



Movement Toward Immigrant Justice

dear members

As I write this, the winter of economic struggle continues. The bare numbers are startling: unemployment approaching 9%, foreclosures continuing at a startling rate, the auto industry struggling, and banks mired in chaos. And we at NETWORK, like you, our members, are striving to be faithful to our mission while struggling to make ends meet.

But in the midst of that, there are so many indications of spring. We've seen daffodils, cherry blossoms and now the azaleas. We've wrestled with federal budget battles and struggles to make policies for the common good. We have had some successes in realizing the first steps for healthcare reform and energy responsibility. Funding for peaceful development in Iraq was restored to the budget, and there appears to be some momentum on immigration reform (dare we hope for actual passage of a comprehensive bill?).

It is this combination of winter and spring that is at the heart of our faith commitment. We know that dying and struggle are not the end of the story. So I thank you for your faith-filled commitment that helps to keep us faithful also. Together, we can be the Body of Christ that Paul talks about. This faith response is needed now more than ever. Let us continue to work together to bring about the common good...a reign that Jesus described as starting with a mustard seed or the widow's mite. That is all that we need. Thank you for being a part of this faith reality for us. You give me life!

Simone Campbell, SSS

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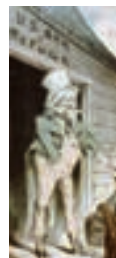
Moving Beyond Fear to Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Copy and distribute this two-page sheet describing how you can help foster justice for immigrants.

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A Community Responds to the Postville Immigration Raid

Mary McCauley, BVM, tells the moving story of the aftermath of the Postville raid.



calendar

May 16, Chevy Chase, MD

Jean Sammon and Stephanie Niedringhaus will participate in the Gathering of Intentional Eucharistic Communities and Jean will be part of a panel on social justice.

May 16, Litchfield, CT

May 23, Ontario, Canada

June 13, Halifax, Canada

Simone Campbell, SSS, will facilitate workshops on social justice for the Sisters of Charity of Halifax.

June 20, Chicago, IL

Marge Clark, BVM, will do a presentation on advocacy and Catholic Social Teaching for the BVM Sisters, Great Lakes Region.

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A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby

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Immigration— A New Way Forward

BY SIMONE CAMPBELL, SSS
AND KATRINE HERRICK

Virtually everyone agrees that current immigration policies are not working as they should. There is an urgent need to fix them, and comprehensive immigration reform is the solution. Why? Because reform is good for workers and families, rewards honest employers, and restores the rule of law. And most of all, it's the right and just thing to do. But how do we get there? Clearly, old methods haven't worked. These two authors were recently part of a new approach to this problem.

How Do We Engage the Impasse?

SIMONE CAMPBELL, SSS

Almost a year ago, I realized that immigration is the most intractable issue we have followed since I came to NETWORK almost five years ago. Following 2001, immigration got caught up in “Homeland Security” and the “Global War on Terror.” It was easy to paint the person who speaks with an accent or dresses differently with the broad strokes of prejudice.

Immigration does not divide easily along partisan lines. In 2007, Senators Kennedy (D-MA) and Specter (R-PA) cosponsored comprehensive immigration reform legislation that failed twice in the Senate.

Since that time, nothing comprehensive has happened. A border wall is being built along the Mexican/U.S. bor-

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Our nation's immigration history is long and complex. While most U.S. citizens are descended from immigrants—or are immigrants themselves—many of today's newcomers face racism, fear and prejudice similar to those faced by earlier generations. Below: A U.S. roadway runs along the border fence between Arizona and Mexico.

der. It is incomplete, over budget and not functioning well. There have been other efforts at border enforcement, but these for the most part have not passed.

There was an effort to pass the DREAM Act, which would allow young people brought here as children to adjust their status from undocumented to permanent residents by meeting performance criteria including graduating from high school and providing community service. But even this bill with bipartisan support has struggled.



During the 2008 election, immigration was basically not discussed. Those who seek reform can take some consolation from Congressman Tancredo's (R-CO) run for the presidency on an anti-immigrant platform. He received little to no response from the electorate! It is also noteworthy that various anti-immigrant proposals on ballots were (mostly) unsuccessful.

While it is comforting that more bad policy was not passed, the polarization exacerbates the problem. We are stuck with a system designed in the early 20th century that does not reflect 21st century realities.

Impasse

This lived experience brought me to know that immigration is at an impasse—all the ways we have to address the issue don't work. We have ritualistic arguments about immigrants who broke the rules to come here without visas or

NAME: Joey Morrison

OCCUPATION: Local Chamber of Commerce President

NATIONALITY: American

IMMIGRATION STATUS: U.S. Citizen

STORY: You live in a town in Maine that died in the 1970s when it was primarily a mill town. Jobs and people vanished and the center of town was nicknamed “the combat zone.” In 2001, a family of Somali refugees discovered your town and began spreading the word to fellow refugees and friends. The mayor worried that refugees would take the few remaining jobs and that costs for social services would rise. You were nervous about where all these new people would work, or if opportunity for entrepreneurial activity existed. Since then, you have watched entrepreneurs launch restaurants and small businesses providing translation services, in-home care for elderly residents and other services. Per capita income has increased and crime has decreased. In 2007, the town was named an “All American City.” The refugees brought the revitalization that your town needed, but hearing all the negative economic arguments, you wonder if this would work in other towns.

overstayed their departure dates. The counter argument is that people come here out of necessity (because of trade policies) in their desire to support their families. We argue that the wall is futile, or that it is vital to our homeland security plan. I can take on any side of the argument and know the points likely to be made, but this does not move us any closer to resolution.

In one conversation, a person opposed to solving the issue said that she feared that if the “door opened” on the DREAM Act the rest of what we are advocating would come tumbling through. She feared “losing her country.” The more she resisted, the more I insisted making the knot tighter. This to me is impasse. This impasse is replicated around the country and especially in Congress.

This experience led me to the idea that we should try something new. Nancy Sylvester, IHM, NETWORK’s National Coordinator in the 1980s, has developed a process for “engaging impasse” from a contemplative stance. (See box.) But



Retreat participants. Front row: Simone Campbell, SSS, Nancy Sylvester, IHM, and Katrine Herrick.

Engaging Impasse

Evolving from her experience with NETWORK (1977-1992) and in the presidency of LCWR (1998-2001), Nancy Sylvester, IHM, founded the Institute for Communal Contemplation and Dialogue. One of the major programs is Engaging Impasse: Circles of Contemplation and Dialogue®, which explores the experience of impasse in our church and society in ways that invite a transformation of consciousness so as to imagine new ways of being and doing. Contact her at nsylvester@aol.com and visit the Web site www.engagingimpasse.org.

the process had never been used with a group who shared the same impasse. Those of us who had participated in her workshops each brought our own impasse to the conversation. What if we brought together a group to engage the single impasse of immigration? Might we find another way through?

Coming Together in Iowa

In early March, 25 of us met in Dubuque to do just that. There were 22 women religious from various communities, all passionate about the topic. Nancy Sylvester, Katrine Herrick and I designed the process for the gathering.

We settled into a reflective process in small groups that encouraged deep listening while trying to understand the challenge of immigration. We described

the impasse of immigration as a combination of fear of change and loss of the familiar. We noted the global causes, loud polarizing voices, and an impasse grounded in a “we/them” mentality catching people in predictable arguments that do not move the conversation forward. We found little political will or benefit to resolve this issue.

NAME: Ramon Lopez

OCCUPATION: Day laborer

NATIONALITY: Mexican

IMMIGRATION STATUS: Undocumented

STORY: You live in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Six days a week, you wake up at 2:00 AM to cross the U.S.-Mexico border to El Paso. Once there, a farm labor contractor recruits you for work. You cram into an unsafe bus without seats for a two-hour trip to the fields. Once there, you receive a chile pepper collection bucket about 3.5 feet high and begin working diligently. You receive fifty cents per bucket, but when you bring your bucket to the truck to empty it, your supervisor steps down on the chiles and sends you back to fill it even more. You work all day without restrooms or portable toilets. At 4:00 PM, you start the long journey home just to go to bed and get up to do the same thing the next day. Sometimes it is hard to convince yourself that this terrible work is worth it, but as you leave each day you see the town and think to yourself, “Are there any alternatives?”

NAME: Amitola

OCCUPATION: Teacher

NATIONALITY: Native American

IMMIGRATION STATUS: U.S. Citizen

STORY: The immigration debate is one that baffles and hurts you and your community. If one does not become a citizen, then one is not “legal.” You ask how the original immigrants, now making the decisions, became “legal.” If a wall had been put up during the time of Christopher Columbus, would anyone have been able to enter? Would generations of those who make up the U.S. be here? You resent that you and your community are being forgotten and disrespected again. You live on the border and have little land left of your vast nation. Now this remaining land is being divided, without consultation, to build a wall to keep out immigrants, some of whom share the same ancestors. It was your land, and a little bit of it still is, and yet even that is being taken away for a cause you don’t believe in.

The complexity of the problem overwhelmed us and we experienced our own sense of paralysis. One challenge was that for those who think about governance with a conservative mindset, the mantra that “they broke the law” is the end of the story. Those who think in a progressive, nurturing fashion want a response to the suffering of families and economic pressures that create global migrations. This is a perfect stalemate.

We heard participants’ stories of their experience of this impasse. The most heart-rending for me was the story of the Postville, Iowa raid. I felt disbelief that our country would separate children from their parents without notice. I was heartened by the response of the people galvanized by the parish ministers and particularly Mary McCauley, BVM. I was horrified by the trauma caused to families by the wrenching separation and fear.

I told the story of my experience in Mexico where families in rural areas depend on money sent back from the U.S. for survival (March/April 2006 *Connection*). I also described a retention facility in Lebanon where undocumented people including Iraqis were confined without windows, sunlight and most services (March/April 2008 *Connection*).

We had developed 15 roles representing persons involved in the immigration impasse, all based on true stories. Some of these stories appear in boxes connected with this article. The names have been changed. We drew roles and held in prayer the person’s story we received, preparing to reflect that person’s experience the next day. You can imagine my intake of breath when I looked at my slip and discovered I had drawn “a Minuteman”—a border vigilante who said he was committed to non-violence, but would protect his family and do what the government was unable (or unwilling) to do.

In the morning, we learned a meditation practice to use our breath as in centering prayer. We focused on breathing in the pain of the person whose name we had drawn and breathing out a gift or healing. We then went through a process of examining the feelings generated. As I held “my” Minuteman and his story, I came to know his fear and desire to protect his family. I knew I had to be the “man of the household” and protect my wife and family. I knew that schools were not as good as they once were and that my children were getting lost in the process. I was trying to be a good parent, but it was really difficult.

We met in small groups and used silence and prayer to keep us open to others’ stories.

NAME: Gabriel Rodriguez

OCCUPATION: Student

NATIONALITY: Salvadoran American?

IMMIGRATION STATUS: Undocumented

STORY: Your nationality requires a question mark because you were brought to the U.S. when you were only a few weeks old. You have always considered yourself an American. You grew up here, you played here, you learned here, your life is here, but you were born in El Salvador. Now you are a senior in high school, you’re near the top of your class, and you realize that you are not an American, at least not legally. Despite having done everything like all of your documented classmates, you are denied the same future. You’ve been denied access to the next step, the one that will help you get that job you want, the one that represents your “American dream.”

Our Insights

Later, we explored what we learned. Realizing that our attitudes change only with new experience, we tried to describe steps to move us forward. Our thinking included the following:

- Common ground is really middle ground where everyone has a chance to share their personal perspectives. Once my Minuteman story was heard, it was easier to let others talk.
- We must try to frame immigration around common concerns. From the

In 1911, child workers—mostly immigrant Syrians from the Boston/Providence area—work at a Maple Park Bog farm. Photo by Lewis Wicks Hine.



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MEL STOUTSENBERGER

Above left: Naturalized citizens attend "I am an American" day rally in Buffalo, NY, 1943. Above: A worker from Mexico.

NAME: Kaylan Sites
OCCUPATION: Wife and Mother
NATIONALITY: Irish
IMMIGRATION STATUS: Undocumented—
now U.S. Citizen

STORY: You came at the urging of your U.S. husband Andrew. You didn't need a visa so this wasn't hard. Andrew promised to file a lawful permanent resident application on your behalf. Andrew regularly abused you, but fearing reprisal and deportation you didn't seek help. Andrew broke your jaw and three ribs, sending you to the emergency room where medical staff referred you to law enforcement and a Catholic Charities immigration program. There you learned about legal, social service and immigration options. You entered a shelter with your two children, pressed charges and had Andrew sent to prison. You applied for lawful permanent resident status without Andrew's assistance and your application was approved. You worry there are many other women and children scared to get out of abusive situations.

find a way forward we must change. If we stay centered in the Spirit, I believe we will respond in ways that are healing and productive. I know I am different for coming to understand the perspective of a Minuteman. I am also different for having heard firsthand stories about the Postville raid. May we all be led to share life-altering stories and engage this global impasse for the common good.

Minuteman perspective, it would be important to talk about fairness, hard work, caring for families.

- Common ground starts with muddled feelings and concerns, not with polarized rhetoric.
- We must nurture curiosity about others' points of view to really listen.
- It is important to gather in safe groups to share stories. We gain understanding by stepping out of our own stories.
- All voices need to be at the table. If "my" story is not there, then I'm going to resist and slip into polarizing rhetoric.

How challenging it is to really listen and invite the diversity of opinion! We realized that contemplative or centering prayer was a key to staying open.

Something surprising also happened. While we all came with a concern about immigration, we had not thought that our work would have an action component. After entering into the lives of people in the stories and hearing those of others, great energy was unleashed. We did not want to stop with just insight! We wanted to move to action.

Some decided to work on commemorating the one-year anniversary of the Postville raid as an educational moment that could foster fresh perspectives. Others committed to adapt our impasse process for immigration lawyers, law enforcement agents, business people and others impacted by immigration to seek healing and new ideas.

Another group was interested in developing education modules for both classroom use and parish adult faith formation. This could deepen shared faith experience and help people understand the complexity of the issue from various perspectives.

Katrine Herrick and I agreed to work on this article and thought about public service announcements with individual stories that end with, "Can't we solve this immigration problem together?" And, of course, we agreed to continue advocacy on the Hill. We talked about an abbreviated impasse process with Hill staff who work on immigration. Wouldn't it be great to combine our faith values and Hill advocacy in this way?

We were greatly energized by our three days in Iowa. We know that to

NAME: David Kolnoski
OCCUPATION: Unemployed
NATIONALITY: Italian American
IMMIGRATION STATUS: U.S. Citizen

STORY: You had some bad luck when you were a teenager and were forced to drop out of school. At the time, you were able to find work to help your family, but your employer closed and you cannot find a new job. Not having a high school degree limits your options. You apply and apply, but everywhere you go you see undocumented workers taking the low wage jobs.



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An 1880 cartoon, "Welcome to All," in the journal, Puck, depicts Uncle Sam welcoming war refugees.

NAME: Christopher Bartlett

OCCUPATION: Accountant

NATIONALITY: German American

IMMIGRATION STATUS: U.S. Citizen

STORY: You were born and raised in a border town in Texas and have great pride in your country. It upsets you to see so many people passing through illegally. Your grandparents went through Ellis Island and filled out their papers. Your town has changed dramatically. A lot of the resources at your daughter's school are going to English instruction for immigrants. You resent paying taxes to educate children of people who entered illegally. It does not seem fair that you've followed the rules and are paying for them not to. You called Congress repeatedly, wrote letters, and went to rallies, but you have seen little response. Problems are increasing. Not knowing what else to do, you joined the Minutemen. Since Congress has decided to do nothing, you will help protect the border. You are sworn not to use violence. You will just be there, a presence at the border, to let others know that America is watching and will not allow an illegal path.

My New Awareness

KATRINE HERRICK

Early in retreat preparation I found myself nodding to the following statement: "Composing letters, e-mails and faxes did not make an impression on our public servants. Now we will assert ourselves as citizen representatives of the government. We are citizens who set the example, of the people for the people and by the people." This quote evoked memories of letters sent to Congress with no response and my participation in charity events to address gaps in government safety-net services. The words even seemed to define the reason for the immigration retreat—taking it upon ourselves to find new paths since our voices so far have not moved our public servants.

It took me by surprise when I remembered that I was on a Minuteman web site (www.minutemanhq.com/hq/about-us.php). I was there to find the anti-



immigrant perspective. That was the moment when I realized just how much this experience of engaging the impasse of immigration could change my perspective.

The Minuteman's story was not the only one. Each week brought a new collection of stories representing people on all sides of the debate. The more I read these stories, the more I felt a new solidarity with those labeled as anti-immigrant, and the more sorrow I felt for those often forgotten in the debate—people who are confused and undecided. These stories helped open my heart and mind to hearing new voices and creating new solutions.

During the retreat, we each assumed an identity and attempted to speak from the heart and mindset of that person. This practice allowed each of us to not just hear a story, but to understand the feelings behind the story—the worry, love for family, confusion, and desire to succeed. As I listened to each person discuss her feelings about the impasse of immigration, and the reasoning behind those feelings, it became clear that this debate is even more complicated than I once perceived.

My new awareness of the complexity of this issue was actually derived from a rather simple truth—we are all humans trying to survive as best as we know how. On the last day of the retreat we were asked what we learned. My answer was "that I might be wrong." Reflecting

more on this statement, I realize that I was not wrong about my opinion, I was instead wrong to think that my opinion was THE opinion. This retreat demonstrated that everyone's position is reflective of his or her reality and that by truly listening to other realities I could, and did, change my own. I wonder if by listening to and truly sympathizing with the realities of others, we can one day realize a common reality.

NAME: Marta

OCCUPATION: Farmer

NATIONALITY: Mexican

IMMIGRATION STATUS: Mexican Citizen

STORY: You and your three small children live in a small highland rancho called "rancho sin hombres" (a town without men). Your husband is in the U.S. You get to see him every other Christmas. You work with other women and children in the fields and try to sell crops, but the market is extremely weak. You miss your husband terribly but it is necessary for him to be in the U.S. working to send money home. Even the money your husband sends home is not enough for the oldest child to go to school. You wonder if your children will remember their father, but you know this is the only way you can provide for them. It's in their best interest, or is it?

Forging New National Priorities

BY MARGE CLARK, BVM, CATHERINE PINKERTON, CSJ, SIMONE CAMPBELL, SSS, KELLY TROUT AND KATRINE HERRICK

The economy continues to be a focal point on Capitol Hill. NETWORK welcomed the shift in economic priorities represented by President Obama's budget request, which invests more of our tax dollars in human needs programs and services that help reduce poverty and promote opportunity. As Congress begins the appropriations process, we will work to ensure that legislators follow through with key investments in economic justice and peacebuilding.

Beginning with the budget debate, we see a shift in legislative energy on Capitol Hill away from short-term measures to stabilize the economy and toward long-term challenges to build more just and sustainable economic foundations. Forging viable and meaningful consensus on key goals such as expanding healthcare coverage and reforming our broken immigration system will require steady dialogue in the halls of Congress and sustained advocacy from constituents urging action for the common good.

New Priorities in the Federal Budget

The election of President Obama ushered in an opportunity to move forward with a new agenda to place our nation's future on a firmer foundation and to support the common good. The administration requested a 3.9% increase in discretionary (annually approved) spending, the source of funding for a significant percentage of human needs programs. Through our legislators, we are challenged to move this more just agenda forward—and to put failed policies behind us.

While both House and Senate budget resolutions include increases in discretionary spending, they give different degrees of support to the president's pri-

orities of healthcare reform, education, clean and efficient energy, and more equitable distribution of resources. As *Connection* goes to press, the Fiscal Year 2010 federal budget is in the hands of the House-Senate conference committee, which must reconcile differences between each chamber's budget resolutions. Rising unemployment (currently 8.5%) and increased veterans' health needs place significant demands on the non-defense portion of discretionary funding. NETWORK supports the highest possible cap for discretionary spending to enable investments in job training, healthcare, housing, education and other services. These investments are needed to sustain benefits reaching communities from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (economic stimulus package).

Meanwhile, defense spending is proposed at its highest inflation-adjusted level since World War II. Defense Secretary Gates is working to readjust where and how the Pentagon spends, but the overall amount of funding continues to increase. Defense is one area where NETWORK continues to push for reductions in spending to enable deficit reduction and investment in human needs programs, which sustain life and bring economic security to our nation's households.

Healthcare Reform

When President Obama presented his FY2010 budget request to Congress and the nation, he envisioned a fundamental change in the nation's healthcare system: the promise of quality, affordable healthcare for every American. The number of Americans currently without health insurance is

46 million, up from 38 million ten years ago. Rising healthcare costs are the largest single cause of projected increases in long-term budget deficits. Any analysis of the current situation mandates the absolute need for healthcare reform from both moral and fiscal perspectives. Thus, there is now an air of urgency in Congress.

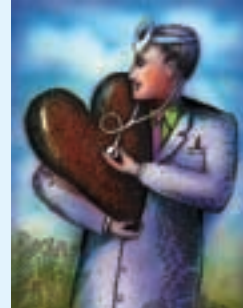
Advocates are bolstered by the fact that President Obama's vision for healthcare reform is based on solid principles: universal coverage, protection of families' financial health, affordability of care, portability of coverage, choice of plans and physicians, support for prevention and wellness, improved patient safety and quality of care, and long-term fiscal sustainability. The months ahead will reveal how Congress evaluates his vision and whether the political will exists to pass legislation necessary to its realization.

To guarantee the movement toward reform, the president created a reserve fund of over \$634 billion in his budget request specifically targeted for healthcare reform. It was derived from:

- Changing itemized tax deductions for wealthy individuals (\$318 billion)
- Savings from improving the efficiency of Medicaid and Medicare and curbing overpayments to Medicare Advantage providers (\$316 billion).

Both House and Senate budget resolutions designate reserve funds for healthcare reform. Neither resolution identifies specific sources or amounts of funding, but both mandate that healthcare legislation must be deficit-neutral.

The spring and summer of 2009 will be critical to moving healthcare reform forward in Congress. Senator Max Baucus (D-MT), Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, and Senator Edward Ken-



Need up-to-date information about legislation in Congress? Check out NETWORK's Legislative Action Center at <http://capwiz.com/networklobby/issues/bills/>. ★ To learn what happened to legislation you followed in the past, go to <http://capwiz.com/networklobby/issues/votes/> and enter your zip code in the "Key Votes" field.

nedey (D-MA), Chair of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, are keys to Senate action. Senator Baucus has asserted that it is the duty of this Congress to reform America's healthcare system. He has scheduled a series of hearings to begin this spring and to focus on delivery reform, healthcare coverage and healthcare financing.

The quest for universal access to healthcare is complicated by the current economic downturn, which makes the guarantee of universal coverage more necessary and at the same time more difficult to achieve. Many employers can no longer provide jobs, much less health benefits. Consequently, the numbers of uninsured workers and families and the burdens on the delivery systems are likely to increase unless there is government intervention. NETWORK continues to work for a reform of the nation's healthcare system that is principled, authentic and realistic—in other words, a model of the common good.



Immigration Reform

Discussions about immigration are beginning again on Capitol Hill. The Hispanic Caucus met with President Obama and was heartened to learn that immigration is on the president's agenda. The timing of its consideration is still a question. Fall of 2009 or sometime in 2011 are likely due to agreement that immigration reform will probably happen in a non-election year. At NET-

WORK, we continue work to change the dialogue around the issue and to make sure that the needs of all are considered in any policy formation. We urge all of our members to speak positively about comprehensive immigration reform as the responsible way forward.

Affordable Housing

While the National Housing Trust Fund became law in 2008, we are still seeking funding sources so that its mission of refurbishing and expanding our nation's supply of affordable housing can be realized.

An initial capital amount for the Housing Trust Fund is included in President Obama's FY2010 budget request and in the House budget resolution. However, this funding will only be available if an equivalent amount is cut or generated from other areas.

Child Nutrition

All federal child nutrition programs need to be re-authorized in 2009. NETWORK is working with several coalitions to secure increased child nutrition funding, particularly for programs outside the school-day setting. These programs are critical as increasing numbers of children rely on school-based and other government programs for meals.

Peacemaking in Iraq

We are heartened that the Obama administration is considering the needs of ordinary Iraqis, understanding that security is more than a military issue. The focus on diplomacy and development along with a military step-down recognize that peacebuilding is the most effective strategy. NETWORK continues to advocate for money for effective development within Iraq and the needs of Iraqi refugees. The president's budget request established these priorities and we must make sure that they remain so in



the congressional budget and appropriations process.

Trade Policy

NETWORK expects reintroduction of the Trade, Reform, Accountability, Development and Employment Act (TRADE Act) in this session of Congress. The TRADE Act would set new standards for U.S. trade policy to ensure that existing and future agreements support social, environmental and development goals. While the Obama administration has not yet pushed for passage of free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea left over from the Bush presidency, NETWORK is concerned that action on the Panama FTA could come soon. These agreements reinforce the status quo of trade policy, and their passage would set back efforts to promote a new model for trade that is fair and just. Our existing trade model reflects the anti-regulatory, free market ideology at the roots of the global financial and economic crisis; its reform should not be overlooked as Congress and the administration work to improve other aspects of our global economic and regulatory structures.

Marge Clark, BVM, and Catherine Pinkerton, CSJ, are NETWORK lobbyists. Simone Campbell, SSS, is NETWORK Executive Director. Kelly Trout and Katrine Herrick are NETWORK Associates.

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May 12, 2008: “That day scarred my heart forever.” —Pedro Lopez, 12 years old

They were Guatemalans and Mexicans, along with a few Ukrainians and Israelis. They wanted only to support their families and were grateful to find work at the Agriprocessors meatpacking plant in the small town of Postville, Iowa. One day last May, they found fear instead.

At 10 AM, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) launched a raid involving 900 agents, and boasted that it was “the largest single-site operation of its kind in American history.” Hundreds of frightened workers were rounded up. Mothers were separated from their children and some juvenile workers were arrested as well. Families not at the plant sought refuge at St. Bridget’s Church, where they prayed and cried.

Court proceedings were bewildering. According to Dr. Erik Camayd-Freixas, a court interpreter, workers arrived shackled, ten at a time, in “the saddest procession I have ever seen.” Many, he said, were illiterate Mayan farmers from Guatemala. They could speak Spanish, but some spoke it haltingly, and many of their stories were heartbreaking. Some had fled persecution in Guatemala, where death squads killed thousands. Others had desperately poor families who depended on their income for basic necessities.

In the end, hundreds of the immigrant workers were imprisoned, including the mother of Pedro Lopez, and many later deported. Their pain was incalculable and lingers still.

Wendy Razam, Age 19, Tells Her Story to the U.S. Congress

MMy name is Wendy Razam. I have lived in Postville, Iowa since I arrived from a very small town in Guatemala three years ago.

I came to the U.S because I realized that back home I would never be able to finish high school and attend college like I always dreamt. As the oldest of four siblings, I felt the responsibility to help our single mother and I knew the only way to do that was by obtaining a higher education degree. That way I could get a good job.

My mother, unable to provide for us due to the lack of job opportunities at home, was forced to immigrate to the United States in 2002 leaving us in the charge of a relative. After working very hard for three years and finding out that we were being abused by the relative in whose care she had left us, she decided to bring us to Postville.

When we arrived in Iowa, I saw that my dreams now were possible. My siblings and I began to attend school. The first day was terrifying but at the same time it was like a dream. I had never seen a school with computers and free

breakfast and lunch. This meant that we would never go hungry again like we used to. School was very hard, I did not understand the language, and I



SISTERS OF CHARITY, BVM



Sr. CAROL HOEHRMAN, OSF

Above: At St. Bridget’s Church after the raid in Postville, Iowa, a woman wears a GPS tracking device on her ankle. Below: Sr. Mary McCauley, BVM, with Rosa (from Guatemala) and her family.



Above: The Postville community protests the ICE raid involving 900 agents, which separated mothers and their children and resulted in hundreds of workers being imprisoned. Right: Sr. Mary McCauley, BVM, comforts a woman at St. Bridget's church after the Postville raid. Below: A child sleeps on a pew in the refuge of the church.

didn't know anybody. But I made myself a promise: I would work extra hard in order to learn the language, overcome my fear and meet new people, and help to take care of my younger brothers and sisters while my mother worked chopping off the wings of chickens at Agriprocessor, Inc.

There were times when I felt that I could not do it anymore, but I knew I could not give up. I could not let my mother down after all the sacrifices

she had made to get us here. With God's help and my mother's unflinching support I made it through my sophomore, my junior and my senior years and graduated in May 2008. Since I knew I could not apply for financial aid due to my legal status, I planned to work full time and attend college part time. I would also continue helping my mother babysit my siblings while she worked overtime in order to help me pay for school.

On May 12, 2008, when ICE raided Agriprocessor, Inc., my plans, my dreams, and my life were shattered in thousands of pieces. That morning my mother was arrested at the plant, and my brothers, my sister and I were segregated along with all the other Spanish-surname students at school.



Sr. CAROL HOVERMAN, OSF



SISTERS OF CHARITY, BVM

Today, my mother continues wearing the GPS tracking device on her ankle that she must charge by plugging herself to the wall for two hours a day. My seven-year-old sister Merlin lives with the constant fear that "the police will come to take our mother away again." I am not working nor am I going to school, and—waiting for a decision to be made on our U-Visa applications—we live off the charity of others in a constant state of uncertainty.

For more information about the aftermath of the raid, see page 15.

Our Stories

BY MORENIKE MOSURO

There is one thing most citizens of the United States have in common, regardless of race, class, gender, or anything else that categorizes us. We are children of immigrants. Most of us can trace our ancestry back to another land, another country. How well we can trace it often depends on how recently our ancestors arrived.

I am a second-generation American. My parents immigrated to the United States in the late 1970s from Nigeria. I was born here and know my heritage well. I also know that it is a blessing to have U.S. citizenship. I have seen many people face challenges in this country because of their immigration status, my mother and best friend included.

My Mother's Story

My mother came to the United States in 1979. Like many immigrants, she came with goals for education and a better life. The process she went through was not easy. She entered the U.S. under a visitor's visa and had to go through a long process to receive amnesty and then Lawful Permanent Resident status. In elementary school, my brother and I helped my mother study for the U.S. citizenship test. I remember quizzing her on questions like, "Who is your state's governor?" and "Name the two senators from your state." I learned more helping my mother prepare for this test than I ever did in history and government classes.

Overall, it took my mother seventeen years from the time she entered the U.S. to be approved as a citizen. It was a proud day for our family when we traveled to Baltimore to watch my mother being sworn in as a citizen, gaining all the rights and responsibilities that came with citizenship. My mother never had

the opportunity to vote in Nigeria, so she has always taken the freedom to vote in the U.S. very seriously. Every election day my mother wakes up early because she wants to be first at the polls.

Sandra's Story

My best friend Sandra came to the U.S. in 1990 to escape the bloody civil war in Liberia. Sandra was 5 years old at the time and she and her family were asylum seekers. Over the next 15 years

three years ago, she must wait another two years to apply for citizenship. With U.S. citizenship, she can travel overseas for the first time and visit Liberia without fear.

And My Experience

Before I came to NETWORK, I worked with a legal advocacy organization in Boston serving many immigrant clients. I helped clients gain access to public benefits with the goal of fighting hunger in Boston's low-income communities. Studies repeatedly show that access to benefits such as food stamps, child care vouchers and rental assistance improve the nutrition and overall health of recipients and their children.

Sadly, immigrant families cannot always access the help they need. While some benefits are available to them, their use counts against the families later when they apply for citizenship. It is painful to see a working mother of two children struggle to feed her family and guide it through a healthy life, unable to access the resources that could help. What are the life chances for these children of immigrants, most of whom are U.S. citizens themselves?

Too often, people forget the diverse faces of immigrants. Many may think immigration issues are all about Latin Americans, but there are many faces, many different people, each with a story about the challenges of U.S. immigration policies. Our immigration policies make me wonder: why does the United States work so hard to keep people out or marginalized?

Morenike Mosuro is an Emerson Hunger Fellow currently working at NETWORK. The Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship is a project of the Congressional Hunger Center.



Author (center) with her mother, Tayo Mosuro, and brother, Femi Mosuro.

her family spent upwards of \$10,000 to change Sandra's immigration status from asylee to Lawful Permanent Resident. Getting a single document can cost \$800, as prices have greatly increased over the years. For Sandra, going to the immigration office is like going to the DMV, with long wait times and confusion.

Although Sandra got her LPR status

“Fear and bigotry are often the driving forces behind laws and practices that have separated families, deprived people of basic human rights, militarized the border, and negatively impacted local economies” —*Platform for the Common Good*

Moving Beyond Fear to Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Current immigration practices in our country produce a lot of fear:

- The undocumented immigrant mother fearing deportation and separation from her citizen children
- A small town fearing it will be devastated by the next raid
- A laid-off U.S.-born manufacturing worker who sees undocumented immigrants working for lower wages and fears he won't be able to support his family.

Fear clouds our capacity to recognize human dignity across divides of perception and opinion while it undercuts our need for human solidarity and polarizes families, communities and our legislative process.

To build the will for comprehensive immigration reform, we must move beyond fear and toward patient and productive dialogue that leads us to action for the common good.

But that's not an easy task.

To engage the impasse on comprehensive immigration reform, NETWORK recently convened a workshop where participants spoke to each other from divergent perspectives.

What did we learn through this process?

- To overcome fear, we must first describe in honest dialogue the experiences and worries that cause it.
- To achieve genuine common ground, we must bring all voices to the table, no matter how painful they are to hear or how uncomfortable they make us feel.

What can you do to engage the impasse on immigration in your community?

- Listen to people's fears. Engage in dialogue with people in your community who have negative or conflicted feelings about immigrants or fear the consequences of immigration reform. What are their worries and how can you respond to them in a respectful and thoughtful manner?
- Lift up people's hopes. Share stories about the positive impacts of immigrants in your community. Emphasize the benefits that fair and humane immigration reform would bring to your community, families and our economy.
- Read the information below and on the following page for talking points to help you address the fears and lift up the hopes!

Fair and comprehensive immigration reform will help fix our economy. Immigrants aren't the problem. Our broken immigration system is.

- A path to legalization would likely improve wages for all workers. Undocumented immigrants are the most exploited workers. Bringing workers out of the shadows would level the playing field and give immigrants more security to report employer abuses.
- Immigrants are needed to grow the tax base for an aging workforce. Undocumented immigrants provide a net gain of about \$7 billion to the Social Security system each year.
- Immigrants boost state revenues. Reports from several states such as Texas show that unauthorized immigrants contribute as much as \$1.5 billion to state revenues.

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Help U.S.-raised immigrant children pursue their dreams of higher education!

The DREAM Act (S. 729, H.R. 1751) is a bipartisan bill reintroduced in the House and Senate on March 26, 2009. It establishes a path to legal status and eventual citizenship for undocumented youth who were brought to the U.S. years ago and have since grown up here, stayed in school, and kept out of trouble.

How would the DREAM Act move us beyond fear toward hope for common ground?

- Currently, 65,000 undocumented immigrant youth graduate each year from U.S. high schools. They face unique barriers to higher education, are unable to work legally in the U.S., and often live in constant fear of detection by immigration authorities.
- The DREAM Act would add thousands of talented, motivated, multi-lingual and multi-cultural people to our workforce.
- With higher education, these young adults would earn more, pay more in taxes and maximize their contributions to our economy and communities.
- The DREAM Act would support justice for young people who have lived in the U.S. for most of their lives and desire only to call this country their home.

**Ask your members
of Congress to
co-sponsor and
support the
DREAM ACT.**

Written by Katrine Herrick and Kelly Trout.

We encourage the reproduction and distribution of this back-to-back fact sheet.



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A Community Responds to the Postville Immigration Raid

BY SR. MARY MCCAULEY, BVM

(For more background on the Postville raid, see pages 10-11.)

As I returned to St. Bridget's from the site of the immigration raid at Agriprocessors, I discovered a few women and their small children huddled together. By evening, over 400 men, women and children were pouring into St. Bridget's. They came to be with one another; to pray and cry together; to receive strength from one another. They were too afraid to be alone in their homes for fear that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials might come to their door. They came to St. Bridget's because they trusted the Church and the broader Postville community to guide and help them at this most horrible time in their lives.

and Presbyterian churches, our Jewish brothers and sisters, social advocacy groups, volunteer lawyers, Department of Human Services personnel, and volunteers from Luther College and various religious communities.

One person came in to prepare meals, another to engage the children, another to translate, while others counseled, offered legal advice, provided medical care, served as a driver, kept a record of jail placements for the detainees, approved the payment of bills, updated computer programs, coordinated the volunteers, cleaned the parish hall, received donated food, responded to the

What we learned:

- Trust your heart to respond to the need of the moment with compassion and wisdom.
- Interfaith prayer, dialogue and advocacy are powerful and essential.
- Innumerable people within the U.S. were shocked by the action of our government and wanted to offer whatever help they could.
- People can be touched by the humanitarian needs of immigrants and at the same time feel conflicted over questions of breaking the law, even to the point of exhibiting great fear and anger.



L-R: Sr. Judy Callahan, the author, Nobel Peace Prize-winner Rigoberta Menchu, Paul Rael and Fr. Paul Ouderkerk. Rigoberta Menchu called for solidarity with victims of the Postville raid.

For the six days following the raid, St. Bridget's became a safe haven for people from Mexico and Guatemala and a center for people to reach out and respond. Members of St. Bridget's and other neighboring churches provided meals while lawyers, clergy, medical personnel, translators, drivers, social workers and friends came to offer their special expertise and presence.

The raid demanded a type of whole-hearted presence and commitment that few had ever experienced before. Our St. Bridget's Response Team relied on help from Catholic Charities, Lutheran Services, the Archdiocesan Office of Hispanic Ministry, the United Food Growers of America, neighboring Lutheran

questions of journalists, initiated contacts with a legislator, and offered comforting words to a frightened child. Each person's gift was needed. Each person's gift was valued.

Our goal was to respond to the myriad needs of fearful, anxious and traumatized men, women and children. We stood in solidarity with them, assuring them that they were safe and encouraging them to give strength to one another.

Archbishop Jerome Hanus, OSB, came to Postville the Saturday following the raid to celebrate Eucharist and meet with all affected by the raid. After this gathering, our people returned to their homes. On the next day, about 75 people participated in a prayer service and walk

to the Cattle Congress, a 60-acre cattle fairground serving as a detention center for those detained in the raid. Women with GPS devices on their ankles rolled up their slacks so that others could see their bracelets. They carried signs that read: We are not criminals. We are mothers. We came to feed our families.

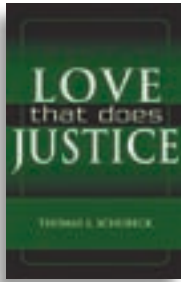
Amidst all this activity, staff members at St. Bridget's gave innumerable interviews to journalists and documentary filmmakers. Each request was treated with respect for we knew that unless the story of our people became public, change in our immigration laws would not occur.

In July 2008, Representatives Joseph Baca (D-CA), Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) and Albio Sires (D-NJ) came to hear the heartbreaking stories from the community. We hope they will remember these stories and share them with other members of Congress—and that the tragedy of Postville will serve as an impetus for bringing about needed change in our immigration laws.

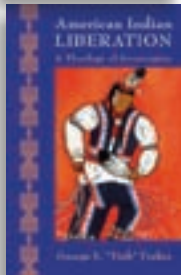
Mary McCauley, BVM, is the former Pastoral Administrator of St. Bridget Church in Postville, Iowa. This article is adapted from several articles at www.arch.pvt.k12.ia.us/PostvilleRelief/. Please visit that site to learn more about the raid and the current situation in Postville.

NETWORK recommends

Love That Does Justice
by **Thomas L. Schubeck**,
Orbis (ISBN 978-1-
57075-746-4). www.maryknollsocietymall.org



American Indian Liberation
by **George E. "Tink" Tinker**,
Orbis (ISBN 978-1-
57075-805-8). www.maryknollsocietymall.org



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"In this time of great challenge and opportunity, NETWORK's preferential love for all marginalized by poverty or immigration status continues to call Catholics in the U.S. to this fundamental value of the Christian Gospel. This is why NETWORK's voice on Capitol Hill is so sought out by all those who are deeply committed to the Common Good."

—Alexia Kelly, Executive Director of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good

"NETWORK serves a leadership role on Capitol Hill like no other. As we work in partnership to advance healthcare reform, NETWORK's long-standing commitment to real social justice for those on the margins speaks volumes. Their voice is a crucial one that speaks on behalf of the compassionate and inclusive system we must build together as we join ranks in this transformational movement toward the Common Good."

—Rachelle Reyes Wenger, Director, Public Policy & Community Advocacy, Catholic Healthcare West

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