

Background and Further Information on the USCCB's Policy Positions

The policy positions of the USCCB on immigration come from Catholic moral teaching, including the vast number of Scriptural references to "welcoming the stranger in our midst" and Jesus' own life and ministry, in which Jesus (and Mary and Joseph) were migrants and refugees and Jesus consistently welcomed and received all who came to him and whom he encountered. These positions are also based upon the following principles of Catholic moral theology:

- the right to and dignity of human life,
- the centrality of the family as the most basic unit of society,
- subsidiarity and solidarity,
- the preferential option to address the needs of the poor and vulnerable first,
- and our understanding of justice, peace, and the common good.

For at least the last 15 years, the USCCB has called for comprehensive immigration reform. These reforms include:

- earned legalization (a path, which is not amnesty, to legal permanent residency and/or citizenship) for qualifying undocumented immigrants, like those brought here as children (those who are eligible or would have been eligible for DACA);
- policies that support keeping families together and/or reuniting them;
- restoring due process rights;
- addressing the root causes of immigration, thereby reducing the reasons that often compel people to leave their homelands and undergo dangerous and uncertain journeys in the hopes of being able to live more safely and securely (or even to be able to live at all);
- and immigration enforcement measures that are targeted, proportional, and humane.

Neither bill meets all these criteria and, in both cases, parts of them would either make the current situation worse or fail to adequately address the problem it is seeking to solve. The statement from the USCCB is below, along with links to their pages on immigration if you would like to read further.