



Photo: Faith in Indiana

# Catholic Accompaniment and Reflection Experience (CARE) Program Training Guide

2019



UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF  
CATHOLIC BISHOPS



JUSTICE FOR  
IMMIGRANTS

*we are one family under God*

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The CARE program training guide was created by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Office of Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS) and revised by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and Faith in Indiana for the use of dioceses, parishes, communities, and individuals who wish to learn more about the CARE program and accompaniment and pastoral support of immigrants at the community level.

This training guide was made possible by funding received from the Wants of the Age (WOTA) committee of the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus and the Raskob Foundation. We want to thank them for their generosity and support of the CARE program, and we hope that this guide will inspire you to further create communities of welcome and understanding and look to accompany fellow community members.

“The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”

**Leviticus 19:34**

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me.”

**Matthew 25:35**

“Immigrants will experience the Church’s welcome most personally at the level of the parish. Pastors and parish staff, accordingly, must be filled with a spirit of welcome, responding to a new and perhaps little-understood culture.”

**Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity, A Statement of the U.S. Catholic Bishops**

# What is the Catholic Accompaniment and Reflection Experience (CARE) Program?

The Catholic Accompaniment and Reflection Experience (CARE) program is a new pilot initiative that was launched by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Office of Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS) in Fall 2018. CARE is also operated in collaboration with the Justice for Immigrants (JFI) campaign, and the CARE program webpage is [available](#) on the JFI website.

While the CARE program is welcome to all people of faith and goodwill, CARE is particularly committed to connecting Catholic volunteers, clergy, and men and women religious with undocumented immigrants, and other immigrant populations and their families in need of accompaniment and emotional, social service, and spiritual support when integrating into their communities or attempting to comply with immigration proceedings, such as reporting to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for check-ins or attending their immigration court hearings and proceedings.

## **Purpose of CARE**

- 1)** Connect Catholic parishes with members of their communities who have to report to ICE, appear in immigration court, or request accompaniment for other immigration proceedings so that no one stands alone.
- 2)** Encourage and foster Catholic pastoral responses to the uncertainty and fear that many immigrant communities around the United States are experiencing.
- 3)** Connecting immigrant families to existing community resources which will help integrate, protect and enable families to comply with legal requirements and reach their full potential and human development.
- 4)** Build awareness regarding existing immigration policies and their impacts on communities. Further create solidarity and public support for new policies that support immigrant families and improve local communities.
- 5)** Create avenues for education and learning about the diversity of modern Catholic parish life and the centrality of welcoming the newcomer to Catholic Social Teaching as well as create new formation and immigrant leadership opportunities at the parish level.
- 6)** Bridge cultural differences to foster a community of welcome and understanding.

## Who Are the CARE Pilot Dioceses?

The [Archdiocese of San Francisco](#) and the [Archdiocese of Indianapolis](#) are the pilot sites for the initial CARE program kick-off. Both San Francisco and Indianapolis have been successful in fostering community-based solutions to help serve immigrant families and parishes.

Additionally, Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of the Archdiocese of San Francisco and Archbishop Charles Thompson of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis have both voiced their support for the program and its' goals of accompaniment, solidarity and encounter. The two archdioceses will also serve as mentors to new sites that are added as the CARE program further develops.

While these two archdioceses are listed partners, we continue to encourage others to get involved and are actively looking for new dioceses and parishes to work with and support. For questions on how to get involved please email Sarah Hoff at [mrsconsult\\_shoff@usccb.org](mailto:mrsconsult_shoff@usccb.org).

## Accompaniment and the Catholic Faith: Why We Are Called to Stand in Solidarity

### What is Accompaniment?

The Catholic call to accompany migrants is rooted in Scripture and [Catholic Social Teaching](#). Accompaniment in this context calls us to serve, to provide assistance and support, and to advocate with and for migrants from the start of their migration experience to its end. Accompaniment also encourages greater mutual understanding of migration challenges as well as formation and immigrant leadership opportunities for directly impacted communities and community supporters.

### Daily Acts of Love and Accompaniment

Accompaniment may entail standing beside someone on their journey and spiritually supporting them throughout that process, but it may also take the form of smaller actions that can assist and provide comfort and support. Daily acts of accompaniment might include:

- Assisting undocumented immigrants who are required to check in with ICE on a semi-regular basis or the continual support of an immigrant family as a family member attends their mandatory immigration hearings and court proceedings.
- Assisting an unaccompanied child and their parents to enroll the child in school.
- Giving a family a ride to a medical appointment or helping them receive an identification card.
- Just being present to listen to an individual's stories.
- Offering to pray with individuals.
- For other examples please see the resource [10 Things You Can Do To Accompany Immigrants](#) ([English](#) and [Spanish](#) versions available).

Accompanying an individual through these daily acts can provide comfort, spiritual and emotional support. It can build solidarity between Catholic volunteers and immigrants and their families as well as build bridges of understanding and mutual interest within communities.

## Catholic Social Teaching Principles of Migration

- I. People have a right to find opportunities in their homeland.
- II. People have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.
- III. Sovereign nations have a right to control their borders.
- IV. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.
- V. The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.

## Why Does the Catholic Church Believe in Accompaniment?

The act of providing emotional, physical, and spiritual support to people in need as well as standing in solidarity alongside them is a critical part in recognizing the human dignity and experience of every person. In his [2018 migration day message](#), Pope Francis spoke about how “the Lord entrusts to the Church’s motherly love every person forced to leave their homeland in search of a better future”. The Holy Father has repeatedly emphasized the importance of welcoming, supporting, protecting, and integrating immigrants as a high priority for the [Church](#). Each of these broad themes, when put into practice, are important ways in which accompaniment can be made concrete.

## Are There Examples of Accompaniment in the Bible?

The call to accompany and support immigrants that is evident in the Catholic faith is based on the rich heritage of Scripture and the Church's teaching. Abraham and his family were nomads who were called by God to in the land of Canaan. They soon after migrated to Egypt, where they suffered oppression and were delivered once again by the hand of God. From this experience comes a deep appreciation for the migrant journey as highlighted in the words of Scripture: "You shall treat the stranger who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you, have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once strangers in the land of Egypt" ([Leviticus 19:34](#)). Jesus echoes this tradition when he proclaims, "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me" ([Matthew 25:35](#)). Throughout the years the Church has remained faithful to this call to care for and have solidarity with immigrants of all kinds and has worked to respond accordingly.

## How Are We Called to Accompaniment through the Sacraments of the Catholic Faith?

Through [Baptism](#) we are members to one another and are called to imitate Christ's example. As one body in Christ, all the members share "a common dignity" so that "no inequality arising from race or nationality, social condition or sex" exists. For all are one in Christ (*Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic Constitution of the Church*, no. 32).

In the [Eucharistic Liturgy](#) and our prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, we encounter God's presence in a personal and profound way. But the Eucharist is also social, as Pope Benedict XVI reminds us in *Deus Caritas Est* (God is Love): "A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented" (no. 14). As the body of Christ, it sends us on mission to help transform our communities, neighborhoods, and world. The Eucharist awakens us to our own dignity and to that of others and moves us to respond.

Through the Sacrament of [Penance and Reconciliation](#), God offers mercy and forgiveness. In response to this gift, we are called to become vehicles of Christ's love, making amends and restoring justice and the bonds that been broken. The collective actions (or failures to act) of individuals create "structures of sin", which "grow stronger, spread, and become the source of other sins" (Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis: On Social Concern*, no. 36). We are all called to consider how we contribute to structures of sin in our personal, economic, and public choices. When we are healed and forgiven, we are sent to work for peace, justice, and love in our communities and world.

# Why Is There a Current Need for CARE?

## **Current Immigration Situation in the U.S.**

Recent changes to immigration enforcement in the interior of the United States and [changes](#) to who is considered a priority for deportation by the Department of Homeland Security in 2017 have led to deepening feelings of fear and anxiety throughout immigrant communities. For example, the number of non-criminal immigrants arrested by ICE in communities across the U.S. has more than [tripled](#)—from 15,353 in Fiscal Year 2016 to 53,441 in Fiscal Year 2018. Formerly ‘low-priority’ cases of non-criminal immigrants are now facing arrests at a higher level and deportations and many parents, aunts, uncles, and grandparents are becoming more afraid to engage in everyday life for fear of apprehension and the possibility of being separated from their children, loved ones, and community.

Immigration or other local court proceedings that were previously routine now pose a real threat to many families. In particular, many undocumented individuals are increasingly afraid to attend their ICE check-in meetings and local and immigration court proceedings for fear that they may be detained and then face removal proceedings.

For more information about the recent immigration enforcement policy changes, see the resource [Immigration Enforcement in the Interior of the U.S.](#) ([English](#) and [Spanish](#) versions available).

## **Why CARE and Accompaniment?**

Some of the most positive outcomes related to cases of ICE check-ins have been where individuals have been accompanied by their legal representative, family, and by a support group of concerned community members and faith leaders. These positive outcomes can result in a myriad of situations, ranging from the use of prosecutorial discretion to an increased amount of time a family has to prepare for a deportation of a loved one. Almost all cases of individuals participating in accompaniment programs have reported feelings of increased community support and well-being during these traumatic experiences.

The CARE program aims to help facilitate a larger accompaniment movement among Catholic parishes to ensure that individuals who attend their ICE check-ins and local and immigration court proceedings are not going alone and that each person is supported every step of the way. Similarly, CARE works to ensure immigrant families, particularly those who are receiving a child who was unaccompanied, receive support and are able to fully integrate into their communities.

## Who Benefits from Accompaniment?

- **Families** who are able to stay together and live their lives free from fear or uncertainty and be connected to services that help them fully integrate into their communities.
- **Communities** who become stronger by strengthening the bonds between neighbors.
- **Catholics** who learn more about their faith and the call to welcome the stranger and about other Catholic parishes in their own communities.

## How Do Individuals and Groups Benefit from CARE?

Individuals who are accompanied benefit by being able to feel the support of their family, neighbors, and community behind them, and to know that they are loved, cared about, and valued in the Catholic community, particularly as they face immigration enforcement and community integration issues and obstacles. The Catholic community benefits from learning more about their fellow neighbors, the immigration system, and are able to share their gifts and engage in encounter as called for by Pope Francis. Accompaniment also provides formation and leadership opportunities for immigrants and other involved Catholics.

## The CARE Process



## How Are Accompaniment Referrals Received?

- Referrals will come in via the CARE Hotline, that is staffed 24 hours a day by a trained representative.
- Typical immigration proceeding requests for accompaniment:
  - Asylum cases
  - U-Visa cases
  - Local civil court (traffic, misdemeanors)
  - ICE Check-ins
  - ISAP supervision appointments
- Typical community service and integration requests for accompaniment:
  - School enrollment assistance for children
  - Assistance with rides to immigration or other court proceedings, legal or doctors appointments, etc.
  - Assistance with medical and insurance enrollment for U.S. citizen family members
  - Assistance with registering in a Parish
  - Assistance with connecting to legal services and mental health assistance
  - Assistance with receiving an identification card

## Bilingual Core Team

- Referrals are directed to the Bilingual Core Team who facilitate the intake process.
- Bilingual Core Team is made up of 8 to 10 individuals who speak at least 2 languages.
- The Bilingual Core Team connects person seeking accompaniment with the Congregational Team and helps facilitate accompaniment and follow-up.

## Congregational Team

- A Congregational Team consists of 2 Co-Chairs, plus a team of 10 or more volunteers.
  - The 2 Co-Chairs would be the point person between the Bilingual Core Team and the Congregational Team and would receive accompaniment requests from the Bilingual Core Team, reach out their Congregational Team members, and facilitate team reflection after accompaniment.
- The Congregational Team should include at least 2 or more individuals who have some daytime availability.

- The Congregational Team meets monthly or bi-monthly for faith sharing, reflection around accompaniments or relevant current events.
- Possible Congregational Team roles include a communications/outreach chair, a prayer captain, and an on-going education lead.

## The CARE Process

1. Referrals come in via the CARE Hotline, that is staffed 24 hours a day.
2. The referral is directed to the Bilingual Core Team who facilitates the intake process to determine our neighbor's need.
3. Once the Bilingual Core Team receives a request they reach out to the Co-Chairs of a Congregational Team.
4. The Congregational Team Co-Chairs then reach out to their fellow team members.
  - Congregational Team members confirm their attendance for the accompaniment
  - The Congregational Team members participating in the accompaniment coordinate with Bilingual Core Team and/or person seeking accompaniment to arrange when and where they will meet and provide rides if needed.
5. On the day of the accompaniment the Congregational Team:
  - Gathers for prayer
  - Attends proceedings
  - Debriefs together after
    - One person on the Congregational Team should be designated to take notes during the accompaniment and to then share back to Co-Chair & Bilingual Core Team what occurred during the accompaniment.

## Roles of an Accompanier: The Do's and Don'ts

### Do:

- Stay together as a team and ride together if possible
- Follow any directions given from legal counsel
- Be a calming, respectful, and prayerful presence
- Get to know person you are accompanying and follow their lead; you are there to support them
- Share a meal or coffee together before or after the accompaniment
- Contact the Bilingual Core Team member and the CARE Coordinator right away if someone is detained
- Comfort family members who may also be accompanying their family member

### **Don't:**

- Disrupt the proceedings
- Allow person you're accompanying to sign documents they don't understand
- Allow person you're accompanying to be taken to another room alone; ask if you can go with them
- Offer any legal advice
- Speak for person you're accompanying
- Force sharing if the person you're accompanying is unwilling

## **How Can You Get Involved in CARE?**

### **Ways you can get involved in CARE:**

You can get involved in CARE by organizing a prayer chain, holding vigils, letter writing campaigns, educating others about immigration policies, holding know your rights trainings, staffing a local hotline, doing accompaniment work (ICE check-ins, immigration hearings, other appointments), providing rides, lifting up stories, following and sharing Justice for Immigrants Action Alerts, advocating for change, providing help with getting legal assistance, and inviting others to take these actions with you.

### **To find out more, you can visit:**

The CARE program webpage on the JFI website: <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/>

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis' website: <http://www.archindy.org/index.html>

The Archdiocese of San Francisco's CARE webpage: <https://sfarchdiocese.org/care>

# Sample CARE Materials

## Sample Letter of Support for Individual to Send to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

[DATE]

[NAME, Field Office Director]  
Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
Office of Detention and Removal  
[Address]

Dear Field Office Director [NAME],

The Catholic Church supports the humane treatment of immigrants and their families in our communities. We write you as supportive and concerned fellow Catholic parishioners and ask you to grant [Individual] prosecutorial discretion by releasing him and reunite him with his family.

[Individual] came to the United States in [year]. [Individual] is a member of [name of congregation] in [City]. Since entering the country, he has become a person of strong faith, worked hard, created a family of his own, and has become a role model for both his family and community in [State]. [Individual] has been married for [# of years, status of spouse] and has [#] U.S. citizen children [list kids' statuses and ages if applicable]. His family is suffering greatly due to the recent detention of [Individual], [how family is suffering]. If he is deported, his family would become separated and we believe the children would experience severe emotional distress. Furthermore, given [Individual's] role in the community, it will be huge loss to this community as well.

[Individual] is also the primary income earner for his family. Therefore, if he were deported, not only will it guarantee that his family would be permanently separated from one another, but that his children would suffer financial hardship. [Individual's] children would not only suffer emotionally because of the separation caused by the deportation, but economically as well.

Both Scripture and the Catholic Church's teachings call us to recognize the human dignity and experience of every person and to treat each individual, regardless of where they come from, as we ourselves would want to be (Leviticus 19:34). Caring and devoted parents like [Individual], who have been long-term members of our community and who greatly contribute to our communities should not be a high enforcement priority or deported by ICE.

Please help us keep [Individual's] family together. We urge you to exercise prosecutorial discretion and release [Individual] to his family. Such an action would not only be in line with the teachings of the Catholic faith, but true to the values of our communities and nation.

Sincerely,

## Accompaniment Request Form

Name of Ambassador: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Contact Info</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full name of person who called in:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Phone number:</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Relation to person detained/with upcoming court hearing:</li> <li>3. Address (if relevant):</li> <li>4. Name/contact of person with court hearing:</li> <li>5. Do they attend a congregation? If so, which?</li> </ol>
<b>Court Details</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reason for court hearing/check-in/probation:</li> <li>2. Type of court (traffic, criminal case, ICE check-in, immigration, etc.):             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Is this a status hearing or final hearing?</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. When did the initial incident happen?</li> <li>4. Details (interaction with police/ICE, what did they say, did they ID themselves as ICE, any other relevant details of incident):</li> <li>5. When/where is the court hearing/check-in/probation?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Date, time, address:</li> </ol> </li> <li>6. Does the person with court hearing/check-in/probation have any prior criminal or immigration offenses (including multiple border crossings)?             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Details – type of offense, year and location:</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

<b>Legal Resources</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you have a lawyer? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If so, what is their name, phone, email?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Would you be willing to give your lawyer permission to talk with us?</li> <li>3. Will your lawyer be present in court?</li> </ol>
<b>Other Needs</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you need a ride to the court? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If so, what is your address?</li> <li>b. How many people will be going?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Will you need translation in the court? Have you checked with your lawyer to see if the court provides translation?</li> </ol>
<b>Escalation Plan</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If the person is detained or in clear danger of being detained, would your family be interested in enacting a plan for deportation defense? (Check all that you would be willing to engage in on behalf of this person): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Call-in day to ICE or legislators</li> <li>b. Sharing person's story in the media</li> <li>c. Vigil &amp; press conference at the person's congregation</li> </ol> </li> </ol>



**Want to help accompany and support your fellow neighbors?**

## **Join the CARE Program**

The Catholic Accompaniment and Reflection Experience (CARE) Program is committed to connecting volunteers with their immigrant neighbors who are in need of accompaniment and support when integrating into their communities or attempting to comply with immigration or other court proceedings.

**If you would like to learn more about CARE and form an accompaniment team please attend the training below**

**When**

Time and date

**Where**

Place

**Details**

What to bring and other info

**Please contact \_\_\_\_\_ to confirm your attendance**



## CARE Program Volunteer Commitment Form

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

### My best weekday ability is:

\_\_\_ Mondays      Circle: AM    PM

\_\_\_ Tuesdays    Circle: AM    PM

\_\_\_ Wednesdays   Circle: AM    PM

\_\_\_ Thursdays    Circle: AM    PM

\_\_\_ Fridays        Circle: AM    PM

### Do you have access to a car and are you willing to drive to the appointment? *Circle your response.*

YES    NO            Number of Seats in Car: \_\_\_\_\_

### Apart from English, which other languages can you speak? *Circle your response.*

None            Spanish            French            Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### What if any community services do you have familiarity with?

School Access    Health Care    Legal Services    Mental Health    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### What's the best way to contact you?

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Can we text you at this number?    YES    NO

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ I am unavailable weekdays for accompaniment. Please contact me about other ways I can get involved with and support the CARE Program.

## Sample Social Media Posts (for Facebook and Twitter)

If you are interested in learning more about accompaniment and how you can support immigrants and their families in your community, you can visit the link below to the Catholic Accompaniment and Reflection Experience or CARE program. <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/>

One of the newest programs at the USCCB/MRS is the Catholic Accompaniment and Reflection Experience or CARE program. This program aims to provide accompaniment and support to immigrants and their families throughout the US. You can learn more about this program by visiting the link below. <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/>

Interested in learning about the new CARE program and how you can get involved? Visit the CARE program page on the @USCCBJFI website to find out. <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/>

To learn more about why supporting and accompanying immigrants and their families is so important, visit the CARE program's webpage linked here. <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/>

What to learn more about the CARE program? Visit the link below to read an article about CARE from the Criterion. <http://www.archindy.org/criterion/local/2019/03-01/care.html>

What to learn more about the CARE program? Visit the link below to read an article about CARE from America Magazine. <https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2019/02/14/accompanying-undocumented-immigrants-catholic-thing-do>

“The Lord entrusts to the Church’s motherly love every person forced to leave their homeland in search of a better future.” From Pope Francis’s 2018 migration day message – learn more about the CARE program and how you can support migrants in your community today!  
<https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/>.

## Additional Resources

### CARE Program specific resources:

- CARE Program webpage <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/>
- CARE Program Overview <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/care-program-overview/>
- Catholic Church and Accompaniment Backgrounder <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/catholic-church-and-accompaniment-backgrounder/>
- What You Need to Know About Immigration Enforcement in the Interior of the U.S. <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/immigration-enforcement-in-the-interior-of-the-u-s-backgrounder/>

### Other resources from the USCCB and JFI:

- 10 Things You Can Do To Accompany Immigrants <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/10-things-you-can-do.pdf>
- Catholic Principles of Migration <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Principles-of-Migration-1-18-17.pdf>
- Quotes from Church Teachings on the Rights of Migrants and Refugees <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/migrants-refugees-and-travelers/quotes-rights-migrants-refugees.cfm>

### CARE in the news:

- *The Criterion* <http://www.archindy.org/criterion/local/2019/03-01/care.html>
- *America Magazine* <https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2019/02/14/accompanying-undocumented-immigrants-catholic-thing-do>
- *Catholic San Francisco* <https://catholic-sf.org/news/new-archdiocesan-program-will-accompany-immigrants-and-build-community>
- *Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC)* <https://cliniclegal.org/news/archdiocese-indianapolis-unites-communities-care>

