

Justice, Peace and Life

December 2019

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-Maryknoll Priest
Joseph Veneroso



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—Joseph R. Veneroso, M.M.
Good News for Today

A painting by Kenyan artist Ng'ang'a Njoroge depicting the Holy Family's flight to Egypt hangs in Kenyatta University chapel in Nairobi. (S. Sprague/Kenya)

Welcoming the Stranger

Advent reminds of the long wait for the Messiah, the long wait for the already-here-among-us-but-still-not-yet-arrived reign of God. So many among us in this country are still waiting now, waiting to live in security and peace, waiting to feel at home in a country far from the land of our birth.

In no uncertain terms, the Bible teaches us to welcome people from other lands. When we do so, we welcome Christ Himself. When we denigrate and oppress foreigners, we reject Him.

This Advent, this very week, please join your voice with the other Catholics in showing your solidarity with immigrants. Two very important things to do:

Stand with the Dreamers

Undocumented people who were brought to this country as children are known as “DREAMers”, after the “Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act”, a bill that would give them a path to U.S. citizenship. For many years these brave young people, along with the Catholic Church and many other people of good faith, have advocated for passage of this legislation.

The wait must seem endless for people who grew up here and see America as their homeland but still aren't sure if they will be allowed to stay.

The Supreme Court will be ruling in June on DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals); this program created by executive order gives 800,000 DREAMers the legal right to remain. However if the Court rules against it, the DREAMers could face deportation.

That's why there is an urgent need for the U.S. Senate to do as the House of Representative has done, pass legislation to give the DREAMers legal status and a path to citizenship. Advocate by going to the Action Alert page of www.justiceforimmigrants.org and please **send this to friends in other states too!**

Speak Up for Immigrants Becoming U.S. Citizens

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is proposing major increases in fees to apply for asylum and for other immigration applications, and the elimination of many fee waivers granted to low income immigrants. For example, the fee to apply to become a naturalized citizen would go up from \$640 to \$1170!



C&G Newspapers, Photo by Deb Jacques

From *the Catholic Legal Immigration Network*: “Raising prices and eliminating waivers make applying for vital immigration benefits harder for low-income immigrants. The sharp increase in fees for naturalization and adjustment of status will likely deter immigrants from naturalizing or adjusting status, and increases in DACA renewal fees will further disadvantage young immigrants. Additionally, the imposition of a fee for affirmative asylum applicants places yet another burden on some of the most vulnerable people in the world... [T]his proposed fee schedule will eliminate most existing fee waivers. This, too, increases the burden on particularly vulnerable non-citizens seeking immigration benefits.

Immigration benefits should remain accessible, regardless of an immigrant’s socioeconomic background. Join CLINIC in standing up for our immigrant brothers and sisters by opposing USCIS’s proposed fee schedule increases.”

Speak our against these unfair fee hikes by **FRIDAY DECEMBER 13!**

Go to www.cliniclegal.org/fee-schedule-changes and click on

[I Oppose a Wealth Test on American Citizenship!](#) and **[I Oppose a Fee for Asylum!](#)**

Care for God’s Creation: Support the Paris Climate Accord

The Presidents has initiated the withdrawal of our country from the international climate accord, created in Paris in 2015 and signed by 185 countries.

Join Catholics from around the country in telling the President and Congress that you want our country to remain committed to this international agreement on addressing climate change and environmental degradation.

Go to www.votervoicenet.org/USCCB/home

to speak out for the planet and the poor and vulnerable who are most adversely affected by our destruction of it.



Opposition to Physician-Assisted Suicide

On Public Policy weekend next February, parishes around the diocese will collect petition signatures opposing the legalization of physician-assisted suicide (“PAS”) in New York State.

PAS discriminates against people with disabilities. It threatens improvement of palliative care. It puts vulnerable people at risk of coercion to end their lives by the heirs to their estates.

Learn more about these and other dangers of PAS at www.nosuicideny.org

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