immigration reform in order to bring needed attention to the issue and correct media distortions.
6. Urge the Federal Government to ensure due process and access to pastoral services for all detained immigrants.

Resources:

1. USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops)
www.justiceforimmigrants.org
2. Dream Act info: www.justiceforimmigrants.org/learn-issues.shtml
3. Immigration Policy Center: www.immigrationpolicy.org
4. Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act (CIR ASAP) introduced by Congressman Luis Gutierrez Dec 2009.
5. S. 3932 Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2010 introduced by Senators Robert Mendez (D-NJ) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) Sept 29.

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