



AN SND CORPORATE STANCE ON IMMIGRATION REFORM

In response to our 2008 Chapter calls and the need to reform the US immigration system, we, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur of the United States, join the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in calling on the federal government to implement a comprehensive immigration reform that would:

- **provide a path to legalization for the undocumented:**

make it possible for hard-working immigrants who are already contributing to this country to come out of the shadows, regularize their status upon satisfaction of reasonable criteria and, over time, pursue an option to become lawful permanent residents and eventually United States citizens.

- **provide a path to legal work for future immigrants by increasing the number of employment visas available:**

create legal avenues for workers and their families who wish to migrate to the U.S. to enter our country and work in a safe, legal, and orderly manner with their rights fully protected.

- **expedite family reunification by increasing the number of family-based visas available:**

reform the family-based immigration system to significantly reduce waiting times for separated families who currently wait many years to be reunited.

- **restore due process rights important for the protection of refugees and others:**

legislate border protection policies consistent with humanitarian values and which treat all individuals with respect, while allowing the authorities to identify and prevent entry of terrorists and dangerous criminals.

- **focus on the development of migration sending countries.**

These policy recommendations are consistent with Catholic Social Teaching's call for dignified treatment of migrants and the authentic development of all people. They derive from basic principles of Catholic migration teaching, and from Scripture.

"You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; have the same love for them as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt." Lv. 19:33-34.

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me." Mt. 25:35.

"We work with others to transform unjust structures and systems as we participate in creating new ways of relating which enable all to experience more fully the goodness of God." Constitutions #23.

"We yearn to deepen our fundamental commitment to stand with our sisters and brothers who live in poverty and accompany them in their struggle....All these cries compel us to personal, corporate and collaborative action."
Chapter of 2008: Calls.

Suggestions for action:

- Pray for comprehensive immigration reform and for the victims of the broken immigration system and for those who advocate harsh anti-immigrant laws.

- Work in our local communities as we are able to support local initiatives to protect immigrants' rights and to promote comprehensive immigration reform.

- Help educate our communities about Catholic Social Teaching, the suffering of immigrant communities and the global realities which are causes of their emigration.

- Work with organizations committed to comprehensive immigration reform.

(October 2011)