

## Pastor's Column

Rev. Michael Ratajczak  
michaelr@stmoside.org  
758-4100 x100

### "Immigration Reform and Corpus Christi Sunday 2007"

The Catholic Bishops of California have designated June 10, 2007, *Corpus Christi Sunday*, as the day to highlight the necessity for comprehensive national immigration reform—which we as a Church, support.

The Bishops are encouraging this Church Feast Day to be an opportunity to reflect on the struggle of immigrants, pray for a just reform and urge all parishioners to take some action.

The Bishops urge us to remember:

- † **that we are an immigrant Church and that we are all members of the Body of Christ and that we ought to welcome the immigrant, the stranger into our lives**
- † **that we will be affected by the outcomes of the national debate on immigration reform because some may actually be immigrants without legal status or resident aliens waiting for visas for their family members or because they may depend on the hard work and invaluable contribution of immigrants—both documented and undocumented**
- † **that with the approaching 2008 political season, there is an urgency to pass responsible immigration reform now because otherwise it will likely be another two or three years before it is again considered**
- † **that both our government and the governments of the migrants' home countries bear responsibility in the current immigration problem. Those that immigrate often take huge risks coming to the United States because there are no jobs in their homeland. Our immigration laws make legal immigration or temporary worker status very difficult—especially for families**
- † **that the Church does not support illegal immigration, but rather, supports a path to legal residency which has fair requirements such as background checks, reasonable fines, back taxes, and learning English**

Some of the negotiated talks taking place in Congress now are shifting away from compassionate reform and a family-based immigration policy to a number of unworkable solutions: building a wall and employment-based and enforcement-only proposals.

Catholic Bishops are calling to consider the well-being of the family first. Legal workers in the US may actually wait 10 years or more for their families to join them, which may mean missing children's entire childhood. That situation is not acceptable to our Catholic values, and that is why we need to be involved in the immigration reform debate.

The five main principles of Catholic Social Teaching on Migration are:

1. *People have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.*
2. *People have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.*
3. *Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.*
4. *Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.*
5. *The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.*

Included in today's Bulletin is a flyer with more information regarding the Catholic position on immigration reform. Please take time to read it, pray and reflect upon it, and act upon it as your conscience dictates.

With God's help let us seek legislation that incorporates the spirit of the Gospel. Remember that early in the life of Jesus, when he was 2 years old, Joseph needed to flee to Egypt with Mary, and the infant Jesus. The Holy Family became immigrants and sought sanctuary.

If there were immigration laws then, like some that are now being proposed, Jesus would never have gotten across the border and would have been killed by King Herod!

*Fr. Mike*