

## IMMIGRATION: THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S VIEW

- **The Catholic Church believes that ALL immigrants have inherent dignity and worth as human beings regardless of immigration status.**

Catholics denounce anti-immigration bigotry, stereotypes, and xenophobia as immoral and un-American

- **The Catholic Church is NOT anti-enforcement and does NOT support “open borders.”**

The Catholic Church does believe that enforcement-only policies that focus on closing the borders and deportation, without reforming the immigration system, would cost the US hundreds of billions of dollars and have a devastating impact on vast sectors of the US economy

Therefore, the Catholic Church believes that enforcement of immigration policies should be:

1. Targeted - US enforcement resources should be focused to ensure that those who are dangerous or more easily identified and apprehended. Enforcement policies should be tailored and not overly broad so that the basic rights of all immigrants are not abridged. Ethnic or racial profiling should be avoided. Improvements in intelligence and information sharing and technological improvements in border security would help ensure that those who are most dangerous - smugglers, human traffickers, and terrorists - are intercepted.
  2. Proportional - Enforcement of immigration laws should not feature unnecessary force. Immigration control officers and border patrol agents should receive intensive training on appropriate enforcement tactics and the appropriate use of force. Border enforcement policies should not drive immigrants into more remote regions of the desert, risking their lives. State and local law enforcement should not be authorized to enforce immigration laws.
  3. Humane - The human rights and dignity of the person should be preserved and respected to the greatest extent possible. Families should not be divided and should receive special consideration. Undocumented immigrants should not be detained for lengthy periods of time or intermingled with violent offenders. Asylum-seekers should receive appropriate screening by a qualified adjudicator. Children should be accommodated within a child welfare context.
- **The Catholic Church advocates for comprehensive immigration reform.**

A comprehensive immigration reform plan would include:

1. An earned legalization program - allows undocumented workers to earn permanent residency.
  2. Worker program - protects foreign-born workers and safeguards against displacement of US workers.
  3. Family-based immigration reform - reduces waiting times for family reunification.
  4. Restoration of due process protections for immigrants and policies addressing root causes of migration.
- **The Catholic Church supports an earned path to citizenship, NOT a handout.**

This includes:

1. Undocumented immigrants to pay a fine and application fee.
2. Go through criminal background checks and security screenings.
3. Demonstrate that they have paid taxes.
4. Are learning English.
5. Obtain a visa that could lead to permanent residency.