

**Message for “Share the Journey” Campaign
September 27, 2017
Most Rev. Dennis M. Schnurr**

On September 27, Pope Francis is launching a two-year, worldwide campaign called “Share the Journey.” As millions of migrants and refugees look for a better life, many of them fleeing war, persecution, and poverty, Pope Francis invites us to share in their journey through prayer and support. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our solidarity with migrants and refugees in our Archdiocese.

The Church stands with these brothers and sisters of ours who have journeyed great distances to find life, security, and hope for the future in our own communities. Not only that, but we walk beside them, listening to their stories, helping bear their loads, and celebrating the gifts of culture and faith they bring to us. Through them, we are reminded of who we really are: pilgrims on a journey from this life to a greater Kingdom.

Many upcoming activities sponsored by the Archdiocese and our related ministries can enable us to “share the journey.” They will provide us with an opportunity to encounter our fellow travelers in our communities, appreciate their hopes and struggles, and advocate for their dignity. These include:

- Multi-lingual Mass with migrants and refugees on September 27 at 7 p.m. at St. Mary Catholic Church (310 Allen St., Dayton, OH 45410);
- A presentation on the Catholic Church’s teaching on migration, titled “Restoring Order and Human Dignity” on October 1 at 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Church (101 W. Pearl St., Wapakoneta OH 45895);
- A presentation by Fr. Daniel Groody on “Passing Over: A Compassionate Response to Immigrants and Refugees” on October 5 at 7 p.m. (with a light dinner at 5:30pm) at St. Albert the Great Church (3033 Far Hills Ave., Kettering OH 45429).

In addition, ongoing opportunities for education and service to migrants and refugees exist through Catholic Charities Southwestern Ohio at (513) 241-7745 and Catholic Social Services of the Miami Valley at (937) 498-4593.

For more information on any of these or other upcoming events, please contact our Catholic Social Action Office at (513) 421-3131, ext. 2660, or csa@catholiccincinnati.org.

Lastly, the U.S. Catholic Church is deeply concerned by the many years of failure by Congress, whether controlled by Democrats or by Republicans, to address the plight of immigrants who were brought to the United States when they were young and who have no pathway to regularize their status. Started in 2012, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which the Trump Administration has announced will end by March 2018, has protected hundreds of thousands of young people from deportation. In our Archdiocese, many DACA youth worship in our parishes, attend our schools, and contribute to our communities. We urge Congress to provide a path to permanent residency for these young immigrants by passing the DREAM Act or similar legislation.

To that end, we are joining with the other Roman Catholic dioceses in the State of Ohio on a campaign to generate 10,000 letters to our congressional delegates across the state. Why this number? Since it began, there have been nearly 10,000 total applications approved for DACA in Ohio, including renewals. We encourage other Catholic, faith-based, and advocacy organizations to partner with us in this appeal to Congress to live up to its responsibilities to protect these young people as a step toward fixing our broken immigration system. We will collect these letters between now and December 18, International Migrants Day. For more information, please contact our Catholic Social Action Office.

As Pope Francis exclaimed, “Welcoming others means welcoming God in person! Do not let yourselves be robbed of the hope and joy of life born of your experience of God’s mercy, as manifested in the people you meet on your journey!” (2016 Message for World Day of Migrants and Refugees) May our efforts together to share the journey with migrants and refugees help straighten our own paths as we approach our final destinations in God’s Kingdom.