

Refugee & Immigrant Solidarity Opportunities

Below are opportunities to become more involved with immigration issues in Seattle and Washington state, assembled by the Our Lady of Guadalupe (Seattle) Catholic Church Immigrant Ministry. We encourage you to **learn, pray, act** and **give** for immigration justice, following the Catholic Relief Services model. All activities listed here are legal.

Page last updated: September 4, 2018. Please contact Kathleen Sullivan with corrections and suggestions, or if this document doesn't work with a screen reader or other assistive technology (malusdomestica19@gmail.com).

[Learn](#)

[Pray](#)

[Act](#)

[Give](#)

Learn

Below are reliable starting points for learning more about immigration, as well as Catholic and local government positions on immigration.

A very effective way to stay current is to receive updates from an immigration advocacy organization. Many of the organizations linked in this document allow visitors to sign up for email newsletters and RSS feeds, or follow updates through social media. Look for social media or RSS icons on web pages (often at the top or bottom of the organization's Home page), or search the site for "mailing list" or "newsletter."

Information & statistics about immigration

- [Data on Immigrants and Refugees who come to Seattle](#), from the Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA).
- The [Migration Policy Institute](#), a nonpartisan think tank providing data and reports about migration worldwide, including migration to the U.S.
- The [Library of Congress' Teacher's Guide on Immigration in the U.S.](#) provides a summary of U.S. historical highlights (through about 1950), as well as links to sources for further exploration.
- The [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees \(UNHCR\)](#) is an essential relief agency and one of the top information sources about refugees worldwide.

- [“What part of legal immigration don’t you understand?”](#) The Reason Foundation’s one-page graphic explaining the course for legal immigration into the U.S.

Statements about immigration from Catholic leadership

- The [Vatican Migrants and Refugee Office website](#) includes statements by Pope Francis, news articles, blog posts, and a repository of speeches, statements, suggested action plans and other supporting documents.
- The [U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Justice for Immigrants](#) website and [USCCB Migration and Refugee Services website](#) include official statements, suggested actions and information resources such as [Why Don’t Unauthorized Migrants Come Here Legally?](#)
- [Share the Journey](#) (a joint service of USCCB, Catholic Charities USA and Catholic Relief Services) offers opportunities for action, stories about immigrant neighbors and a resources library that includes [church teaching about welcoming migrants and refugees](#) and [reflection activities about immigration](#).
- The [Seattle Archdiocese Immigrant and Refugee ministry website](#) includes learning resources, official statements and upcoming events.

Local laws and guidance about immigrants

- [King County ordinance 2017-0487](#)
- [Seattle’s “Welcoming Cities” resolution](#)
- [Washington State Attorney General’s Immigration Guidance for law enforcement, hospitals, schools, libraries and other local agencies](#)

Know your rights.

The American Civil Liberties Union provides guidance on [what to do if government officials ask you -- or others near you -- for immigration or citizenship information](#). If you’re asked, you have a right to remain silent. If you’re a bystander, [you have a right to take video](#) of a government interaction. Guides are also available in other languages, including Chinese, Spanish, Somali and Vietnamese.

- [Know your rights when stopped by police or immigration agents](#)
- [Know your rights if questioned by immigration agents on trains and buses](#)

Explore your own history

Our Lady of Guadalupe parishioners were born in more than 20 countries -- and their great-grandparents in more than 50 countries -- on every inhabited continent. What's the role of immigration in your family history? Do you have photos, recordings, letters or other documents from your ancestors? How is your heritage present in your daily life?

If you're interested in exploring your genealogy, visit our public libraries for excellent resources and assistance:

- [Genealogy resources at the Seattle Public Library](#)
- [Genealogy resources at King County Library System](#)

Pray

Catholics are called to pray for others and reflect prayerfully on their lives. Pray for migrants, their loved ones, those supporting them and those who make policy about immigration. Reflect prayerfully and continuously on your own experiences, attitudes and actions around immigration.

- [Prayer for migrant families](#), from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.
- Take time to use theological reflection about your experiences and actions related to immigrants and refugees. Theological reflection means examining experience for the presence of God. Try these questions for theological reflection, from the Seattle Archdiocese's Cabrini Ministry program:
 - What were your questions and feelings during this experience?
 - What are you learning about gifts and strengths? Your prejudices or resistance?
 - What in the experience is important to understand?
 - Where was God in this experience? Who is God to you now?
- The [Tree of Contemplative Practices](#), from the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, describes various approaches to reflecting on experience, including creativity, silence, movement, and participating in rituals or communal events.

Act

Catholics are called to act with justice. Acting with justice sometimes involves discomfort, but it often also brings us life and joy -- connecting us to community,

channeling our expertise and interests, and focusing us on what's important. Find a step you can take and start.

Tell your elected representatives what you want them to do.

Get to know your local elected representatives' positions on immigration-related issues. Email or telephone elected representatives to let them know where you'd like them to stand. (Remember to thank representatives who have supported your position!) Many elected leaders' websites also allow you to sign up for e-newsletters or other regular updates on their activities.

- [Find your U.S. House representative](#)
- [Contact a U.S. senator](#)
- [Washington State Governor's office](#)
 - [Washington State Governor's Immigration and Refugee Resources](#)
- [Washington State Attorney General](#)
 - [Washington State Attorney General's Immigration Guidance for law enforcement, hospitals, schools, libraries and other local agencies](#)
- [Find your Washington State senator, representatives](#)
- [King County Council](#)
 - [King County Council Immigrant and Refugee Task Force](#)
- [Seattle Mayor's Office](#)
 - [Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs](#)
- [Seattle City Council](#)
 - [Seattle City Council on Legal Defense for Immigrants and Refugees](#)
 - [Seattle Welcoming Cities Resolution](#)

Attend training about immigration.

Northwest Immigrant Rights Project's "[Immigration 101](#)" training supports social service workers and others working closely with immigrants. Check the [Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network calendar](#) for upcoming workshops (and other events). Meantime you can watch this March 2017 training at the Seattle Public Library:

- ['Immigration 101' event \(March 2017\)](#)

Donate your professional expertise.

Local organizations bring together professionals willing to donate their expertise to support immigrants. Opportunities for specific skills include the following.

- Can you create an app? Contribute other information technology expertise? Check out the [Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network events calendar](#) for the monthly All-Tech Team Meeting.
- Lawyers have many, many opportunities to donate time. Explore volunteer opportunities with [AirportLawyer](#), [Immigration Justice Campaign](#), [Northwest Immigrant Rights Project](#) or [other organizations providing legal assistance to Immigrants](#) (from the Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA)).
- Are you're multilingual and able to interpret? Are you willing to teach? Can you help people and organizations fill out applications? Are you handy with spreadsheets or creating multimedia presentations? Are you good at organizing events? Explore the many volunteer opportunities at [community-based organizations who support immigrants and naturalization](#) (from OIRA). (You can also explore volunteer opportunities through virtually any organization linked in this document.)

Support refugees resettling in the U.S.

- The Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service [Circle of Welcome](#) program connects faith- or community-based groups with refugees as they resettle -- hosting, mentoring, tutoring to help refugees integrate into their new community.
- Explore opportunities through these [other organizations that support refugees](#), from Seattle's Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA).

Support people preparing to become U.S. citizens.

You can support people seeking to become citizens through numerous local organizations, through the [local new citizenship process](#), the [Washington New Americans](#) partnership between OneAmerica and Washington state, or [many community-based organizations](#). Lawyers, multilingual interpreters and those willing to teach and welcome can all serve valuable volunteer roles.

- [New Citizen Campaign](#), Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA)
- [Washington New Americans](#)
- [OIRA's list of naturalization/citizenship support organizations](#)

Become a foster family for immigrant and refugee youth.

- [Refugees Northwest Foster Care](#) (part of Lutheran Community Services NW) helps connect local families with some of the thousands of unaccompanied immigrant and refugee children seeking safe homes in the U.S.

- [Catholic Community Services of Western Washington](#) is seeking foster families in Pierce, Thurston, Lewis, Clark, and Cowlitz counties to host unaccompanied refugee children.

Support people in detention.

Approximately 1,500 people are held in detention at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma. Visit or write to those held in detention, stand witness outside the center, help detainees when they are released and support their families.

- [Advocates for Immigrants in Detention Northwest](#) organizes visitation, book drives and post-detention support.
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has more information about becoming [a pen-pal to a person in detention, or hosting a film screening about detention](#).

Report a raid, or get an alert.

The Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network maintains a hotline to report active government immigration action (e.g., a raid or interrogation). Keep the number on your cell phone: 1-844-RAID-REP (1-844-724-3737).

You can also sign up to get text alerts from the Network about government immigration action statewide: Text JOIN to 253-201-2833.

Join a Rapid Response team.

Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network provides regular training sessions for people who wish to become “Rapid Responders” to a report of U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) action against immigrants. See [WAISN's calendar](#) for the next event.

Join the OLG Immigrant Ministry!

We meet monthly, volunteer together, organize events and do our best to connect OLG to its immigrant heritage and immigrant neighbors. Come talk, learn, witness, cook, garden and work with us!

Give

Organizations that support immigrants and refugees (including those linked in this document) need financial and in-kind support from the community. Please give what you can to support their work.

Below is a partial alphabetical list of organizations that support immigrants and refugees. To find more Seattle community-based organizations, visit the Seattle Foundation 2018 “Give Big” pages to search for nonprofits by “[refugee](#),” “[immigration](#)” or “[immigrant](#).”

- The [American Civil Liberties Union of Washington](#) leads legal challenges to government actions against immigrants. Its website includes updates on the latest government actions concerning immigrants, and provides reliable guides to **legal** action that anyone can take to resist or bear witness to government action against immigrants.
- [Catholic Community Services’ Immigration Legal Services](#) provides legal and material support to immigrants. Its pages also list organizations that support immigrants.
- The [Church Council of Greater Seattle](#) is an alliance of local Christian communities committed to peace and social justice. Its web pages list [resources for refugee and immigrant support and advocacy](#).
- [Kids in Need of Defense \(KIND\)](#) provides free legal services to unaccompanied migrant children. The organization also does public education and advocacy.
- [Lutheran Community Services Northwest’s Refugee and Immigrant Services](#) helps refugees settle in the community, and connects them with supportive faith-based and community groups. Services include foster care for refugee and immigrant youth and the only torture treatment program in Washington State.
- The [National Immigration Law Center](#) defends the rights of low-income immigrants through litigation, policy development and communications.
- The [Northwest Immigrant Rights Project](#) provides legal assistance to immigrants, as well as community education and training. Volunteer, attend a community event, or donate.

- [St. James Cathedral Immigrant Assistance](#) works in immigration justice, naturalization and English language instruction, and provides support to other immigration solidarity efforts throughout the Seattle Archdiocese.
- [St. Vincent de Paul Latino Services: Centro Rendu](#) offers legal immigration services along with educational and other support services.
- [Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network](#) is an all-volunteer coalition of immigrant and refugee rights organizations and individuals in Washington. Upcoming Seattle events include training for “Rapid Response” to government action against immigrants, and meetings for people interested in local ordinances to protect immigrants, or technology tools to support immigrant communities.