



Migration and Refugee Services: The Office of Policy and Public Affairs

CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec

Grounded by our belief in Jesus Christ and Catholic teaching, Migration and Refugee Services (MRS) fulfills the commitment of the U.S. Catholic bishops to protect the life and dignity of the human person. We serve and advocate for refugees, asylees, immigrants, unaccompanied children, and survivors of human trafficking.

- MRS Mission Statement

In 2004, the Catholic Bishops of the United States committed to make immigration reform a priority of the U.S. Catholic Church and to create a culture of welcome in which all migrants are treated with respect and dignity. MRS Policy and Public Affairs' mission is to represent the migration policy positions of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, as well as to liaise with the U.S. federal government (Congress and the Administration - particularly the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of State (DOS)) on behalf of immigrant and refugee populations of concern.

For over a century, the U.S. Catholic bishops have undertaken the Gospel mandate to welcome the stranger and provide support for vulnerable and marginalized populations on the move. MRS takes a multifaceted approach to achieve its objectives, which include the responsibility to:

- **Advocate** with policymakers at the local, national, and international levels to ensure dignity, justice, and protection for vulnerable people on the move that the Church serves;

- **Communicate** to an ever more interconnected world the Church's social teaching on migration, and help both Catholics and others of goodwill to better understand and appreciate the Christian call and commitment to serve Christ in the stranger;
- **Educate** the Catholic faithful on the moral and Scriptural imperative to provide safety, hospitality, and welcome to newcomers to our nation and, in the process, change hearts and minds to act humanely on their behalf; and
- **Serve and support** vulnerable migrants in need of MRS' advocacy and care in collaboration with other Catholic and allied partner organizations. By partnering with its extensive national and international networks, MRS amplifies its voice in the public square to help ensure that responsible legislative, policy, and program initiatives are enacted to meet the critical needs of vulnerable immigrants and refugees.

Additionally, MRS Policy and Public Affairs convenes the Justice for Immigrants (JFI) campaign, a national effort to unite and mobilize a growing network of Catholic institutions in favor of humane immigration reform. The JFI core group is comprised of 36 Catholic organizations with U.S. or regional-wide constituencies. Currently, JFI's grassroots membership extends to approximately 80,000 identified Catholic participants throughout the United States. For more information see www.justiceforimmigrants.org.

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