



On Fire for Immigration Reform: A Pentecost Resource

Overview

Join Catholics across the country for seven days of prayer, reflection, and action to heal our broken immigration system. Each day will be centered on one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It will be through this lens that we will explore seven aspects of our immigration system.

Each day participants will be asked to pray the *Prayer of the Holy Spirit*, the daily reflection, and the closing prayer (on page 2). Additionally, we encourage you to choose to engage in one or more of the suggested actions, joining with other Catholics across the country.

This resource could be used by individuals, small groups, or whole parish communities. *Please see the pulpit announcements on page 7.*

Scripture: Acts 2:1-4

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

History

Pentecost is an ancient feast. In the Christian calendar the 50th day after Easter supplanted the Jewish Feast of Pentecost, 50 days after the Passover, which celebrated the sealing of the Covenant on Mt. Sinai. Christians celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples, often called “the birthday of the Church.” In earlier times, both fasting and kneeling were forbidden during the 50 days of Pentecost which were supposed to give a foretaste of heaven.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created
And you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who instructed the hearts of the faithful
by the light of the Holy Spirit,
grant us in the same Spirit

to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reflection on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Wind and fire: images of power. Both have capacity for destruction and for life, for pain and for healing.

The Spirit of God empowers for life, for enthusiastic, bold witness in proclaiming the “good news.”
Wind: breath of the Spirit, the soft whisper of God’s voice within us as persistent as our breathing, or a strong wind shaking us loose from fear, doubt, timidity, apathy, empowering us to speak and act boldly for what we know is right and just.

Fire: a reminder of the Holy Spirit’s essential role in the creation of the world and of the Church, Spirit who came as “tongues of fire,” encouraging the disciples to spread God’s word to all people with enthusiasm. Fire symbolizes the light of truth and heat of love. When we are “on fire” about something we are passionate about it.

May we be filled with and inspired by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. If we are “truly wise” and “understanding” we will relish what is right and just for immigrants in our country and will work with “fortitude” for genuine immigration reform, sustained by the “piety” of love and hope. May the feast of Pentecost rekindle in our hearts the fire of God’s love for all, and energize us to continue the work of immigration reform in partnership with immigrant sisters and brothers, who are participating in the mission of the Holy Spirit to “renew the face of the Earth”—and of the United States of America.

Closing Prayer from Hildegarde of Bingen

Be not lax in celebrating.
Be not lazy in the festive service of God.
Be ablaze with enthusiasm.
Let us be an alive, burning offering
before the altar of God.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Monday, June 2

God grant us the gift of Wisdom to contemplate the root causes of immigration.

Reflection: The gift of wisdom enables us to value what we believe by faith; to see in any event or situation the essential meaning beneath what is immediately obvious. While advocates and legislators address the effects of immigration, all need to examine the root causes, the reasons people take risks to come to this country, if long-term solutions are to be found. We pray for ourselves, our families and communities, and for our legislators, the wisdom to see that migration has understandable causes that need to be addressed and that immigration reform is a moral issue.

❖ **Educational resource:** It is not an easy decision to leave your family and friends to risk your life to come to the United States. The choice to migrate, especially without legal authorization, is most

often a desperate act. Read Celina's story and learn why she migrated to the United States, visit: <http://bit.ly/1omLb8i>

- ❖ **Group action:** Watch the film *Who is Dayni Crystal?* You can view the trailer or schedule a showing of the documentary at <http://whoisdayanicristal.com/>. To access more resources, including a facilitator guide to the film, visit <http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/2014/04/22/who-is-dayani-crystal/>
- ❖ **Individual action:**
 - Talk to a person who has come from another country. Ask why she/he left home for a new land. How does her/his current life compare with the life left behind? What were the benefits of migrating? What were the sacrifices?
 - Spend some time in reflection with Celina. Could she have made different choices? What did she need that she did not have?

Tuesday, June 3

God grant us Piety so we can serve the most vulnerable, the refugees and migrants, not out of duty but out of love.

Reflection: Piety is a fiery desire to worship God in word and deed, not out of duty, but out of love, a love which reaches out to those who suffer under unjust systems. We pray for asylees and refugees, undocumented immigrants, migrant victims of human trafficking, survivors of torture, and unaccompanied children. We urge Congress to assure adequate funding to assist them.

- ❖ **Educational resource:** Since 2011, the United States has seen an unprecedented increase in the number of unaccompanied migrating children arriving to the country, predominately at the U.S./Mexico border. Whereas the number of children apprehended averaged 6,800 between 2004 and 2011, the total jumped to over 13,000 children in 2012 and over 24,000 children in 2013. The Federal government estimates that more than 60,000 unaccompanied minors could enter the United States during 2014. To find out more about the causes behind this unprecedented migration and to learn about the bishops recommendations, please visit: <http://bit.ly/1fCE2h4> (English) or <http://bit.ly/1iGHti4> (Spanish)
- ❖ **Group action:** Support children around the world. Urge the United States to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Ask President Obama to send the Convention the CRC to the Senate for ratification before the November 20th International Day of the Child. Sign the petition at www.childrightscampaign.org.
- ❖ **Individual action:** Urge your senators and representative to preserve funding for programs that serve refugees and asylum seekers. To be connected to an action alert that will send an email to your elected officials visit <http://bit.ly/1lpqoxC>

Wednesday June 4

God grant us the gift of Knowledge, so we can comprehend the pain of families separated by deportation.

Reflection: Spiritual Knowledge is more than knowing facts. Facts provide evidence that nearly two million immigrants have been deported under this Administration, often separating parents from children; ripping families apart. We pray that everyone comes to value the intellectual life, to discern good from evil, to be passionate about the good of preserving family unity, and to bring this knowledge to others.

- ❖ **Educational resource:** Imagine being arrested by immigration enforcement officials—separated from your children—knowing that they would be left alone. Now imagine your children pretending you are still home in order to avoid losing each other in the foster care system. Imagine the fear, the pain, the longing. That is Amalia’s story and it is the story millions of other families currently separated by our broken immigration system. With debate over immigration reform stalled in the House, children wait for their parents to come home. Read more about *Immigration Enforcement and Family Separation* at <https://lcwr.org/sites/default/files/publications/files/RTA1-11.pdf>.
- ❖ **Group action:** Host a letter writing campaign. Ask President Obama to address the continuing mass deportations in the absence of immigration reform. To ensure your letters are received quickly, it might be best to submit them on line at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/submit-questions-and-comments>.
- ❖ **Individual action:** Then Call the White House at **1-866-473-5915**

Sample script:

"I'm from City, State and as a Catholic, I urge President Obama to stop the pain and family separation caused by deportations. The President has the authority to allow more of our undocumented community members to stay in the United States without fear of deportation. Please expand prosecutorial discretion and ensure that the policy is implemented. End federal-state enforcement programs such as Secure Communities and 287g. End the use of methods that deny due process. Reform deportation practices to ensure returnees are safe. Expand programs that provide alternatives to detention, and end Operation Streamline."

Thursday, June 5

God grant us the gift of Understanding, so that we may mourn the death and suffering on our border.

Reflection: Through the gift of understanding, we grasp the essence of the truths of our faith. Understanding enables us to see with God’s eyes the long range impact of decisions made about enforcement and border security rather than propose solutions that may be harmful instead of helpful. We pray that border security will be understood as only one component of a genuine, compassionate, and workable immigration system.

- ❖ **Educational resources:** In his homily at a July 8, 2013 Mass celebrated with the residents of the Italian island of Lampedusa and the immigrants who have sought refuge there, Pope Francis spoke out against the “globalization of indifference” that leads to tragedies like the deaths of so many migrants seeking a better life. Read the Pope’s homily at Lampedusa: <http://bit.ly/1qwZWYj>
- ❖ **Group action:** Following the example given by Pope Francis at Lampedusa, where the Holy Father remembered migrants from Africa who have died trying to reach Europe, a USCCB-sponsored in Nogales, Arizona called attention to the humanitarian consequences of the our nation’s broken immigration system. A group of Catholic bishops, led by Cardinal Sean O’Malley of Boston, commemorated the deaths of migrants in the U.S. desert and prayed for immigration reform. Invite your community to watch the border mass together. Access the video at <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org> and find additional resources at: <http://bit.ly/1o5oerc>
- ❖ **Individual action:** Break down the barriers of misinformation with social media. You can access suggested tweets and Facebook posts in the resource section (page 8). If you do not use social media, you can also access an outline for writing a letter to the editor about the broken immigration system.

Friday, June 6

God, grant us the gift of Counsel so we may make decisions based on Gospel values.

Reflection: The gift of Counsel provides ability to search, ask questions, and judge the best way to act in light of current circumstances. It is neither a moral value nor an American value to create a class system in which millions of people can never hold citizenship. We pray for the grace to ask the right questions and pursue the most effective ways of persuading Congress to enact immigration reform that includes a clearly defined, earned, and achievable path to citizenship.

- ❖ **Educational resource:** Read the USCCB/MRS issue brief, *Why Don’t They Come Here Legally?* to gain insight into our nation’s past immigration practices and to learn more about the complicated federal requirements, regulations, and restrictions that current immigrants must follow today in order to immigrate to the United States. You can access the document at <http://bit.ly/1sFtD7f>
- ❖ **Group action:** Schedule an in-district meeting with your member of Congress or invite him/her to visit your organization or community. Call the Capitol switchboard number at **202-224-3121** to be connected with your representative’s office. Ask to speak to the scheduler and he/she will work with you to find a suitable time to meet with your representative in-district. Find tips for planning a visit at: <http://bit.ly/RIndqM>
- ❖ **Individual action:** Call this **toll-free number, 1-855-589-5698**, to be connected to the in-district office of your U.S. House Member and ask them to:
 - Vote for immigration reform,
 - Support a path to citizenship,
 - Preserve family unity, and
 - Employ safe and humane immigration enforcement practices.

Saturday, June 7

God grant us the gift of Fortitude to enter into the suffering of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Reflection: This Gift of the Spirit enables us to overcome fear and be drawn by the Love of Christ, who risked suffering and even death to expose sin, injustice, and violence. Fortitude is the virtue of the martyrs which calls us out of our comfort zone to take risks with the Lord. We pray for the will to risk our comforts, our routines, our status, our resources, and our access to privilege as we live into deep solidarity and work for comprehensive immigration reform.

- ❖ **Educational resource:** *The Dream is Now* is a 30-minute documentary that captures the debate over immigration reform as it unfolds in the lives of five extraordinary young people. Academy Award-winning director Davis Guggenheim shines a spotlight on the struggle and fortitude of the undocumented children of immigrants desperate to earn their citizenship and contribute to the country they call home. In a larger sense, theirs is the story of all 11.5 million immigrants forced to live in the shadows—denied the chance to realize their dreams. The film goes beyond the personal, placing the stories of these young people in a larger context, exploring the consequences of our current immigration policies – not just for the young people of today but for our country’s future.

View the film on YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfiInvpjPtI> or at www.thedreamisnow.org where you will also find resources for discussion and action.

- ❖ **Group action:** Call to public witness. With fortitude stand in solidarity with the immigrant community. Suggested actions can be found in the resource section, starting on page 8.
- ❖ **Individual action:** Write Letters to the Editor or Op-Eds challenging the system that profits from imprisoning immigrants. Guidelines and tips can be found in the resource section, page 9.

Sunday, June 8

God grant us the gift of Fear of the Lord so we as one community we can hope in your abiding love.

Reflection: This Gift of the Spirit does not inspire anxiety or dread of God, but gives us an abiding consciousness of God’s presence in us, thus confirming the theological virtue of hope. We pray that in our work for immigration reform we may not yield to pressures that try to deter us, but may learn from our immigrant brothers and sisters to live and act always with hope, believing that “if God is for us, who can be against?”

- ❖ **Educational resources:** Reflect on the readings and homily of this Pentecost Sunday through the lens of our broken immigration system.
- ❖ **Group action:** Celebrate the diversity of culture, language and a shared faith in God. Plan a joint gathering between the Spanish Mass and English Mass groups in a local parish.
- ❖ **Individual action:** Call Speaker Boehner’s office in Washington D.C. at **202-225-6205**. Tell him that with him that we are placing our “hope” in his leadership. You can see a sample script below. If

we fill up his voicemail, then send Speaker Boehner an email at <http://www.speaker.gov/Contact/> .
Sample Script: *Speaker Boehner,*

This Pentecost Sunday, I am praying for you and your colleagues in the House of Representatives that together you may be able to find solutions to fix our broken immigration system. Time is running out. I ask you do everything in your power to pass just and humane immigration reform that preserves family unity and offers a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.

Pulpit Announcements

Seventh Sunday of Easter (June 1st)

As we begin the week that climaxes with Pentecost next Sunday, it is important that we take a moment to reflect on the unity of the Church in Christ, and not allow our place of origin, our legal status, or the cultural differences that too often and too easily divide us from one another, to do so anymore. This season provides us an opportunity to come to terms with what our unity with one another means in our daily lives, outside these four walls, and in our mission to bring the Gospel to the world.

Suggested Actions:

- ❖ Before the feast of Pentecost, meet with your Member Congress while they are in their home districts during the week of June 2-6 and ask them to pass immigration reform legislation. Harness the power of the season to advocate passionately on behalf of our immigrant brothers and sisters and their families.
- ❖ On June 6th, call this **toll-free number, 1-855-589-5698**, to be connected to the in-district office of your U.S. House Member and ask them to:
 - Vote for immigration reform;
 - Support a path to citizenship;
 - Preserve family unity; and
 - Employ safe and humane immigration enforcement practices.

Pentecost Sunday (June 8th)

In our reading from the Acts of the Apostles we hear the story of disciples who came from all over the known world: from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Rome, and elsewhere. Although from different places and speaking different tongues, with the descent of the Holy Spirit each one came to understand the others when they spoke. Let this be a reminder that despite our differences, we are one in Christ. It is imperative then, that we not allow our place of origin, our legal status, or our cultural differences to blind us to this unity.

Suggested Action: In the spirit of the season, please call the office of your Member of Congress and remind her or him that, like the disciples in the story of Pentecost, our families came from different lands and that we are all children of God. Call this **toll-free number, 1-855-589-5698**, again on June 13th to be connected to the in-district office of your U.S. House Member and ask them once more to:

- Vote for immigration reform;
- Support a path to citizenship;
- Preserve family unity; and
- Employ safe and humane immigration enforcement practices.

RESOURCES

Social Media

- **Twitter**

Important handles: @SpeakerBoehner @GOPLeader (Eric Cantor) @USCCBJFI

Access your member of Congress' twitter handle at <http://stuffthought.com/blog/113th-congress-twitter-handles/>

Hashtags: #timeisnow #ImmigrationReform

- **Sample Tweets**

@SpeakerBoehner @EricCantor Catholics support immigration reform that preserves family unity and offers a path to citizenship @USCCBJFI

@SpeakerBoehner and @(your member) I am counting on you to pass immigration reform in the 113th Congress @USCCBJFI

@(your member) as a constituent, I expect you to do everything you can to pass just and humane immigration reform @USCCBJFI

- **Facebook**

The House of Representatives is running out of time to fix the broken immigration system. Only 40 work days left before the election. Click here to join with other Catholics and send your member of Congress the U.S. Catholic Bishops' [Justice for Immigrants electronic postcard](http://bit.ly/19GcEXH) at <http://bit.ly/19GcEXH>

Resources for Saturday Day of Action—Gift of Fortitude-Saturday June 7th

We encourage you to develop a “public witness action” for the Gift of Fortitude we celebrate on Saturday June 7th. This can take a broad range of forms, but we hope they embody the new Spirit we receive from Christ in the Gifts of the Spirit, and particularly the gift of fortitude and the courage to take risks as the original apostles did after Pentecost. Here are some suggestions:

Flash Mobs or Role Plays

What is it? A justice and peace flash mob is a way to call people's attention to an issue by using coordinated surprise activity in a meaningful public location.

Often we get distracted in our ordinary routines from attending to the urgent issues of the day. This is one tactic that can re-orient folks to these urgent issues. They have been used in high-intensity conflicts such as Belarus and Egypt, as well as lower-intensity spaces such as the UK for various social issues or at Wall Street in the U.S.

Video examples are available at: <http://bit.ly/1iL06Wz>

Why for Immigration Reform? For immigration reform, we encourage you to consider using this tactic at this time to spark creativity, re-energize each other, and to help bystanders more deeply sense the pain and injustice of our present system.

How do we do it?

1. Connect and gather interested people. It can be small from 3-5 or larger groups.
2. Choose your location. Decide on a public place that has meaningful significance and entails a lot of bystanders. For example, near the district office of your representative, at a central location your community, at a key business benefiting from the unjust system, in a place where many might not support immigration reform and just be inactive, etc.
3. Develop your method and roles. There are multiple ways to consider flash mobs to catch people's attention, such as a simple set of coordinated gestures, a noticeable coordinated walk, flashing signs, a song, a simple dance, role-play, etc. Normally it entails the participants simply hanging out in the chosen area, and then at once or gradually entering into the coordinated activity. Music in some form is generally a valuable component. For example, you might do a brief 30-90 second role-play of an ICE agent arresting an immigrant with their family nearby and emotionally distraught about their mother/father/sibling, etc. being deported. This could be done with words or in silence. Then have a few people simply hold up signs with short messages for bystanders to see. Some people could be "supportive observers" who are simply present, might applaud, etc. You could do this in multiple locations at the same or different times. Organizers should be conscious of health and safety.
4. Plan for Press and Attend to Multiple Audiences. Contact a few press people ahead of time that you trust to keep details confidential, but who could also be in the area to see and report it. You should plan to video it if participants are ok with this and then share it on social media, e.g. Youtube. Coordinating tweets to your representative and Facebook posts on your representative's page would enhance the impact. *You should also have a couple people hand out 3 x 5 flyers to bystanders with short messages on the issue and who you are, as well as ways to contact their representative and you if they want to get involved later.
5. Celebrate your experience. Gather sometime soon afterwards and debrief, but also spend some time celebrating together your creativity, courage, and solidarity!
6. Questions: contact Eli McCarthy, Director of Justice and Peace at CMSM, emccarthy@cmsm.org or 301-588-4030.

Sample Letter to the Editor—General

Start with a specific reference to a recent article about immigration, and express disapproval or approval. Then continue with the part below.

As a _____ (name your religious order, your job or just put Catholic), I am (either your individual, communal or churches role on this issue). (My/our) commitment to immigration reform comes from (this will have to come from you but examples could be: as a teacher your experience teaching children that have had parents deported). This service includes our commitment here in _____ (City, State) _____ (run a school, serve in a hospital, etc.) It is through our direct interaction with migrants that (I/we) know the broken immigration system separates families; exploits vulnerable migrants by unscrupulous employers and smugglers and disregards the human dignity of our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. We must push our elected officials to provide a pathway to citizenship and offer measures that support family reunification. I join other faith leaders in praying that Senators _____ and Representative _____ (names of your elected officials for state/district) makes the right decision and pass just and humane immigration reform.

Sample Letter to Editor-- For-profit Private Prison Detention Companies

Start with a specific reference to a recent article about immigration, and express disapproval or approval. Then continue with the part below.

(I am/We are) advocating diligently for genuine solutions to our unjust immigration system. However, major for-profit private prison detention companies, i.e. Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) and the GEO Group's approach to immigration is in stark contrast to our values.

A solutions-based approach to immigration reform that relies on the values of human dignity, compassion, and hospitality includes swift citizenship for undocumented immigrants, re-uniting families, protecting refugees and asylees, due process protections for immigrants, an end to deportations, and addressing root causes or drivers of forced migration.

In contrast, CCA and GEO are pouring millions of dollars into lobbying Congress, (including our congressional representative _____,) primarily to increase their market and win immigration-related detention contracts. The result is immigration reform legislation that focuses on border surges and detention. This emphasis on border and interior enforcement will increase the number of people in these private detention centers, increase the number of deportations, and likely increase the profits of private prisons at the expense of many who are poor and marginalized.

One egregious example of this pattern is the 34,000 "bed quota" presently required by law to ensure their profits. CCA and GEO's business is very disappointing, disheartening, and in many ways unjust.

I/We urgently request that (my/our) congressional representative(s) _____ refrain from receiving any money from CCA or GEO, pay back any that has been received, and avoid allowing the private for-profit interests of CCA or GEO to influence immigration legislation.

Instead, I/we ask that (my/our) congressional representative(s) _____ end the bed quota and contribute to the immigration debate in a more constructive way in accord with human dignity, compassion and hospitality as described above. In addition, I/we plan to divest from CCA and GEO, while encouraging other individuals and organizations to also divest of any financial investments in both CCA and GEO.*

*An alternative ending:

while encouraging other individuals and organizations to publicly explore divesting or engage in effective shareholder advocacy that diminishes the negative influence CCA/GEO have on immigration reform.

*If you don't have stock in CCA/GEO:

we refuse to own stock in CCA and GEO and encourage other individuals and organizations to publicly explore divesting or engaging in effective shareholder advocacy that diminishes the negative influence CCA/GEO have on immigration reform legislation.

Resources: Major Private Prison/Detention Center Corporations

Corrections Corporation of America

- Campaign Finance: Spent \$5.2 mill. since 1990; \$400,000 (2011-2013);
- 91% of donations to Republicans (2013)
- Lobbying: Spent \$19 million since 1990; \$2.6 mill. (2011-2013)

GEO Group

- Campaign Finance: Spent \$4.6 mill. since 1990; \$400,000 (2011-2013);
- Lobbying: Spent \$3 mill. since 1990; \$700,000 (2011-2013)
- CCA acknowledges the need to expand the market: “(o)ur growth is generally dependent upon our ability to obtain new contracts to develop and manage new correctional and detention facilities.” (2012)

JFI Focused Catholic Congresspersons Receiving Funding from CCA and/or GEO

- J. Boehner, Rep. OH-8: \$40,000 in 2012-2014
- H. Cuellar, Dem. TX-28, \$27,000 2012-2014
- T. Ryan, Dem. OH-13, \$12,500 in 2012-2014 (CCA)
- M. McCaul, Rep. TX-10 \$1,000 in 2013 (#7 for GEO)
- P. Tiberi, Rep. OH-12, \$1,000 in 2013 (#7 for GEO)
- S. Brooks, Rep. IN-5, \$1,000 in 2012 (GEO)
- For a fuller tally of all congresspersons receiving funding from CCA and/or GEO between 2012-2014 see: <http://bit.ly/1miJ7vY>

Further Research Links

- CCA: <http://influenceexplorer.com/organization/corrections-corp-of-america/46a43aff0a6743c59fbed588e8ee743?cycle=2014>
- GEO: <http://influenceexplorer.com/organization/geo-group/7dfa33488aad4908ac1c75336c20db05?cycle=2014>
- Congresspersons, etc. www.opensecrets.org
- Articles:
 - <http://bit.ly/1dVAoYh>
 - <http://bit.ly/1mStGsT>

Talking Points

1. Include a personal connection/story
2. We want Comprehensive Immigration Reform that includes:
 - Values of human dignity, compassion, hospitality
 - Swift pathway to citizenship
 - Family unit
 - Addresses root causes
3. For-Profit Prisons, esp. CCA and GEO obstruct this goal
 - By funding candidates
 - Increasing their market
 - 34,000 “bed quota”
4. We call on our congressional rep. to:
 - refrain from receiving money from CCA/GEO,
 - pay back any that have been received
 - avoid allowing CCA/GEO to influence immigration legislation
 - end the bed quota
5. I/We plan to
 - divest (or explore divesting) from CCA/GEO
 - refuse to invest in CCA/GEO
6. I/We encourage other individuals/organizations to also publicly divest or engage in effective shareholder advocacy that diminishes the negative influence CCA/GEO has on immigration reform ration reform.