

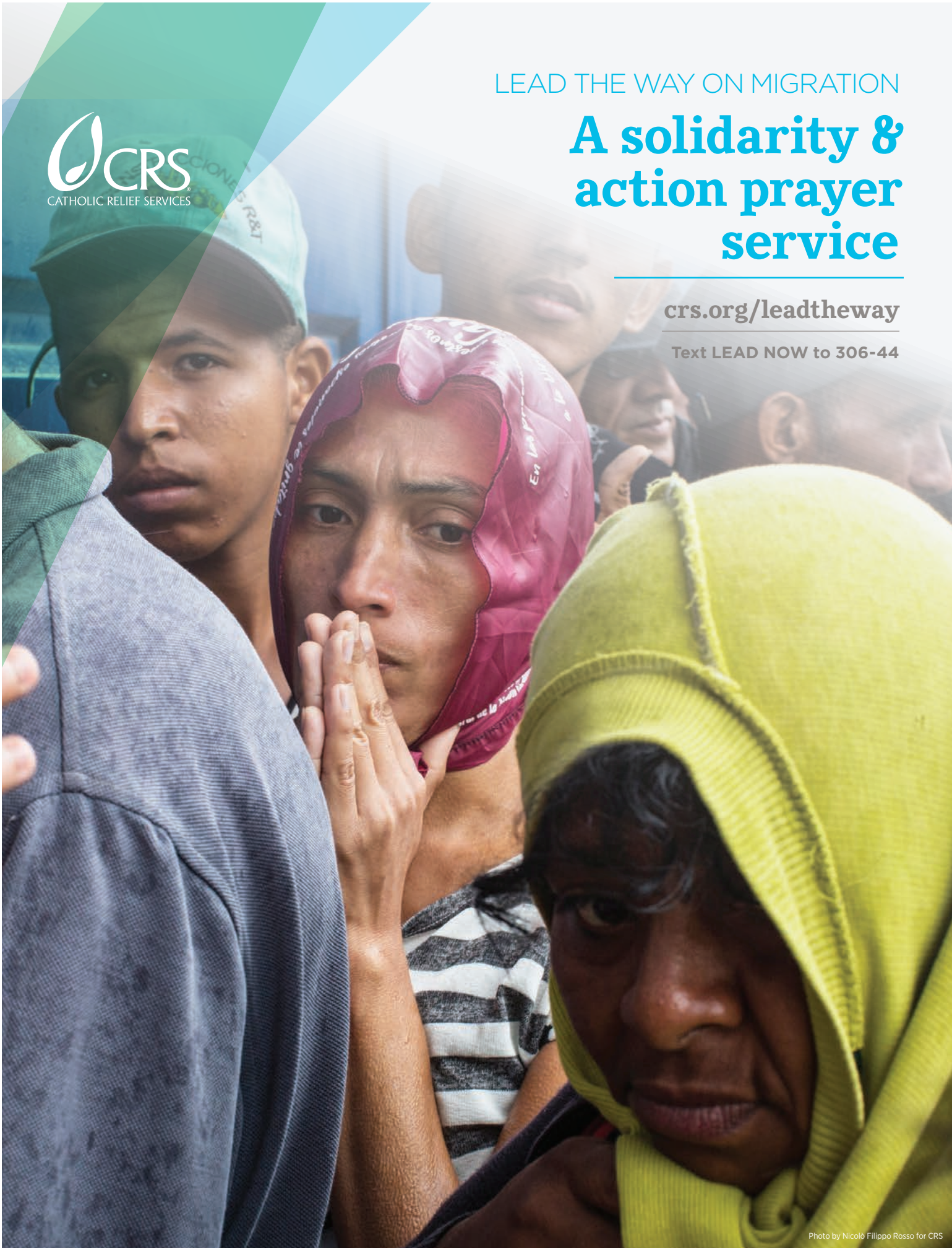


LEAD THE WAY ON MIGRATION

A solidarity & action prayer service

crs.org/leadtheway

Text LEAD NOW to 306-44





OVERVIEW

Through reflection on Scripture, Catholic social teaching and their own experiences and knowledge of the issue of migration, participants will consider how they might put their faith into action to support migrants and refugees around the world.

- This resource may be used in its entirety as a stand-alone prayer service with reflection and small-group discussion. You can also adapt it to fit into another event or specific timeframe.
 - *Using parts of the introduction, migration in scripture and closing prayer sections, you can create a 30-minute prayerful experience for your community.*
- You can find the most updated advocacy letter about migration at crs.org/get-involved/lead-way/migration.



FACILITATOR NOTES

MATERIALS

- Copies of this prayer service for leader and readers
- Optional: Bible(s), with Scripture verses bookmarked
- Optional: Candles for the space or other materials to create a prayerful environment
- If handwriting advocacy letters:
 - Basket to collect letters
 - Pens for participants
 - Paper for participants
- Copies of reflection questions and Catholic social teaching passages for small group facilitators
- Copies of **Opening Prayer** for each participant

PREPARATION

- Set up the prayer service space with the number of chairs you will need, candles if desired, and baskets for advocacy letters. If you expect a larger group, you can set up the room so that participants can share in groups of four.
- Select and prepare leader and readers.
 - Give each reader a copy of the prayer service with the reader's part highlighted.
 - *Option: Choose multiple readers to read the Scripture verses and excerpts from Catholic teaching.*
 - Select a facilitator for each small group so that everyone in the group has an opportunity to speak.
 - Prepare for the advocacy portion of the vigil. Decide whether you will handwrite letters or use the online option, then prepare your script accordingly. Instructions for each option can be found on page 7 under the ACT section.

INTRODUCTION AND GREETING (5 MINUTES)

LEADER: We gather together at a pivotal moment—when there are more vulnerable people on the move than at any other point in history. More than 70 million migrants, refugees and others have fled their homes as a result of persecution, conflict, violence and other life-threatening situations.

As prophetic advocates in our community, we name the injustices our displaced sisters and brothers experience, and we lead the way to hope and justice through prayer and action. We recognize that many displaced families are forced from their homes and that we have a responsibility to not only pray for and welcome them, but to demand change.

It is especially important for us to come together and make our voices resound in support for all who have been displaced or forced to migrate, championing the sacredness and dignity of every human life.

OPENING PRAYER AND VIDEO (5 MINUTES)

READER:

Almighty God,

Millions of our brothers and sisters are on the move around the world, not by choice, but by desperation.

We encounter their stories in the news and their faces in members of our own communities.

We pray that we may lead the way to bring about God's vision of peace and justice to all, and hope and love to those on the move near and far.

For those forced to flee violence, we pray they find safety.

For those seeking economic opportunity, we pray they find secure livelihoods.

For those trying to support and protect their families, we pray they find communities to embrace them.

For those searching for peace and hope, we pray that we may be bearers of the Good News.

We are called to be prophetic advocates in this world to call out injustice and be heralds of truth and love.

We pray that all migrants, refugees and displaced persons may find safe and loving communities and the opportunity to thrive.

And we pray that we may have the courage to stand and act in defense of human dignity for all our brothers and sisters in need.

Amen

LEADER: We will now watch a [video](#) that introduces this issue and what it means for us as people of faith.



Photo by Ismail Ferdous for CRS



DISCUSS (10-15 MINUTES)

LEADER:

Would anyone like to share their thoughts or reflections from what we just watched? [*Allow a few people to share.*]

Would anyone like to share a personal story or the story of someone you know who has been forced to leave their home? Or perhaps a story you heard on the news or from CRS? What difficulties has he or she encountered? [*Allow a few people to share, depending on time.*]

MIGRATION IN SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

(25 MINUTES)

LEADER: Scripture has nearly 100 references to protecting or helping the “foreigner,” “alien” and the “stranger.” Catholic tradition also speaks to why it is our responsibility as Christians to defend and support migrants and refugees.

READER 1: A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 10:17-19)

“The Lord your God is supreme over all gods and over all powers. He is great and mighty, and he is to be obeyed. He does not show partiality, and he does not accept bribes. He makes sure that orphans and widows are treated fairly; **he loves the foreigners who live with our people, and gives them food and clothes. So then, show love for those foreigners, because you were once foreigners in Egypt.**”

READER 2: A reading from the Book of Leviticus (Leviticus 19:33-34)

“Do not mistreat foreigners who are living in your land. Treat them as you would an Israelite, and love them as you love yourselves. Remember that you were once foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.”

READER 3: A reading from the Book of Zechariah (Zechariah 7:9-10)

“Long ago I gave these commands to my people: ‘You must see that justice is done, and must show kindness and mercy to one another. **Do not oppress widows, orphans, foreigners who live among you, or anyone else in need.** And do not plan ways of harming one another.’”

Give a moment for quiet reflection and then begin the introduction to Tradition.

LEADER: There are three basic principles of Catholic social teaching on immigration and migration. 1) People have the right to migrate or not to migrate to sustain their lives and the lives of their families. 2) A country has the right to protect its borders. 3) A country must regulate its borders with justice and mercy.

READER 1: People have the right to migrate or not to migrate to sustain their lives and the lives of their families. A reading from the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (1963, #25)

“Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence within the confines

of his own state. When there are just reasons in favor of it, he must be permitted to emigrate to other countries and take up residence there. The fact that he is a citizen of a particular state does not deprive him of membership in the human family, nor of citizenship in that universal society, the common, world-wide fellowship of men.”

READER 2: A country has the right to protect its borders. A reading from the USCCB’s letter *Strangers No Longer* (2003, #36, #39, #78)

“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 ... The Church recognizes the right of a sovereign state to control its borders in furtherance of the common good ... The Catholic Church recognizes the right and responsibility of sovereign nations to control their borders and to ensure the security interests of their citizens.”

READER 3: A country must regulate its borders with justice and mercy. A reading from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#2241)

“The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin.”

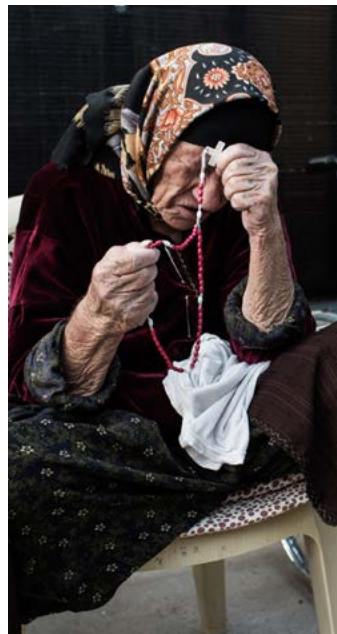


Photo by Daniel Etter for CRS

A reading from Pope Francis’ Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2016)

“Mercy nourishes and strengthens solidarity towards others as a necessary response to God’s gracious love ... Each of us is responsible for his or her neighbor: we are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, wherever they live ... From this perspective, it is important to view migrants not only on the basis of their status as regular or irregular, but above all as people whose dignity is to be protected and who are capable of contributing to progress and the general welfare ... Migrations cannot be reduced merely to their political and legislative aspects, their economic implications and the concrete coexistence of various cultures in one territory. All these complement the defense and promotion of the human person, the culture of encounter, and the unity of peoples, where the Gospel of mercy inspires and encourages ways of renewing and transforming the whole of humanity.”

Give a moment for quiet reflection and then introduce the discussion questions. Small group leaders should have a copy of the discussion questions. If the group isn’t large enough for small groups, you can discuss as a large group.

LEADER: We will now break into small groups of 3-4 for discussion.

DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES)

Participants can discuss any or all the following questions in their small groups. Invite a few people to share reflections from their groups with the larger group once discussion time wraps up.

- What does it mean to protect the stranger?
- In what ways do we see oppression of the stranger in today’s world?
- The Church has a long history of supporting migrants and refugees and defending one’s

right to migrate and not to migrate. What stood out to you from these excerpts from Catholic social teaching?

- What would just and merciful border regulation look like?
- What would cause you to consider migrating to another country? Did a story shared earlier about a migrant or refugee resonate with you?



ACT (20 MINUTES)

LEADER: As prophetic advocates in our community, we are called to lead the way to hope and justice through prayer and action. We can make a difference in the lives of millions of our migrant and refugee sisters and brothers by using our voices and advocating for change. Today we will take action by writing letters to our members of Congress, asking them to address the root causes of migration and support families who have been forced to migrate.

Action can be taken digitally or using handwritten letters. Share the relevant instructions with your participants, depending on which method you choose for your event.

DIGITAL ACTION INSTRUCTIONS

You can access the relevant advocacy action alert in two ways:

1. Visit the [Lead the Way on Migration](#) campaign page to find the most urgent action at the top of the page. Click on the “ACT NOW” button to access the action alert.
2. [Text MIGRATION to 306-44](#)
You'll receive a direct link to the action alert in response to your text message.

Whether you access the action alert on your phone via text or the website, you'll see a text box that you can edit to personalize your message. Please use the text box to include who you are and why you care about this issue. Personalized messages to Congress are 10 times more effective than ones that are not personalized!

NOTES FOR LEADER

- Copies of the advocacy action alert can be found at the top of the [Lead the Way on Migration](#) campaign page via the “ACT NOW” button.
- Delivering your letters: Decide how you will share these letters with your members of Congress. Your letters will have the most impact if they are hand-delivered to the local offices by organizing a meeting with key members of your community. If this is not feasible you may mail the letters to their offices. Be sure you send the correct letters to the correct members of Congress.

OFFLINE ACTION INSTRUCTIONS

LEADER: We've passed out copies of the latest CRS action alert on migration as well as blank paper, pens and envelopes. You can use the language in the action alert to help you craft your own letters to your members of Congress. Be sure to make your ask clear and to include who you are and why you care about this issue. Your members of Congress want to know why this issue matters to you!

When you have finished your letter, please hand it to me.

CLOSING PRAYER (2 MINUTES)

God of our Wandering Ancestors,

Long have we known that your heart is with the refugee: that you were born into a family of refugees fleeing violence in their homeland, and sought shelter in a foreign country.

Their cry, your cry, resounds through the ages: ***“Will you let me in?”***

Give us hearts that break open when our sisters and brothers turn to us with that same cry. Then surely all these things will follow: ears will no longer turn deaf to their voices. Eyes will see a moment for grace instead of a threat. Tongues will not be silenced but will instead advocate. And hands will reach out—working for peace in their homeland, working for justice in the lands where they seek safe haven.

Lord, protect all migrants and refugees in their travels. May they find a friend in me and so make me worthy of the refuge I have found in you.

Amen



Photo by Julian Spath/CRS

SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION PASSAGES

Deuteronomy 10:17-19

"The Lord your God is supreme over all gods and over all powers. He is great and mighty, and he is to be obeyed. He does not show partiality, and he does not accept bribes. He makes sure that orphans and widows are treated fairly; **he loves the foreigners who live with our people, and gives them food and clothes. So then, show love for those foreigners, because you were once foreigners in Egypt.**"

Leviticus 19:33-34

"**Do not mistreat foreigners who are living in your land.** Treat them as you would an Israelite, and love them as you love yourselves. Remember that you were once foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God."

Zechariah 7:9-10

"Long ago I gave these commands to my people: 'You must see that justice is done, and must show kindness and mercy to one another. **Do not oppress widows, orphans, foreigners who live among you, or anyone else in need.** And do not plan ways of harming one another.'"

Pacem in Terris (1963, #25)

"Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of his own state. When there are just reasons in favor of it, he must be permitted to emigrate to other countries and take up residence there. The fact that he is a citizen of a particular state does not deprive him of membership in the human family, nor of citizenship in that universal society, the common, world-wide fellowship of men."

Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope (2003, #36, #39, #78)

"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 ... The Church recognizes the right of a sovereign state to control its borders in furtherance of the common good ... The Catholic Church recognizes the right and responsibility of sovereign nations to control their borders and to ensure the security interests of their citizens."

Catechism of the Catholic Church (#2241)

"The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin."

Pope Francis' Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2016)

"Mercy nourishes and strengthens solidarity towards others as a necessary response to God's gracious love ... Each of us is responsible for his or her neighbor: we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live ... From this perspective, it is important to view migrants not only on the basis of their status as regular or irregular, but above all as people whose dignity is to be protected and who are capable of contributing to progress and the general welfare ... Migrations cannot be reduced merely to their political and legislative aspects, their economic implications and the concrete coexistence of various cultures in one territory. All these complement the defense and promotion of the human person, the culture of encounter, and the unity of peoples, where the Gospel of mercy inspires and encourages ways of renewing and transforming the whole of humanity."



Photo by Philip Laubner/CRS

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What does it mean to protect the stranger?
- In what ways do we see oppression of the stranger in today's world?
- The Church has a long history of supporting migrants and refugees and defending one's right to migrate and not to migrate. What stood out to you from these excerpts from Catholic social teaching?
- What would just and merciful border regulation look like?
- What would cause you to consider migrating to another country? Did a story shared earlier about a migrant or refugee resonate with you?



Photo courtesy of Sam Tarling for CRS



Join us

by texting LEAD NOW to 306-44 to get
the latest CRS campaign news and alerts.

crs.org/leadtheway