

WELCOMING THE STRANGER

A Parish Response to Migration

Tell about a time you and your family had to move. What caused them to move toward a place? What caused them to leave a place?

Who in your family had to leave everything behind —land, language, culture—just to survive or start over? What did that cost them?

Have you ever been forced out of a home, whether by eviction, disaster, or conflict, and felt the sting of being uprooted? What stays with you from that experience?"

What does Catholic Social
Teaching have to say about
migration?

What is Catholic Social Teaching?

What is migration?

Catholic Social Teaching

- belongs to the field of moral theology
- accurate formulation of the results of careful reflection on complex realities of human experience

Pope Saint John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 41

“Its main aim is to interpret [the complex realities of human existence], determining their conformity with or divergence from the lines of the Gospel teaching on man and his vocation, a vocation which is at once earthly and transcendent; its aim is thus to guide Christian behavior. It therefore belongs to the field, not of ideology, but of theology and particularly of moral theology.”

Pope Saint John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 41

“The Church's social teaching finds its source in Sacred Scripture, beginning with the Book of Genesis and especially in the Gospel and the writings of the Apostles. From the beginning it was part of the Church's teaching, her concept of man and life in society, and, especially, the social morality which she worked out according to the needs of the different ages.”

Pope Saint John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 3

Leo XIII, Rerum Novarum, 1891

Context: Industrial Revolution leads to exploiting workers.

Message:

- First comprehensive document of social justice.
- Defends workers' rights based on natural law.
- Rights include work, private property, just wage, workers' associations.



See.
Judge.
Act.

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Dignity of the Human Person

- Made in the image and likeness of God
- self-knowledge, self possession, ability to love
- faculties of the soul
- freedom

Principles of Catholic Social Teaching

- Common Good
- Universal Destination of Goods
- Subsidiarity
- Participation
- Solidarity

What is Catholic Social Teaching?

What is migration?

Migration

- Asyle (Asylum Seeker)
- Immigrant
- Legal Immigrant
- Migrant
- Refugee
- Undocumented Immigrant

What does Catholic Social
Teaching have to say about
migration?

CST on Migration

Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.

All persons have the right to find in their own countries the economic, political, and social opportunities to live in dignity and achieve a full life through the use of their God-given gifts. In this context, work that provides a just, living wage is a basic human need.

CST on Migration

Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.

The Church recognizes that all the goods of the earth belong to all people. When persons cannot find employment in their country of origin to support themselves and their families, they have a right to find work elsewhere in order to survive. Sovereign nations should provide ways to accommodate this right.

CST on Migration

Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.

The Church recognizes the right of sovereign nations to control their territories but rejects such control when it is exerted merely for the purpose of acquiring additional wealth. More powerful economic nations, which have the ability to protect and feed their residents, have a stronger obligation to accommodate migration flows.

CST on Migration

Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.

Those who flee wars and persecution should be protected by the global community. This requires, at a minimum, that migrants have a right to claim refugee status without incarceration and to have their claims fully considered by a competent authority.

CST on Migration

The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.

Regardless of their legal status, migrants, like all persons, possess inherent human dignity that should be respected. Often they are subject to punitive laws and harsh treatment from enforcement officers from both receiving and transit countries. Government policies that respect the basic human rights of the undocumented are necessary.

Matthew 25:31-40

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