

How parishes can ‘Share the Journey’

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops offers these suggestions for ways parishes can get involved with the Share the Journey campaign, an effort of Pope Francis to encourage more people to be welcoming to migrants and refugees.

PRAY

- Distribute prayer and commitment sheets (in English and Spanish) and say the prayer together as a community.
- Use the “Share the Journey” parish toolkit for prayers, bulletin announcements and homilies (in English and Spanish).
- Host a community-wide prayer service for migrants and refugees or organize a walk to symbolize migrants and refugees on the move.

LEARN /EDUCATE/SHARE

- Encourage education by challenging your community to learn about the issues migrants and refugees face. Invite classes and groups to spend some time learning about why people leave their home countries, common myths about the issues, and what the Church teaches.
- Spread awareness about the campaign online by using the hashtag #sharejourney.
- Help people put themselves in our brothers’ and sisters’ shoes by offering a simulation experience that helps people explore why migrants and refugees feel forced to leave their homes using this exercise from CRS, a guide from the Catholic Charities of Louisville, or the Refugees Seeking Safety tool from Cabrini University.
- Learn about racism and work for racial justice.
- Host an event or table and encourage people to sign up to join the campaign.

ENCOUNTER / REACH OUT

- Provide opportunities for people to get to know migrants and refugees. Host

a potluck with your community.

- Organize a speaking event or school assembly in your community. Contact your local Catholic Charities, CLINIC affiliate or another local agency.

Offer a public sign that your community is in solidarity with migrants and refugees.

- Consider a symbolic gesture to help create awareness, such as pitching a tent on the parish lawn with a sign about standing in solidarity during the Week of Prayer and Action.

ACCOMPANY/ SERVE

- Organize local community service. Contact your local Catholic Charities, CLINIC affiliate or another local agency to collect needed items or organize a day of service. Assistance is often needed with tutoring, language skills development, shelter, basic resource allocation, legal services, job training, transportation, and companionship.
- Join the Local Parishes Organized to Welcome Refugees Program. Contact USCCB Migration and Refugee Services for more information at MRS@usccb.org.
- Visit justiceforimmigrants.org for more ideas and resources (in English and Spanish).

GIVE

- Support the work of Catholic Relief Services to assist migrants and refugees around the world at crs.org.
- Support the work of Catholic Charities by giving to CCUSA or contact your local Diocesan Catholic Charities Office.

ADVOCATE

- Rally your community to contact your elected officials. Sign advocacy letters asking Congress to support refugees.
- Join an organization in your community that is advocating for and with immigrants.
- Check out action alerts about national and global legislation concerning

refugees and immigrants from Catholic Charities USA, Justice for Immigrants (USCCB) and Catholics Confront Global Poverty (from the USCCB and CRS).

- Schedule a meeting with the offices of your Congressional members in advance of the Week of Prayer and Action and hand deliver these letters or postcards at the meeting. Here are some tips for how to get started.

REACH OUT. *Love your neighbor.*

