

# Catholics and Immigration



## KEYS TO THE KINGDOM

GOOD SHEPHERD SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY  
LOVE GOD, LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Move from Charity to Justice

# Agenda

- **Introduction**
- **Catholic Teachings on Immigration**
- **An Exercise: As a Catholic, what can you do next?**
- **Sources: Conscience Formation Based on Catholic Social Teaching**

# Introduction

- **Provide an overview of Catholic Teachings on Immigration based upon**
  - **Scripture**
  - **Catechism of the Catholic Church**
  - **Teachings of our Bishops**
  - **Recent saints**
- **Perform an exercise to think about immigration**
- **Provide sources to further form and examine your conscience based on Catholic Social Teaching**

# Agenda

- ✓ **Introduction**

- **Catholic Teachings on Immigration**

- **Scripture**
- **Catechism of the Catholic Church**
- **USCCB (US Catholic Conference of Bishops)**
- **USCCB Justice for Immigrants**
- **Quotes**

- **An Exercise: As a Catholic, what can you do next?**
- **Sources for Catholic Social Teaching**

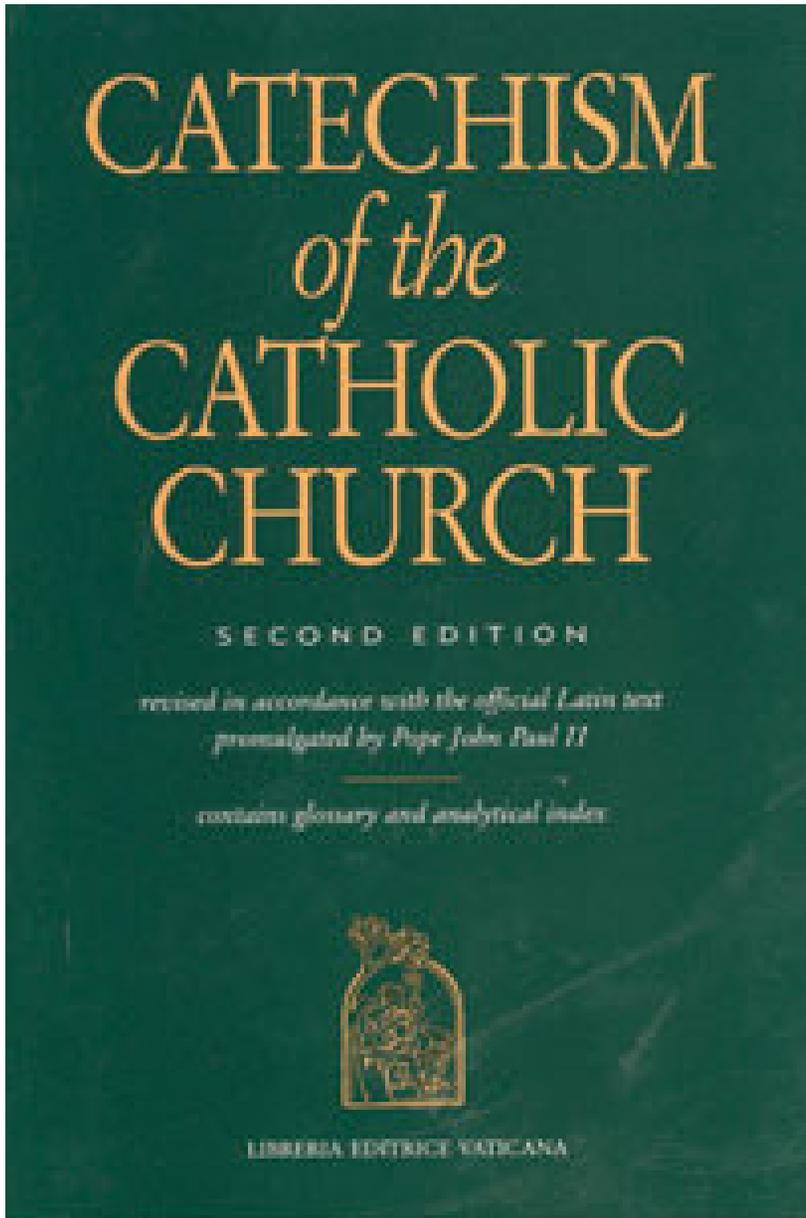
# Jesus was a refugee! (Matthew 2)



# **Scripture has over 2,000 verses about poverty, oppression, and injustice (including treatment of immigrants)!**

**What could that mean?**

- **“...image and likeness...”**                      **Genesis 1:27**
- **“Fasting that I wish ...”**                      **Isaiah 58:6ff**
- **“...least of my brothers...”**                      **Matthew 25:34ff**
- **Greatest Commandment**                      **Luke 10:25-37**
- **“Love your enemies!”**                      **Matthew 5:43-48**
- **“Thy Kingdom come ...”**                      **Matthew 6:9ff**



**The Catholic Catechism instructs the faithful that**

- **good government has two duties,**
- **both of which must be carried out**
- **and neither of which can be ignored.**

# Catechism of the Catholic Church

- **¶2241: The first duty is to welcome the foreigner out of charity and respect for the human person. Persons have the right to immigrate and thus government must accommodate this right to the greatest extent possible, especially financially blessed nations:**
- **"The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the *foreigner* in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin. Public authorities should see to it that the natural right is respected that places a guest under the protection of those who receive him."**

# Catechism of the Catholic Church

- **¶2241: The second duty is to secure one's border and enforce the law for the sake of the common good. Sovereign nations have the right to enforce their laws and all persons must respect the legitimate exercise of this right ...**
- **Immigrants are obliged to respect with gratitude the material and spiritual heritage of the country that receives them, to obey its laws and to assist in carrying civic burdens."**

# Catechism of the Catholic Church

- ¶1911: Internal quote is from Gaudium et Spes: “The unity of the human family, embracing people who enjoy equal natural dignity, implies a universal common good.
- This good calls for an organization of the community of nations able to provide ‘for men’s different needs, both in the fields of social life—such as food supplies, health, education, labor and also in certain special circumstances which can crop up here and there, e.g.,
- **the need to promote the general improvement of developing countries,**
- **or to alleviate the distressing conditions in which refugees dispersed throughout the world find themselves, or also to assist migrants and their families. to alleviate the distressing conditions in which refugees dispersed throughout the world find themselves, or also to assist migrants and their families.’”**



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The Catholic Church in the United States is an immigrant Church with a long history of embracing diverse newcomers and providing assistance and pastoral care to immigrants, migrants, refugees, and people on the move.

Our Church has responded to Christ's call for us to "welcome the stranger among us," for in this encounter with the immigrant, the migrant, and the refugee in our midst, we encounter Christ.

### Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration

The Catholic Church in the United States is an immigrant Church with a long history of embracing diverse newcomers and providing assistance and pastoral care to immigrants, migrants, refugees, and people on the move. Our Church has responded to Christ's call for us to "welcome the stranger among us," for in this encounter with the immigrant, the migrant, and the refugee in our midst, we encounter Christ.

A rich body of Church teaching, including Papal encyclicals, Bishops' statements and pastoral letters, has consistently reinforced our moral obligation to treat the stranger as we would treat Christ himself. In the 2001 pastoral statement, [Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity](#), the Bishops of the United States called upon the Catholic faithful to a conversion of minds and hearts, imploring us to communion and solidarity with diverse newcomers, and entreating us to find new and meaningful ways to welcome our immigrant sisters and brothers into our parishes, schools and communities. In 2003, the Bishops of the United States, together with the Bishops of Mexico, in the pastoral statement, "[Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope](#)" / "[Juntos en el Camino de la Esperanza Ya no Somos Extranjeros](#)" acknowledged that the current immigration system is badly in need of reform and offered a comprehensive set of recommendations for changing U.S. laws and policies to bring about a more humane and just immigration system in the United States.

To learn more about the Church's teaching on immigration, we encourage you to view the resources linked below:

[Quotes from Church Teachings on the Rights of Migrants and Refugees](#)



# Catholic Principles of Migration

Our approach to migration is rooted in the Gospel and in the rich tradition of Catholic social teaching. A recent example of this teaching is in [Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope](#), a pastoral letter concerning migration from the Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States.

## I. 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.

## II. 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.

## III. Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.

The Church recognizes the right of sovereign nations to control their territories and their borders. However, wealthier nations, which have the ability to better protect and feed their residents, have a strong obligation to

accommodate migration flows.

## IV. 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.

## V. 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 by enforcement officers from both receiving and transit countries. Government policies that respect the basic human rights of the undocumented are necessary.

- 1. Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland**
- 2. Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families**
- 3. Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders**
- 4. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection**
- 5. The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected**





A good site to visit

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Catholic Social Teaching >

Bible

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Strangers No Longer

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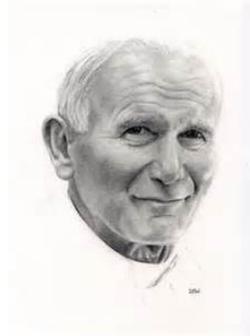


# Quotes from our saints!



**“Every man has the right to life ... and to the means for the proper development of life ... primarily food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, ... , right to security in sickness, inability to work, widowhood, old age, unemployment, or other ... “**

**Saint Pope John XXIII**



**“The characteristic principle of Christian social doctrine ... the goods of this world are originally meant for all!” Saint Pope John Paul II**



**“If you can’t feed a hundred people, then just feed one!”  
Mother Teresa**

# Pope Francis says ...

**"Faced with this kind of rejection, rooted ultimately in self-centeredness and amplified by populist rhetoric, what is needed is a change of attitude,**

**-- to overcome indifference**

**-- to counter fears**

**-- with a generous approach**

**-- of welcoming those who knock at our doors!"**



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- **An Exercise: As a Catholic, what can you do next?**
- **Sources: Conscience Formation Based on Catholic Social Teaching**

# Exercise

- **As a Catholic, what can you do next?**
- **What if you could**
  - **Get all the politicians and elected officials out of the way?**
  - **Get all the media talkers and bloggers out of the way?**
  - **Get all your fears out of the way?**
- **What would God do? What would Jesus do?**
- **What would they want you to do?**

# Be charitable and work for justice

(Charity is First Aid -- Justice is healing the wound and preventing further injury!)

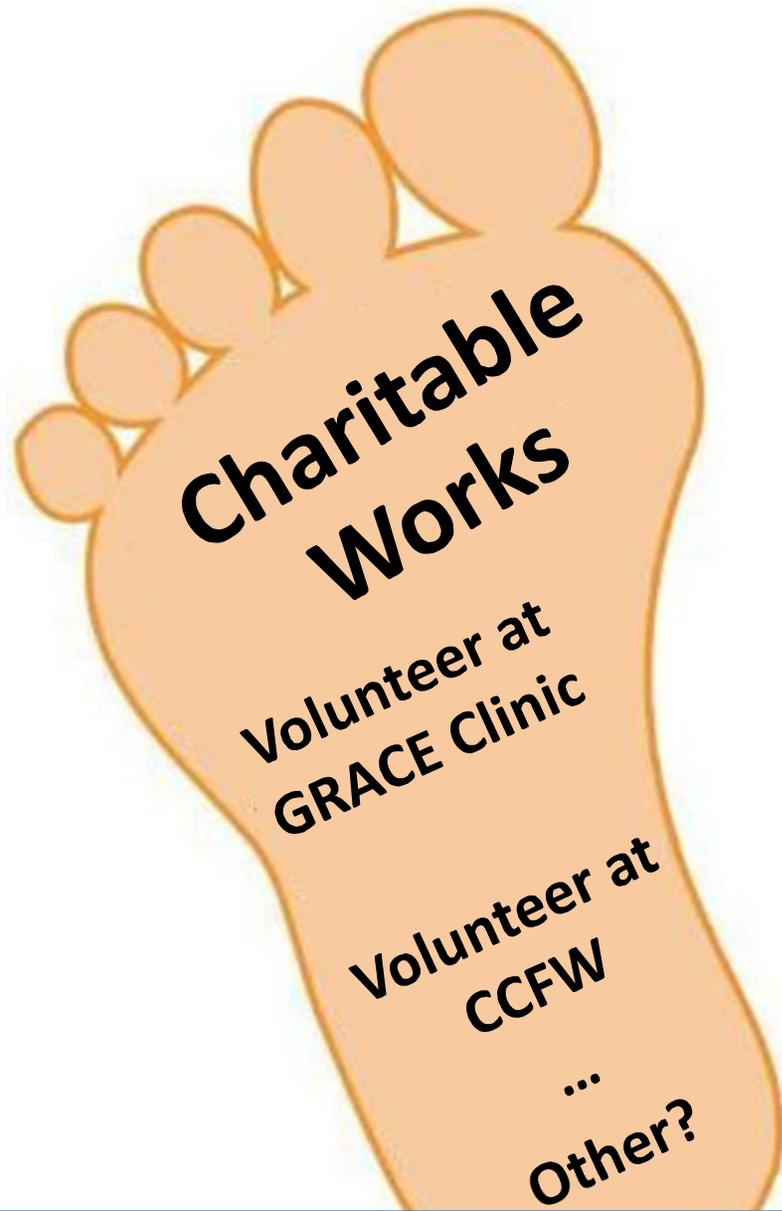


# Charity is First Aid -- Justice is healing the wounds of Immigrants!



Exercise: what charity would you do?

# Charity is First Aid -- Justice is healing the wound!



Exercise: what justice would you seek?

# Charity is First Aid -- Justice is healing the wound!



# What more can you do?

## 1. Be charitable and merciful

- Day-to-day with others you see and don't see
- With what you say

## 2. If you are charitable, then work for justice

- Join the Social Justice Ministry

## 3. Then, ...

Contact: Social Justice Ministry Coordinator, Robert Torres, [socialjustice@gsc.net](mailto:socialjustice@gsc.net)

# Inform your conscience

1. **U.S. Bishops** <http://tinyurl.com/FormingYourConscience>
2. **Issues/teaching**  
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/index.cfm>
3. **Learn! Review the following on the Bishops Web Site**
  - Scripture (but learn the official teaching and meaning of the Word)
  - Catechism
  - Social Teaching
4. **Examine your conscience**  
<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/penance/examination-conscience-in-light-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm>
5. **Pray!!!**
6. **Fear no evil and trust in God! (Psalm 23)**
7. **Act! Be compassionate, merciful, and work for Justice!**

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# Sources: Conscience Formation Based on Catholic Social Teaching

- **U.S. Catholic Bishops Web Site** <http://www.usccb.org>
- **Justice for Immigrants** <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org>
- **Catholic Social Teaching (7 Themes)** <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm>
- **Catechism of the Catholic Church** <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/catechism-of-the-catholic-church/index.cfm>
- **New American Bible** <http://www.usccb.org/bible/index.cfm>
  
- **GSCC Social Justice Web Page** <http://www.gsc.net/socialjustice>
- **Diocese of Fort Worth** <http://www.fwdioc.org/>
- **Texas Catholic Conference** <http://www.txcatholic.org/>
- **Catholic Charities FW** <https://www.catholiccharitiesfortworth.org/>
- **Catholics Confront Global Poverty** <http://www.confrontglobalpoverty.org/>
- **Catholic News Service** <http://catholicnews.com/>
- **Catholic Relief Services** <http://www.crs.org>
- **National Catholic Reporter** <http://ncronline.org/>