



U.S. Campaign to Support Migrants and Refugees Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Share the Journey Campaign?

This campaign puts in action what Pope Francis calls for, “culture of encounter” as a common goal, encouraging people to be fearless in the ways they look beyond themselves to the needs of others, “Faith is an encounter with Jesus, and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others,” he said.

When did the campaign begin and who is running it in the U.S.?

The campaign launched on September 27, 2017, by Pope Francis. Sponsored internationally by Caritas Internationalis and in the United States by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the *Share the Journey* campaign aims to build empathy toward migrants and refugees

What does the campaign want to accomplish?

Together with our U.S. partners the campaign will work to

- change people’s hearts and minds about migrants,
- mobilize the time and talent of Catholics across the U.S.,
- inspire people to advocate for better policies

What has happened in the campaign so far?

- Over 100 dioceses around the U.S. participated in launching the campaign in their parishes, schools and on social media.
- The September 27 launch was followed in the U.S. by a Week of Prayer and Action (October 7–13) when parishes, schools, universities and other institutions and individuals across the country joined in prayer, education and sharing of information about migrants and refugees to support them locally and around the world.
- The campaign has widespread integration and is incorporated into National Migration Week, World Refugee Day, and the advocacy outreach from Justice for Immigrants, CCUSA and Catholics Confront Global Poverty.
- Share the Journey is also woven into CRS Rice Bowl, a Lenten program that engages over 13,000 Catholic schools and parishes in the U.S.
- The campaign has a robust presence on social media (#sharejourney) with the top reach of 1.8 million people in February around the National Call-In Day for Dreamers.



What's Next for Share the Journey?

On World Refugee Day, June 20, a new marketing component of the campaign called “Be Unafraid to Share the Journey” will launch. During this phase a series of photos and interviews of a diverse group of refugees and domestic citizens who shared their personal fears with each other will be featured. This rich content will show the power of encounter, encourage critical conversations between people and move people toward empathy and hope.

The Share the Journey campaign invites Catholic institutions throughout the United States to organize a Prayer Pilgrimage this fall before November 13, 2018. Dioceses, parishes, universities, and schools are being asked to pray, walk, and bear public witness to our solidarity with migrants and refugees. Leaders are being strongly encouraged to intentionally reach out to both interfaith and ecumenical groups. Through a virtual counter, the United States will aim to collectively walk a total of 24,900 miles (once around the world) in 1 month. Information is available at sharejourney.org

Who is involved around the world?

All members of the Caritas Internationalis confederation (over 160 relief, development and social service members) are invited to promote the campaign at local and national levels by organizing events and activities. Bishops' conferences and faith-based organizations around the world are invited to offer the resources created for Share the Journey in the U.S. with their audiences.

How can I make a difference?

You can pray. You can organize an event in your community. You can advocate to your elected officials on migration. You can share on social media and tag your support with #sharejourney.

What does the Catholic church say about migration?

The Catholic Church's approach to migration is rooted in the Gospel and in the rich tradition of Catholic social teaching. A recent example of this teaching is *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope*, a pastoral letter concerning migration from the Catholic bishops of Mexico and the United States.

Five principles that help guide the Church's approach to migration

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 but rejects such control when it is exerted merely for the purpose of acquiring additional wealth. More powerful economic nations, which have the ability to 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.

How is Pope Francis involved?

The Holy Father has made the plight of migrants a centerpiece of his papacy from its beginning when he visited the Italian island of Lampedusa where many land on their way from Africa and the Middle East trying to reach Europe. He calls on us to live the Gospels and share Christ's message of God's loving mercy through encounter with others. As a Church, we will continue to stand in solidarity with our immigrant brothers and sisters because for us this is not a political issue, it's a human issue.

What is the issue?

Nearly half of all displaced people around the world are innocent children, and some are forced to flee without a parent or guardian. These children are among the more than 60 million people today who are displaced from their native land because of lack of food, violence or terrorism, and religious persecution. Many are displaced within their own country, while others have sought refuge in neighboring countries.

We're facing a global crisis not seen since World War II and must accept with compassion those fleeing persecution and seeking refuge. As the Holy Father has said there is currently a great need for a "spirit of readiness to welcome those fleeing from wars and hunger, and solidarity with those deprived of their fundamental rights, including the right to profess one's faith in freedom and safety."

In the U.S., we must always remember that we are a nation of migrants and refugees, many of whom fled religious persecution. It is imperative that we listen to their stories to truly see the face of Christ in these our brothers and sisters.

