

RESOURCES FOR FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS INTERESTED IN IMMIGRATION

In the last decade many immigrant families have been torn apart on grounds of legal status. Today, threats of deportation are on the rise as the new administration takes harsh and unjust measures to punish those who are escaping war, religious persecution, and poverty in their home countries. The policies in place to date target innocent, hardworking people who continue to contribute day to day to our economy and cultural enrichment.

As communities of faith we understand the value and meaningful history of providing sanctuary in our congregation to the poor and displaced. This is an ancient concept that transcends borders and religious nuances, bringing communities together to celebrate and protect the sanctity of life. Our shared faith-driven values of love and compassion for our neighbors, whomever they may be, is what strengthens our commitment to social peace, justice, and prosperity.

If you are interested, here are some ways in which you can help out:

SEE WHETHER YOUR COMMUNITY IS INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THIS MOVEMENT.

There are a variety of ways to help, ranging from enlisting volunteers to accompany individuals to meetings with immigration authorities to providing sanctuary. You might host a meetings with your congregants in order to determine your community's interest with immigration issues. Sanctuary Not Deportation's toolkit [includes a FAQ](#) that would be helpful to reference in case your congregants have any questions or concerns about becoming involved.

ESTABLISH YOUR HOUSE OF WORSHIP AS A SITE OF PHYSICAL SANCTUARY FOR IMMIGRANTS WHO ARE THREATENED WITH DEPORTATION.

Universalist Unitarian Association [outlines the logistics of sanctuary here](#).

New Sanctuary NYC offers explanations of both [short term and long term sanctuary](#).

EDUCATE YOUR CONGREGATION BY HELPING THEM PREPARE FOR POTENTIAL IMMGRATION ISSUES, SUCH AS ARREST OR DEPORTATION.

Sanctuary Not Deportation has a [toolkit that explains how to create "rapid response networks"](#) for persons who are at risk of visitation by ICE agents. StopSeparatingFamilies.org created a toolkit [that outlines the steps people should take if ICE appears at one's doorstep](#).

You can [request a representative from the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs](#) to inform your congregation about available immigrant services. ACLU has created "[Know Your Rights](#)" cards that can be distributed amongst your congregation and shared with local immigrant communities.

Children's Defense Fund also has published briefs [that explain the impact of immigration policies on children and families](#). Sesame Workshop [has created a guide to help immigrant families who are targeted by new immigration policies](#).

DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ABOUT LEGAL SERVICES AND SOCIAL SERVICES THAT CATER TO IMMIGRANTS.

Children's Defense Fund-NY has created two maps with [legal services and social services](#) that cater to the needs of immigrants across New York State. The Immigration Advocate Network also has a [directory of legal service providers across the United States](#).

BECOME PART OF THE ADVOCACY MOVEMENT.

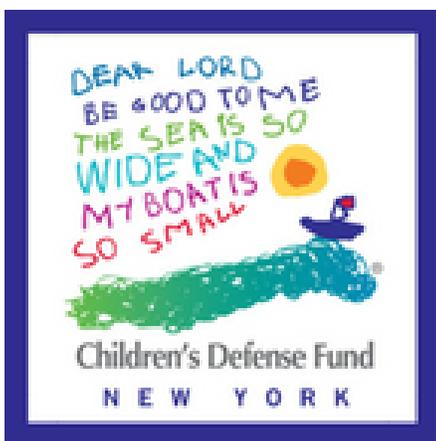
The Catholic Legal Immigration Network has also listed [ways in which people can help protect Dreamers](#) in this tricky political climate by writing letters and petitions to the government. Faith Action Network has also created a "[Develop Effective Messages](#)" memo that explains how to write messages to your legislators. You can find out where to contact your local Congressperson [here](#). Join the movement and get more information [here](#).

CREATE A BULLETIN THAT EXPLAINS THE CONCEPT OF SANCTUARY, AND INCLUDE WAYS IN WHICH THE CONGREGATION COULD GET INVOLVED.

Across religions, there is scripture that discusses a responsibility to help the stranger. Some examples of religious scripture that describe this are:

- a. **Christianity-** *Leviticus 19:33-34* "When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."
- b. **Hinduism-** Using an excerpt from the story of *King Shibi and the two birds*: "Seeing the falcon, the dove got scared and hid more in the king's lap. King Shibi caressed the dove kindly and said to the falcon, 'Maybe, it was your prey, but now he is in my shelter, and whosoever comes in to my shelter, it is my duty to protect him, so I cannot give him to you.'"
- c. **Judaism-** *Deuteronomy 24:17-18, 21*: "You shall not subvert the rights of the stranger or the fatherless; you shall not take a widow's garment in pawn. Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and that the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore I enjoin you to observe this commandment... when you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not pick it over again; that shall go to a stranger, the fatherless, and the widow".
- d. **Islam-** *Quran 60:8* "Allah forbids you not, with regards to those who fight you not for your faith not drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just."
- e. **Baha'i-** *Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah*: "Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all men. Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression. Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive."

Please contact CDF-NY at messages@childrensdefense.org if you have any questions, suggestions or comments. Thank you for joining us in our efforts to protect immigrant rights.



Contact Us

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.Join the Movement