



Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform

Office for Immigrant Affairs & Immigration Education



Statement by the Priests for Justice for Immigrants
and Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants
May 12, 2010

We, the Priests for Justice for Immigrants, representing over 200 priests in Chicago, and the Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants, representing over 40 religious orders in Chicago, stand together with our other brothers and sisters in faith to voice our great sadness and outrage at the passage of SB1070 in Arizona. We stand in solidarity with all of those people in Arizona, both citizens and those who deserve a path to citizenship, in opposition to this legislation, which has its roots in white supremacist ideology. We feel that the passage of this bill reflects a narrow-minded, xenophobic and racist attitude toward people of color, especially those of Latino ethnic backgrounds.

The passage of such legislation that will inevitably increase an already scandalous amount of profiling of Latino men and women in Arizona reflects a greater frustration with our Congress and Federal Administration. We are extremely disappointed by our President's inability to follow through on his promise to facilitate the passage of compassionate comprehensive immigration legislation. We are appalled at the partisan politics of a Congress that seems to be more concerned with what might happen in the Fall elections than what is happening in the lives of hard-working mothers, fathers and children who daily live in fear of having their family torn apart and what has happened in the lives of children who have lost a mother and/or father to deportation. As women and men of faith, we have heard the stories; we have felt the pain of our sisters and brothers; we have seen families torn apart. We are compelled by a moral imperative to go beyond the law, to know the person and the pain before we come back to the law. It is our belief that every woman and man is a child of God and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. The unwillingness of our legislators to exercise courageous and compassionate leadership continues to leave 10 million hard-working mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters in a limbo filled with fear of deportation, with continued abuses by employers and unscrupulous lawyers and realtors, and with continued discrimination against them by non-immigrants.

We call on all people of good faith to immediately join with us to reject laws such as SB1070 and demand that our legislators halt all non-criminal deportations until they fix our long-broken immigration system, freeing over 10 million undocumented immigrants from fear, providing a reasonable and just path to citizenship for them, creating a worker visa program that adjusts to meet our labor needs in this country, and ultimately increasing the security of our country and the just treatment of all workers by doing these things.

We believe in a faithful and compassionate God. We believe that our country can be faithful again to its long tradition of welcoming the immigrant. We believe that the people of this country can reclaim its compassion, a compassion that, like our God, knows no boundaries or borders, but extends its arms in openness and always finds a way to welcome and embrace all of God's children. Together we pledge to continue to accompany our immigrant brothers and sisters as they seek a path to citizenship and the opportunity to fully participate in the American dream.