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Strangers as Neighbors Toolkit: One Parish One Community - A guide for Engaging United States Catholic Congregations in Difficult Dialogues

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Strangers as Neighbors Toolkit

for

ONE PARISH | ONE COMMUNITY

**A Guide for Engaging United States Catholic Congregations
in Difficult Dialogues**

*“For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
a stranger and you welcomed me.”*

(Matthew 25-35)



Fairfield University

A Project of the Center for Faith & Public Life

by Jocelyn Boryczka, PhD and David Gudelunas, PhD
funded by the Hagedorn Foundation and the Jesuit Conference

Project Background

Fairfield University's Center for Faith and Public Life's Strangers as Neighbors on Long Island project, funded by the Hagedorn Foundation and the Jesuit Conference, is helping to shape a new model for bringing people together on contentious issues such as immigration reform within a faith-based framework.

This project was conducted with the full support of the Bishop of Rockville Centre on behalf of the Diocese of Rockville Centre.

This current project is a follow-up to Fairfield University's Strangers as Neighbors: Religious Language and the Response to Immigrants pilot project funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, conducted from August 2008 to July 2009. The project aimed for faith communities to agree on common language for speaking about migration, drawing upon some of the shared sensibilities of religious language - words like "neighbor," "brother," "sister," "pilgrim," and similar concepts that have more nuanced and welcoming connotation than "migrant" or "newcomer".

See Fairfield University's Center for Faith & Public Life White Paper *Strangers as Neighbors: Religious Language and the Response to Immigrants in the United States* (2009) available at www.fairfield.edu/academics/schoolscollegescenters/academiccenters/centerforfaithandpubliclife/generatingresearch-basedsolutions/strangersasneighbors/.



Project Overview

Our research team held two focus groups at two different Catholic parishes on Long Island, New York (NY) and used a cluster analysis and term frequency index to analyze the outcomes of these discussions. Specifically, we examined common frames, or ways that we see the world, surrounding the topic of immigration. Our findings indicate that, when framed in terms of religion and local experience, a more positive and empathetic discussion of immigration emerges. Alternatively, when participants discussed immigration in terms of a government or institutional frame, a qualitatively more negative dialogue develops. Further, our research identifies tensions that arise for parishioners when priests introduce political issues directly into religious services. These findings indicate broader concerns among congregants related to the separation of Church and state that has implications for how the Catholic Church organizes for immigration reform in the United States (U.S.) and invites parishioners into dialogue around hotly contested social and political issues. This toolkit, responding to this project's findings, provides a means for Catholic congregations to engage in faith-based discussions about the issue of immigration outside of formal religious services.

See the Fairfield University Center for Faith & Public Life's White Paper *Strangers as Neighbors: How Religious Dialogue Can Help Re-frame the Issue of Immigration 2015*, available at www.fairfield.edu/academics/schoolscollegescenters/academiccenters/centerforfaithandpubliclife/generatingresearch-basedsolutions/strangersasneighbors/.

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Toolkit Overview

This toolkit is grounded in Catholic Social Teaching that derives from the Gospels and the words of Christ; statements and encyclicals of the Popes; and the statements and pastoral letters of bishops. The following words of Jesus Christ, in particular, focus this toolkit: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25-35). This orientation toward Catholic Social Teaching offers a framing for discussions about immigration and other "hot button" social and political issues, particularly useful for Catholic congregations across the United States.

This toolkit spotlights the issue of immigration. Yet, congregations can adapt the basic principles and procedures to create spaces for discussing other issues from school prayer to the environment that face our communities on the local, state, regional, and national levels.

This toolkit provides materials and a process designed to help members of Catholic congregations to meet outside of formal religious services and hold facilitated discussions about contentious issues based in Catholic Social Teaching. Organizing for any specific action is outside the scope of this toolkit. Creating spaces where Catholic parishioners can share their views and discuss them using the concepts and ideas of their shared faith is the focus of this toolkit. Doing so holds out the possibility that participants move past a polarizing political discourse to one based on a shared humanity extending from the parish to the global community.



Toolkit Framework: Mapping The Journey



The toolkit includes the following six stages that together map out the journey for building one parish, one community through humanistic, faith-based dialogue:

- Getting Prepared
- Breaking the Ice
- Sharing Histories
- Charting Identities
- Learning the Power of Language
- Building Community for the Common Good

STAGE ONE: GETTING PREPARED

This section includes the following materials designed to help facilitators prepare for the discussion groups:

- Getting Organized
- Facilitating Discussions: Some Guiding Ideas
- Engaging in Cross-Cultural Discussions
- Basic Information on United States Immigration
- Catholic Social Teaching: Some Central Ideas & Resources



Getting Organized

Who?

Identify a group within the parish to coordinate the discussion group and all related logistics. Avoid doing this as an individual. Small groups enable outreach to different members of the parish. Include leaders such as deacons and priests. Be sure to include others not often identified with leadership roles.

Choose someone who does not hold a formal position of authority to facilitate the group discussion. Doing so will create a more level playing field for the group discussion as often many people are less likely to share their ideas when confronted by established figures of authority.

Identify the different members of the parish to be included in the discussion, reaching out to various groups affiliated with your church community

What?

Determine as a group the topic under consideration for discussion. Discuss with other parishioners what issues are most pressing for them.

When?

Decide when to hold the discussion based on availability of participants. Keep meetings to approximately 1 to 1.5 hours at the most. Time constraints keep participants focused.

Where?

Hold the discussion in the Church building or on the grounds of the parish. A meeting room, lunch area or other location outside of the chapel is recommended.

Why?

Establish goals for the discussion that meet the needs of the participants and provide reasons for gathering, which may include creating community in the parish by engaging in faith-based discussion about issues important to the congregation.

What is a Facilitator?

The following represent key characteristics of a facilitator for the discussion groups in this toolkit:

- Focus on guiding, rather than leading, discussion by removing themselves from the center of the conversation.
- Encourage participants to explore a given topic or issue from many different perspectives.
- Help to locate information and resources necessary to advance the discussion
- Reference aspects of Catholic social teaching to guide a faith-based discussion.
- Include information regarding immigration or other “hot button” issues depending on the discussion topic.
- Track group power dynamics to ensure equal opportunity for participation.

Being a Facilitator: A Few Guiding Principles

- Develop a genuine interest in each person.
- Be trustworthy. Remind the group that what they discuss should remain within the group.
- Model openness and honesty. Share your own insights and struggles.
- Allow group members to participate at their own comfort level.
- Everyone need not answer every question.
- Ask your questions with interest and warmth.
- Be flexible: Allow the group to stay with a thought or idea to accommodate the needs of your group members but avoid getting off topic and rabbit trails.
- Listen carefully.
- Remember, no answer is too insignificant. Encourage and affirm each person’s participation.
- Allow for (and expect) differences of opinion and experience.
- Do not be afraid of silence. Allow people time to think – don’t panic. Sometimes ten seconds of silence seems like an eternity. Some of this material is difficult to process – allow people time to digest the question and then respond.

For further information see: www.cloudtownsend.com/resources/ten-tips-for-group-leaders/



Leaders Strive To

- Understand the problem they are confronting from multiple perspectives, so as to identify and define a specific issue to be publicly addressed.
- Explore possible solutions, seeking to locate the necessary resources to implement a desired solution.
- Identity the decision-maker with the authority to resolve the issue.
- Gather “political intelligence” on the power dynamics that contribute to the problem i.e. what is the latest on immigration reform.
- Provide a list of resources a leader can contact for up-to-date information.

Facilitating Discussions: Some Sound Practices

The following represent some practices to keep in mind as you facilitate group discussion:

- Mirroring: Repeat what you heard verbatim.
- Paraphrasing: Consolidate and re-phrase what you heard.
- Stacking: Place people in stacking order to ensure that everyone has a chance to speak.
- Tracking: Summarize the different lines of thought occurring.
- Balancing: Give equal weight to the different lines of thought arising.
- Keeping time: use the clock so the group can manage itself.
- Focusing on body language: Be relaxed and avoid distractions (drink in hand, playing with markers) regarding yourself and remain aware of group members’ body language.
 - For instance, crossed arms in front of the body often indicate closing down to the discussion.
- Checking for clarity and accuracy: Ensure that you understand the speaker and that others in the group understand a speaker.
 - For instance, you may ask, “If I heard correctly, you said __, did I get that right?”
- Encouraging: Create opens for participation without putting any one person on the spot
 - For instance, you may ask, “Does anyone else have an idea?”
- Making space: Keep an eye on quiet members, be aware of body language that may indicate a desire to speak.
 - For instance, you may ask specifically, “Did you want to add anything?”
- Drawing people out: Encourage participants to share a little more.
 - For instance, you may ask, “Would you like to add to that? Please say more.”

For further information, see *We Are All Immigrants: A Campaign to Create Welcoming Communities and Organize for Immigrant Rights on Long Island*. Long Island: Long Island Jobs with Justice & Long Island Wins, 2014. 10. Print.

Engaging in Cross-Cultural Discussions, Part 1

Most parishes across the United States include members from a range of cultures. Facilitators need to create positive, safe spaces for discussing issues such as immigration that participants will view differently, particularly in communities with many documented and undocumented immigrants. To do so, facilitators should aim to develop their own “intercultural competence.” This includes the following five elements:

- 1. Attitudes:** respect (value other cultures), openness (withhold judgment), curiosity and discovery (tolerate ambiguity and exhibit a willingness to move beyond your comfort zone).
- 2. Knowledge and Comprehension:** cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge, others’ worldviews, and awareness of language’s role in shaping social views. Engage with other cultures from a point of curiosity, an opportunity to learn something new.
- 3. Skills:** Develop the skills of listening, observing, evaluating, and analyzing in order to interpret and relate across cultures.
- 4. Internal Outcomes:** the individual facilitator sees from others’ perspectives and responds to them according to the way that the other person wants to be treated.
- 5. External Outcomes:** the individual facilitator’s effective behavior in intercultural situations.



For much more information on developing cultural competence, see *Building Cultural Competence: Innovative Activities and Models*, eds Kate Berardo and Darla K. Deardorff (Virginia: Stylus, 2012).

Engaging in Cross-Cultural Discussions, Part 2

As a facilitator, it is useful to keep in mind the four different stages of cultural development in terms of ourselves and those members of our group discussions. The following represent the four key stages:

- 1. Denial:** the belief that differences simply don’t exist.
- 2. Defensive:** taking the position that if you’re different, you’re bad. We often take a close-minded approach to people who behave differently from us, even unconsciously. We are not open to “the other.” This thought process is internalized by minority cultures--particularly children--that because they are different, they *are* bad.
- 3. Minimization:** coming to an understanding and an appreciation that others do have distinct cultures. “Instead of being filled with mirrors, where we see the world only one way--in our image--this room is filled with doors. If we step outside, there are many directions in which to go, many different ways to see the world. And yet--here is the important part--we always have the ability to return to our room. That’s the cultural piece that continues to live within us, even as we change, even as we adapt to other cultures” (*A Pastor’s Toolbox*, 145).
- 4. Adaptation and Integration:** Affirming continuous growth while suspending our private agendas and judgment.

Adapted from Paul A. Holmes, *A Pastor’s Toolbox: Management Skills For Parish Leadership*. (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2014).

Basic Information on U.S. Immigration, Part 1

Facilitators often need to share factual information about the issue under discussion. Here are some basic facts about U.S. immigration and resources for further information.

- Who is an immigrant? *A foreign-born individual who has been admitted to reside permanently in the United States as a Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR).*
- How does an immigrant get admitted to permanently reside here? *There are three ways: family-sponsored immigration; employment-based immigration, or winning an immigrant visa through a visa lottery system.*
- Who is a refugee? *A person outside of the U.S. who seeks protection on the grounds that he or she fears persecution in his or her homeland.*
- Who is an undocumented immigrant? *A person present in the U.S. without the permission of the U.S. government.*
- Who is a non-immigrant? *A person permitted to enter the U.S. for a period of limited duration such as a student, tourist, temporary worker, diplomat, reporter; etc.*
- Who is a naturalized citizen? *A Lawful Permanent Resident eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship through the process called naturalization.*
- What’s the difference between a refugee and an asylee? *A refugee applies for protection while outside the U.S.; an asylee first comes to the U.S. and then applies for protection.*
- How does someone gain refugee status? *A person must come from a country designated by the Department of State; meet the definition as in a well-founded fear of persecution; and fit into one of a set of ‘priority’ categories that determine the degree of risk to their life.*

Adapted from *Enriching Our Diversity*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2012. 13-15.

Basic Information on U.S. Immigration, Part 2

A range of options are available for coming into the U.S. via lawful processes:

- Family-sponsored immigration: *the way that U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents bring family members from other countries to live permanently in the U.S..*
- Non-immigrant visas: *Tourists, students, and other persons who come temporarily to the U.S. for pleasure, business, study, diplomacy, or other purposes that fit a range of visa categories listed on the U.S. Immigration website.*
- Naturalization: *This is the process by which eligible immigrants become U.S. citizens by displaying a willingness to become full members of U.S. society.*
- The naturalization process: *Applicants must be 18 years old; have resided continuously in the U.S. as a Legal Permanent Resident for at least 5 years before filing; pass an FBI background check; speak English and have a general understanding of U.S. government and history; submit an application and fee to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, pass an interview, and take an Oath of Renunciation and Allegiance to their previous country and to the U.S..*

For detailed information regarding U.S. immigration, see: www.us-immigration.com/?utm_source=bing-yahoo&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=immigration-srch&utm_term=invitation-letter-for-us-visa.

Adapted from *Enriching Our Diversity*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2012. 15-18.

Catholic Social Teaching: Basic Ideas – Gospel Foundations

Catholic Social Teaching – derived from the Gospels and words of Christ, statements and encyclicals of the Popes, and statements and pastoral letters of bishops globally – ground the Catholic Church’s position on immigration. Basic ideas are presented here to help the facilitator guide and orient discussion:

Gospel Foundations

Persons on the move, whether refugees, migrants, or immigrants, are special in the eyes of God. The baby child Jesus was a refugee who fled the terror of Herod into Egypt with the Holy Family (Matthew 2:15-15). Jesus throughout his public ministry was in itinerant, moving from place to place, “with nowhere to lay His Head” (Matthew 8:20).

Jesus instructs us to welcome the stranger: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25-35). Jesus Himself was not welcomed by His own people: “He came to what was His own, but His own people did not accept him” (Jn. 1:11).

We welcome Christ as we welcome the stranger into our own midst. In the face of the migrant, immigrant, and refugee, we must see the face of Christ. The disciples experience on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-15) as they witnessed the Truth by welcoming the stranger who is Christ.”

Adapted from *Enriching Our Diversity*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2012, 20.

Catholic Social Teaching: Basic Ideas – Papal Teachings, Part 1

The following papal teachings relate directly to immigration:

Pope Leo XIII established that persons have a right work to survive and support his or her family in the first social encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (On the Condition of Labor).

Pope John XXIII articulates the right to migrate and not to migrate in the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth): “Every human being has the right to the freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of their country; and, when there are just reasons for it, the right to emigrate and take up residence elsewhere.”

Pope John Paul II reaffirmed the above teaching in an address to the New World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Immigrants (1985): “Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of his own country. When there are just reasons in favor of it, he must be permitted to migrate to other countries to take up residence there. The fact that he is a citizen of a particular state does not deprive him of membership to the human family, nor of citizenship in the universal society, the common, world-wide fellowship of men.”

Adapted from *Enriching Our Diversity*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2012, 20-21.



Catholic Social Teaching: Basic Ideas – Papal Teachings, Part 2

Pope Francis’ Speech to the U.S. Congress, September 2015:

In recent centuries, millions of people came to this land to pursue their dream of building a future in freedom. We, the people of this continent, are not fearful of foreigners, because most of us were once foreigners. I say this to you as the son of immigrants, knowing that so many of you are also descended from immigrants. Tragically, the rights of those who were here long before us were not always respected. For those peoples and their nations, from the heart of American democracy, I wish to reaffirm my highest esteem and appreciation. Those first contacts were often turbulent and violent, but it is difficult to judge the past by the criteria of the present. ***Nonetheless, when the stranger in our midst appeals to us, we must not repeat the sins and the errors of the past. We must resolve now to live as nobly and as justly as possible, as we educate new generations not to turn their back on our “neighbors” and everything around us.*** Building a nation calls us to recognize that we must constantly relate to others, rejecting a mindset of hostility in order to adopt one of reciprocal subsidiarity, in a constant effort to do our best. I am confident that we can do this.

Our world is facing a refugee crisis of a magnitude not seen since the Second World War. This presents us with great challenges and many hard decisions. On this continent, too, thousands of persons are led to travel north in search of a better life for themselves and for their loved ones, in search of greater opportunities. Is this not what we want for our own children? We must not be taken aback by their numbers, but rather view them as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their stories, trying to respond as best we can to their situation. To respond in a way which is always humane, just and fraternal. We need to avoid a common temptation nowadays: to discard whatever proves troublesome. Let us remember the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (*Mt 7:12*).

This Rule points us in a clear direction. Let us treat others with the same passion and compassion with which we want to be treated. Let us seek for others the same possibilities which we seek for ourselves. Let us help others to grow, as we would like to be helped ourselves. In a word, if we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities. ***The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us.*** The Golden Rule also reminds us of our responsibility to protect and defend human life at every stage of its development.

For the full text of this speech, go to: w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/september/documents/papa-francesco_20150924_usa-us-congress.html

Also see the Pope’s annual messages for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2013, 2014, 2015): w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration.index.html

Catholic Social Teaching: Basic Ideas – Strangers No Longer

Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope

The U.S. bishops issued this pastoral letter in January 2003 where they articulate five principles that govern how the Church responds to public policy proposals related to immigration:

- Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland, meaning that they have a right *not* to immigrate.
- Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families, meaning that they have the right *to* migrate to other countries to work.
- Sovereign nations have a right to control their borders in the common good of its citizens. This, however, is not an absolute right since nations also have an obligation to the universal common good to accommodate migrants to the greatest extent possible.
- Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.
- The human rights and the human dignity of undocumented migrants should be respected.

Adapted from *Enriching Our Diversity*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2012. 21-22.



Catholic Social Teaching: Immigration Resources

- For excerpts from *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope*, a joint statement by the Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the U.S., see: www.justiceforimmigrants.org/excerpts.shtml.
- “Christian Language and Political Action,” Fr. Richard Ryscavage, S.J., in *Strangers as Neighbors: Religious Language and the Response to Immigrants in the United States*, White Paper Collection, see: www.fairfield.edu/academics/schoolscollegescenters/academiccenters/centerforfaithandpubliclife/generatingresearch-basedsolutions/strangersasneighbors/.
- The Catholic Church’s Position on Immigration Reform, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, see: www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/churchteachingonimmigrationreform.cfm.

STAGE TWO: BREAKING THE ICE

This section includes the following materials designed to help facilitators get the discussion started in their discussion groups:

- Greeting & Seating
- Establishing Ground Rules
- Opening Prayer: Orienting to Faith-Based Discussion
- Solidarity Discussion: Catholic Social Teaching’s Approach to Community
- Exercise One: Solidarity in Action

Greeting & Seating

Greeting

Welcoming each member to the discussion group involves the facilitator greeting each person, inviting all to share their name and perhaps something about them such as how long they have been a member of the parish.

Greeting establishes the very basic step in building community within your discussion group. Facilitators should emphasize this with the group and encourage them to integrate greeting into their engagement with others.

Seating

Arrange the group in a circle so that all members can see each other. Many exercises involve activities that often require a place to write, so small desks or tables may be optimal.



Establishing Ground Rules

Ground rules establish boundaries for group discussion. They should be established before discussion begins. Review the ground rules, ask for members to add, delete, or modify them to meet their needs. Ask for all members to consent verbally in agreement with the group's ground rules.

- Enjoy yourself: Relax and do not hesitate to laugh.
- Listen carefully: Understand others without interrupting. Use eye contact with the speaker to focus attention on him/her.
- Fully participate: Participate actively and equally; ask questions and say what's on your mind.
- Respect others: Use inclusive and respectful language (e.g. Nonracist, non sexist).
- Respect privacy if someone says something is meant to be confidential.
- Value difference: If you do not agree, challenge each other constructively. Focus on differing with the point made as opposed to the person presenting the point.
- Be open-minded: Be open to learning new ideas and taking some risks.
- Challenge yourself and others with the use of "I" statements
- Be on time: Please respect the work and time required to implement this agenda. Everyone's promptness, cooperation, and responsibility are needed.
- Reserve side conversations for breaks: We will work to have breaks with respect to the timeline of the agenda.



Introduction: Opening Prayer

To orient the group to the faith-based discussion, facilitators should request one group member to lead them in the following prayer:

*Good and gracious God,
 We thank you for the gift of families.
 We are grateful for all of the joy and love
 That they bring into our lives,
 And we ask that you provide
 Special protection for all families,
 Particularly those who face hardships
 As they move in search of a better life.
 Show mercy to those who travel in danger,
 And lead them to a place of safety and peace.
 Comfort those who are alone and afraid because
 Their families have been torn apart by violence and injustice.
 As we reflect upon the difficult journey
 That the Holy Family faced as refugees in Egypt
 Help us to remember the suffering of all migrant families.
 Through the intercession of Mary our Mother,
 And St. Joseph the Worker, her spouse,
 we pray that all migrants may be reunited with their loved ones
 And find the meaningful work they seek.
 Open our hearts so that we may provide hospitality
 For all who come in search of refuge.
 Give us the courage to welcome every stranger
 As Christ in our midst.
 We ask this through Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 One God forever and ever. Amen.*

Solidarity Discussion: Catholic Social Teaching's Approach to Community

To orient the group toward a faith-based discussion grounded in Catholic Social Teaching, the facilitator should share the following description of solidarity from John Paul II's *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* as a central approach to community:

The exercise of solidarity within each society is valid when its members recognize one another as persons. Those who are more influential, because they have a greater share of goods and common services, should feel responsible for the weaker and be ready to share with them all they possess. Those who are weaker, for their part, in the same spirit of solidarity, should not adopt a purely passive attitude or one that is destructive of the social fabric, but, while claiming their legitimate rights, should do what they can for the good of all. The intermediate groups, in their turn, should not selfishly insist on their particular interests, but respect the interests of others.

Solidarity helps us to see the "other"—whether a person, people or nation—not just as some kind of instrument, with a work capacity and physical strength to be exploited at low cost and then discarded when no longer useful, but as our "neighbor," a "helper" (cf. Gen 2:18-20), to be made a sharer, on a par with ourselves, in the banquet of life to which all are equally invited by God. Hence the importance of reawakening the religious awareness of individuals and peoples. Thus the exploitation, oppression and annihilation of others are excluded. These facts, in the present division of the world into opposing blocs, combine to produce the danger of war and an excessive preoccupation with personal security, often to the detriment of the autonomy, freedom of decision, and even the territorial integrity of the weaker nations situated within the so-called "areas of influence" or "safety belts."

Solidarity is undoubtedly a Christian virtue. In what has been said so far it has been possible to identify many points of contact between solidarity and charity, which is the distinguishing mark of Christ's disciples (cf. Jn 13:35). In the light of faith, solidarity seeks to go beyond itself, to take on the specifically Christian dimension of total gratuity, forgiveness and reconciliation. One's neighbor is then not only a human being with his or her own rights and a fundamental equality with everyone else, but becomes the living image of God the Father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and placed under the permanent action of the Holy Spirit. One's neighbor must therefore be loved, even if an enemy, with the same love with which the Lord loves him or her; and for that person's sake one must be ready for sacrifice, even the ultimate one: to lay down one's life for the brethren (cf. 1 Jn 3:16).

For the entire encyclical: w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html.



Exercise One: Solidarity in Action

Objective: To introduce group members to each other within the context of their home, their church, and their community as a process for grounding discussion in the Catholic Social Teaching of solidarity.

Tools: Paper and Pens

Steps: *Facilitators should use the following prompts to guide discussion.*

1. Invite the group to reflect on the encyclical regarding solidarity. Prompt them to consider ideas such as inequality between the strong and the weak locally and globally, the "other," and what solidarity means to them in their personal lives.
2. What makes for a perfect Sunday here in this community? What would you be doing? Who would you be with and what would you do? This can be an ideal Sunday, not necessarily your typical Sunday.
3. Describe where is home for you--Not just where is your address, but where do you feel you belong? There are a lot of different answers to this, write them on a piece of paper and then we will discuss.
4. How would you describe your community to an outsider?
5. In what ways does your church represent community for you?
6. Can you explain any similarities or differences between your local community and the parish community?
7. Conclude by reflecting on the following from the encyclical: "Solidarity helps us to see the "other"—whether a person, people or nation—not just as some kind of instrument, with a work capacity and physical strength to be exploited at low cost and then discarded when no longer useful, but as our 'neighbor,' a 'helper'" (cf. Gen 2:18-20). Invite group members to consider how this idea of solidarity could inform discussions about "strangers" such as immigrants in the local and parish community.



STAGE THREE: SHARING HISTORIES

This section includes the following materials designed to help facilitators guide the group toward linking their personal histories to that of a global context where people everywhere throughout time are on the move, but still bound together in the human family:

- Discussion: “We are one human family,” Part One and Part Two
- Exercise One: Embracing Our Own Diversity
- Exercise Two: Embracing Our *Community’s* Diversity
- Exercise Three: Sharing Our Parish History



Discussion: “We are one human family,” Part 1

To orient the group towards discussing the idea of unity amid diversity, facilitators can use the following quotes grounded in Catholic Social Teaching.

Part One: The Global Context

Facilitators may read the following quote and then invite the group to respond to its content:

“We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, and ideological differences. We are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. Pope Paul VI taught that ‘if you want peace, work for justice.’ The Gospel calls us to be peacemakers. Our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict” (*Enriching Our Diversity*, 59).

Invite the group to consider how the world is shrinking and in what ways it brings “strangers” into our local and parish communities. Invite the group to consider how our world is one where people are on the move as illustrated by the following statistic:

The number of international migrants worldwide reached 232 million in 2013, an increase of 57 million or 33% compared to 2000. For further information see the United Nations Population Fund at www.unfpa.org/resources/international-migration-2013-wall-chart#.

Invite the group to reflect on examples from international news regarding migration such as the Syrian refugee crisis, European nation responses to mass migration, and the debates over the U.S.-Mexico border. Despite this violence and conflict, ask the group what the Gospel, as stated in the above quote, compels us to do, focusing on being “peacemakers” and loving “all our sisters and brothers.”

Discussion: “We are one human family,” Part 2

The second part of the discussion links global migration to that of the U.S. and the group’s local and parish communities.

Part Two: Locating the Global in the U.S. Context

Pope Francis on his 2015 visit to the U.S. addressed a crowd at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, PA, stating that: “Among us today are members of America’s large Hispanic population, as well as representatives of recent immigrants to the United States. I greet all of you with particular affection! Many of you have emigrated to this country at great personal cost, but in the hope of building a new life. Do not be discouraged by whatever challenges and hardships you face. I ask you not to forget that, like those who came here before you, you bring many gifts to your new nation. You should never be ashamed of your traditions. Do not forget the lessons you learned from your elders, which are something you can bring to enrich the life of this American land. I repeat, do not be ashamed of what is part of you, your life blood.”

Invite the group to reflect on the Pope’s visit, the fact that he identifies as a migrant, and how that identification invites us all to see ourselves as people on the move in different ways. Then, share the following baseline statistics about immigrant populations within the U.S.:

The U.S. attracts about 20% of the world’s international migrants, accounting for approximately 13% of the overall U.S. population and equaling approximately 80 million people (For more information, see: www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states.

55.4 million or 17.4% of the total U.S. population are Hispanic. For recent information, see the Pew Research Center at: www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/06/25/u-s-hispanic-population-growth-surge-cools/.

Ask group members if these numbers surprise them and reflect their experience in the local community.

For the full text of Pope Francis’ address, see: catholicphilly.com/2015/09/news/local-news/text-of-pope-francis-speech-at-independence-hall/.



Exercise 1: Embracing Our Own Diversity

Objective: To involve group members in identifying their own rich personal and collective diversities as illustrative of U.S. history as one constituted by immigration.

Tools: Paper & Pen, Large World Map, Thumb Tacks/Stick Pins, Post-It Notes

Steps:

1. Orient the group toward reflecting on their own diversity by underscoring Pope Francis' statement in the above address: "I ask you not to forget that, like those who came here before you, you bring many gifts to your new nation. You should never be ashamed of your traditions."
2. Ask each group member to write a short history of their own or their family's immigration to the U.S., including nation(s) of origin and approximate time of arrival.
3. Ask each group member to place a stick pin in the different countries from which they or their families come. Encourage members with multiple nations of origin to place stick pins in each nation that makes up their racial/ethnic background.
4. Then ask them to write the approximate time of arrival in the U.S. on a Post-It Note and place the Post-It Note on the United States area of the world map.
5. Invite each member to share with the group their story of immigration, underscoring diversities and commonalities among participants. The facilitator should participate in this activity to integrate into the experience.
6. Locate the group experience within the broader context of U.S. immigration history. Share, for instance, the two major waves of U.S. immigration and from where people came:
Two massive waves of immigration bookend the twentieth century:
 - 1880-1920: largely European immigrant population growing by 31% or 3.2 million people between 1900 and 1910 alone, driven, in large measure, by the Industrial Revolution.
 - 1960s – Present: the mostly Hispanic immigrant population growing by 57% or 11.3 million immigrants in the 1990s; today the top ten largest immigrant groups are: Mexico, India, China, Philippines, Vietnam, Korea, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Dominican Republic.
7. Return to the faith context by sharing that "Catholics are more likely than other Americans to be immigrants or children of immigrants" as 27% of adult Catholics were born outside of the U.S. and are more likely than other Americans to be Hispanic immigrants. For more information on Catholics in America, see: www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/09/14/a-closer-look-at-catholic-america/.
8. Conclude by inviting group discussion about valuing diversities amid the shared history of the Church and immigration.

Exercise 2: Embracing Our Community's Diversity

Objective: To involve members of the parish community to identify their own rich personal and collective diversities as illustrative of U.S. history as one constituted by immigration and, as members of the Church, to "one human family."

Tools: Paper & Pen, Large World Map, Thumb Tacks/Stick Pins, Post-It Notes

Steps:

1. Invite the group to coordinate participation in this exercise for members of the entire parish community. Read the following statement regarding collective memory among neighbors (this statement can also be posted alongside the world map).
"When a community loses its memory, its members no longer know one another. How can they know one another if they have forgotten or have never learned one another's stories? If they do not know one another's stories, how can they know whether or not to trust one another? People who do not trust one another do not help one another, and moreover they fear one another. And this is our predicament now... (for) most of us no longer talk with each other, much less tell each other stories. We tell our stories now mostly to doctors or lawyers or psychiatrists or insurance adjusters or the police, not to our neighbors..." (Wendell Berry, essayist: *Enriching Our Diversity*, 29).
2. Coordinate with your priest and Church leadership to identify a location in a shared public space where parish members could mark their countries of origin with stick pins on the large map and also their approximate years of arrival in the U.S.. Directions, Post-It Notes, stick pins, pens/markers, and a large world map, preferably the one used by the discussion group, would be placed at the public location.
3. Identify a set period of time for gathering the information from the world map. This information could be shared in a parish newsletter or on a flyer available in a common public space of the parish. Group members could decide to locate this specific parish information within the context of U.S. immigration history and the Catholic Church.
4. Group members should reflect on the outcomes of the immigration mapping exercise in their broader parish community to consider the rich diversity of its members who belong to "one human family."



Exercise 3: Sharing Our Parish Histories

Objective: To involve participants in locating themselves and their families within the shared history of their parish community. To create a one-page “briefing” for the parish community on its history and demography.

Tools: Computers/laptops with Internet Access, map of local parish

Steps:

1. Put participants in small groups of three by numbering them off from one to three. This will locate them randomly in small groups.
2. Invite participants to engage in basic Internet research about their specific parish neighborhood’s demographic make up and history. Depending on the group’s size, different groups may focus on either demographic data or historical information.
 - Historical information – parish priest, diocese, local newspapers and newscasts, members of the group. Demographic information can be found at U.S. Census Bureau at www.census.gov.
 - Invite each group to compile their material into bullet points highlighting major demographic and historic points of change in the parish community’s history.
3. Ask the group to reflect on how their family’s history maps onto that of the parish community.
4. Distribute or make public the group’s one-page “briefing” via the parish newsletter, website, bulletin board, information table.



STAGE FOUR: CHARTING IDENTITIES

This section includes the following materials to enable the facilitator to guide participants through the process of exploring their personal identities via Catholic Social Teaching. This section deliberately locates the charting of individual identities as the fourth stage after the group explores ideas of solidarity and sharing histories. Doing so purposely locates the individual within the context of community and the common good.

- Who Am I? Discussion: Cultural Identities, Parts One and Two
- Exercise One: Mapping Your Identity
- Exercise Two: “Love Thy Neighbor”
- Exercise Three: Cultural Identity “Speed Dating”



Who Am I? Discussion: Cultural Identities, Part 1

The facilitator should invite the group to engage in the following discussion which may be adapted to suit the specific interests and needs of its members:

Read the following quote from Pope Francis in his speech to the U.S. Congress in September 2015:

“In recent centuries, millions of people came to this land to pursue their dream of building a future in freedom. We, the people of this continent, are not fearful of foreigners, because most of us were once foreigners. ***I say this to you as the son of immigrants, knowing that so many of you are also descended from immigrants.*** Tragically, the rights of those who were here long before us were not always respected.”

Re-read the italicized and bold print above. Ask group members to consider the following questions:

1. Why did Pope Francis identify himself as a son of immigrants in this speech?
2. What role does immigration play in your personal history?
3. What are some of the ways that immigration shapes your family’s religious and cultural traditions?
4. What are some of your favorite foods to eat from your racial/ethnic background?

Read the following passage linking Christian spirituality to migration:

“Even at the personal level of individual spirituality, St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.), among other Christian teachers, emphasized the view that humans are resident aliens to this world, pilgrims on a journey home to the City of God, which is our true citizenship and homeland.”

Who Am I? Discussion: Cultural Identities, Part 2

Invite group members to reflect on the previous quote through the following questions:

1. What does the comparison of your personal spiritual identity to migration or a pilgrimage mean to each of you? Does this comparison resonate with you?
2. Would anyone be willing to share their personal spiritual journey with the group?
3. How does thinking of Christian spirituality in terms of migration inform how we may think about the issue of immigration from a religious perspective?
4. If we as humans are all “resident aliens to this world,” then how should we think about immigrants in terms of “strangers as neighbors”?

Invite group members to consider the following statement:

The term “parish” derives from the Greek work *paroikos* that means body of migrants or sojourners living in a specific territory. Originally applied to particular clusters of Jewish people in the Diaspora, Christians adopted the word to define their territorial communities.”

Generate discussion through the following questions:

1. What brought you to this particular parish? How has this parish and the people in it shaped your identity?
2. What brought you to join this particular discussion group?
3. What are you seeking from the experience of participating in this group’s journey?



Exercise 1: Mapping Your Identity

- Objective:
- To create a physical map of each person’s personal identity.
 - To engage each participant in reflecting on the key elements that make up their personal identity.
 - To link each person’s personal identity to dimensions related to migration.
 - To invite group members to consider migration as part of their Christian spiritual identity.

Tools: Colored construction paper, different colored markers

Steps:

1. Provide each member with a piece of colored construction paper and allow them to choose two or three different colored markers.
2. Explain to the group that we can think about our identities as shaped by internal and external aspects that are linked by language. The internal dimensions include those intangible/abstract aspects in our minds that are important to shaping how we understand who we are such as gender, sexuality, religion, age, ethnicity, race, class, physical and mental ability, education, and age. External factors are material, structural realities, including geographic location, social institutions such as the family, voluntary associations, and religion, political institutions such as the military, judicial system, and local, state, and federal government; and economic institutions, including the workplace, financial markets, and employment. Language refers to the verbal languages spoken (English, Spanish, French, Kiswahili), body language, and all communication through visual, written, and social medias.
3. Invite each person to write down all of the things – internal, external, and language-based – that come to mind as part of their identity. Encourage them to “brainstorm” these elements and write them on the construction paper. Give the group approximately 10-15 minutes.
4. Ask each person to then reflect on their identity map and ask them if any groupings took place around different areas such as religion or ethnicity, social institutions, etc.
5. Ask members to take a different colored marker that they have been using and to draw arrows connecting different parts of their identity to show how one element impacted another.
6. Ask members to share how elements of their personal identities shaped by migration in terms of personal journey and moving from one place to another.



Exercise 2: “Love Thy Neighbor”

Objective: To link personal identity mapping with the religious teaching of “Love thy neighbor” to consider how a “stranger” becomes a neighbor.

Tools: Identity Map from previous exercise; different biblical teachings related to the subject (see below for examples) – consider making copies or projecting using Power Point. Large Post-It Note Presentation Pad & Markers

Steps:

1. Review the Bible verses listed in the next slide. Discuss which verses resonate with the group in terms of the message conveyed about “love thy neighbor.”
2. Consider, depending on the group’s interest, other Bible verses that relate to this topic that hold meaning from group members.
3. Ask each member to identify which verse means the most to them and ask them to write it on the back of their identity map.
4. Ask members to review their identity map and to identify which aspects of their identity are likely to be shared with immigrants in your parish.
5. Ask members to write the aspects likely shared on the back of their identity map.
6. Invite all group members to share one identity marker that they share. Facilitator should write those responses on the large Post-It Note pad to track markers.
7. Concluding Discussion: what does this exercise show us about how we can begin to “love thy neighbor.” Facilitator should emphasize our shared humanity and love as Christians.

**“Love Thy Neighbor” Exercise, Bible Verses**

The following are some sample Bible verses that can anchor the discussion about “love thy neighbor.” Group members and facilitators may decide to identify other verses.

John 15: 12-17

12. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.
13. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends
14. You are my friends if you do what I command you.
15. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.
16. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.
17. This I command you: love one another

Mark 12: 28-34

28. One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked them, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”
29. “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.
30. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’
31. The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”
32. “Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him.
33. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”
34. When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

Exercise 3: Cultural Identity “Speed Dating”

Objective: To allow group members to explore their feelings and experiences about societal issues and to explore their cultural identity and how it relates to others.

To begin to understand the origins of learned biases and prejudices by encouraging self-reflection, introspection, and inter-group dialogue.

Tools: List of Discussion Prompts

Steps:

1. Arrange for a long table with an equal number of seats on each side to equal the number of participants in the group. Divide the group into the “As” and the “Bs.” Have the “As” sit on one side of the table and explain that they will not move from their seats. Have the “Bs” sit on the other side and explain that they will move one seat to their right when the facilitator tells them to. Facilitators should allow two minutes first for the “As” and then two minutes for the “Bs” to respond to the discussion prompts. After 4 minutes total, the “Bs” will move one seat to the right. Repeat until each pair has had the opportunity to participate with someone different.
2. The facilitator will read the different discussion prompts available on the next slide. You may decide to create some prompts of your own as well.
3. When finished, engage the group in reflection through the following debriefing questions:
 - What are one or two words that would describe this activity for you?
 - How did you feel about answering the questions?
 - Which questions were more difficult for you to answer? Easier?
 - What did you learn about your cultural identity through this process?

Adapted from The office of Intercultural Affairs, Stonehill College. *Practicing Inclusion: Icebreakers and Team Builders for Diversity.*

Exercise 4: Cultural Identity “Speed Dating”

Discussion Prompts

The following offers discussion prompts for the Cultural Identity “Speed Dating” Exercise. Facilitators are encouraged to develop prompts specific to their group.

1. What is your full name? How did you get that name? What does it mean to you?
2. What is your race and/or ethnicity? What does it mean for you to be that race/ethnicity?
3. When did your family come to the United States? Where did they come from? How long have you all been in the U.S.?
4. When was the first time that you realized you were...
 - Your gender?
 - Your socioeconomic status?
 - Different from others?
 - The same as others?
5. What were your first messages about...
 - People of a different race than you? Where did you get that message?
 - People of a different ethnicity than you? Where did you get that message?
 - People of a different religious background than you? Where did you get that message?
 - People of a different educational background than you? Where did you get that message?
6. Share with your partner a little bit about your family. Who is in it? Who do you consider family? What does that mean to you?
7. What topic was “taboo” in your family when you were growing up?
8. Share with your partner a time when you were unsure of yourself.
9. Share with your partner a time when you felt the most confident about yourself.
10. Share with your partner a goal or a few goals that you have for the next few years.
11. Share with your partner what this activity was like for you.



Adapted from The office of Intercultural Affairs, Stonehill College. *Practicing Inclusion: Icebreakers and Team Builders for Diversity*

STAGE FIVE: LEARNING THE POWER OF LANGUAGE

This section focuses on the third element of the Cultural Identity Mapping done in Stage Three, Exercise One – language. The purpose of this section is to engage participants in thinking critically about the world in which we live where what people say, how they say it, how they use gestures and body language, and media from written and spoken to visual and social all impact how we understand other people from different backgrounds than us and social issues such as immigration.

- Discussion: The Power of Language
- Exercise One: The Wall of Words
- Exercise Two: The Wall of Images & The Common Good
- Exercise Three: Bridging the Gap Between Common Beliefs and Realities
-

Discussion: The Power of Language

This discussion is broken into three basic sections designed to get the group thinking about the interconnected ideas of power and language as they relate to identity and community formation. The facilitator may want to keep notes for the group on a chalkboard or large Post-It note.

Language

Ask group members to reference their Cultural Identity Maps and identify the role of language on those maps. Invite members to share their findings with the group. Then ask members to define what language means to them, what are the various ways that we can understand language. Prompt the group to think about the significance of language in our increasingly media-driven world. Ask group members how many times a day they use different forms of media and what those forms are. How do they use them ie. for shopping, e-mailing, Tweeting, Facebooking, blogging, Instagraming, etc.? Could they “disconnect” completely from all media? If so, for how long? If not, why not?

Power

Ask group members what words come to mind when they think of “power”? How does it make you feel? What are the pros and cons of power?

Share with the group some definitions of power. Political scientists who study power define it as who gets what, when, where, why, and how; and the relationship between the dominant and subordinate. Webster’s Dictionary defines it as “the: possession of control, authority, or influence over others; the ability to act or produce an effect.” Catholic Social Teaching speaks to power. **1 Corinthians 4:20 “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.” 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”**

Invite group members to compare the political and conventional definitions of power with those from Catholic Social Teaching. What are the similarities and differences?

Emphasize that most power is exercised through language as people negotiate conflict and determine the distribution of goods to meet human needs and wants through various forms of language.

The Power of Language

Ask group members to consider the “power” of social media in their own lives given the previous conversation. Invite the group to conclude by considering how the media generally shapes how we as a society think about different social issues, including immigration.

Exercise 1: The Wall of Words

Objective: To engage participants in experiencing the power of language.

To create the opportunity for participants to track how words and their meanings shift and change in communal contexts.

To increase participants' awareness of how words shape the contexts in which people live, work, and worship; in short, that the words we use matter.

Tools: Construction paper, different colored markers, larger butcher paper



Steps:

- Ask each participant to individually write on the construction paper all the words that come to mind in response to one of the following: “Catholic Church,” “spirituality,” or “faith.” Choose one to which the entire group responds.
- As participants then share the different words written on their sheets, the facilitator should write them on a large piece of butcher paper with the word in the middle to create a communal Wall of Words. Ask the group to discuss the meanings of different words on the Wall. Emphasize how words have different meanings and how they can generate disagreement. Ask participants what strategies can be used to negotiate such disagreements.
- Tape up a piece of butcher paper with the word “IMMIGRANT” in the middle and ask group members to come up and write words that come to mind when they see or hear this term. Explain to the group that they may put up terms that they do not necessarily use or agree with that are used in the media or elsewhere.
- Engage in a group discussion of the different words used and how they do and do not agree with Catholic Social Teachings around human dignity and welcoming the stranger.
- Tape up a piece of butcher paper with the word “IMMIGRATION” in the middle and ask group members to come up and write words that come to mind when they see or hear this term. Explain to the group that they may put up terms that they do not necessarily use or agree with that are used in the media or elsewhere.
- Again engage the group in discussing these different words and how they do and do not relate to Catholic Social Teaching.
- Conclude by asking the group to consider the differences between the words used to reflect on “IMMIGRANT” versus “IMMIGRATION.” What explains these differences? How does this relate to the way that we talk about immigration in legal, economic, and policy terms versus those of human dignity and the common good? What would happen if our discussions about “IMMIGRATION” began with the “IMMIGRANT”?

Exercise 2: The Wall of Images & The Common Good

Objective: To engage participants in experiencing the power of visual language through images presented in the media.

To increase participants' awareness of how visual images shape the contexts in which people live, work, and worship; in short, that the images we see all the time shape how we think about groups of people and social issues.

To examine the role of media in relation to “immigrants” and “immigration” from the perspective of the common good.

Tools: Construction paper, different colored markers, larger butcher paper/ laptop, printer, magazines and newspapers, scissors, glue, tape

Steps:

1. Share with the group that recent studies indicate that U.S. adults over the age of 18 spend approximately 11 of their waking 14 to 16 hours looking at screens and using electronic media. For the full 2015 Nielsen report, see, www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports/2015/the-total-audience-report-q4-2014.html.
2. Invite the group to discuss their screen time and that of family members. Ask if this report reflects their experiences with screen time. Share with the group that, regardless of variations, increased screen time only increases the power of visual images in shaping how we understand the world.
3. Ask group members to locate one or two images in the available magazines or newspapers, or downloaded from the Internet (Google Images is an excellent search engine for this project) that represent IMMIGRANTS and IMMIGRATION.
4. Once members have located their image(s), ask them to write a reflection about the message conveyed to them by that image. How does that image reflect their views of immigration and immigrants? How does it not reflect those views? In what ways could Catholic Social Teaching on human dignity, welcoming the stranger, and the common good inform their response to these images? How does the view from Catholic Social Teaching differ from that of conveyed in mainstream media?
5. Ask each group member to tape their image(s) with reflection on the large butcher block paper.
6. Once all the images have been posted, invite all group members to look closely at the collection of images. While doing so, ask them to reflect on the Church's commitment to the **common good as “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily” (Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, no. 26).**
7. Conclude the exercise with a group discussion of how such images do and do not promote the common good. Invite group members to consider how Catholic Social Teaching can inform the way that they engage with such images and even think about them differently.
8. If possible, keep the Wall of Images posted for the group to reflect on in upcoming sessions. The group may also invite their parish community to offer reflections on the Wall of Images.

Exercise 3: Bridging the Gap Between Common Beliefs versus Realities, Part 1

Objective: To engage group members in reflecting on the gap between common beliefs about immigrants and immigration and the realities.

To develop further group members' critical thinking about immigrants/immigration in the broader context of U.S. society and media.

Tools: Written Material Below, Optional: Facilitators may choose to integrate information specific to their area such as Fiscal Policy Institute's report *New Americans on Long Island: A Vital Fifth of the Economy* (June 2015) available online at: fiscalpolicy.org/new-americans-on-long-island-2015

Steps:

- This exercise is discussion based. The facilitator should read each common belief about immigrants below, then invite group members to respond to it. Ask members if they have heard this common belief, what their perspective is on this belief, and how Catholic Social Teachings such as the commitment to the life and dignity of the human person and how the Church champions the "option for the poor."
- Share with the group the following encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*, where Pope Benedict XVI teaches:
- Jesus identifies himself with those in need, with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison... Love of God and love of the neighbor have become one: in the least of the brethren we find Jesus himself, and in Jesus we find God. (#15)
- Ask the group to reflect on how this passage links immigrants to the option for the poor and commitments to treating strangers as neighbors.
- Turn to the "Common Beliefs" and "Realities" about U.S. immigrants on the following slide as a guide for this discussion. Facilitators and group members may develop other common beliefs, including those specific to their local and parish communities.
- Conclude the discussion by asking group members to brainstorm ways that they could engage with fellow parishioners about common beliefs related to immigrants using the language of Catholic Social Teaching.

Exercise 3: Bridging the Gap Between Common Beliefs versus Realities, Part 2

Below are responses to common beliefs made by some Catholics about the Church's position on immigration reform. These are adapted from www.justiceforimmigrants.org "Hot Button Issues in the Immigration Debate" also found in *Enriching Our Diversity*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2012. 102-104.

Common Belief: Undocumented immigrants do not pay taxes.

Reality: Undocumented immigrants pay billions of dollars in sales, property, and income taxes each year. Legal and undocumented immigrants pay sales taxes and property taxes (rent or homeownership). Between one-half and three quarters of undocumented immigrants pay federal and state income taxes, Social Security taxes, and Medicare taxes.

According to the Social Security Administration (SSA), undocumented workers pay as much as \$7 billion in Social Security and Medicare taxes each year. This is placed in an "Earnings Suspense File," an account used by SSA for returns without accurate social security numbers. It has been estimated that, since 1984, undocumented immigrants have contributed as much as \$520 billion to this account.

Perhaps the most telling evidence that undocumented workers pay taxes is that they were legally barred from receiving tax rebates under the 2008 economic stimulus package passed by Congress. In policy terms, it is rational to argue for a legalization of the undocumented workforce so that all would pay into the income tax system, not just one-half. It is in the nation's fiscal interest to legalize these workers, so that they can file tax returns without fear and fully participate in the economy.

Common Belief: Undocumented immigrants are a net drain on the U.S. economy because they use valuable resources and take public welfare.

Reality: This is not true for several reasons. First, undocumented immigrants are not eligible for any type of public assistance program. They are only eligible for emergency medical care and schooling for children. According to the Urban Institute, less than 1 percent of households headed by undocumented immigrants receive cash assistance (because of their U.S.-born children), while 5 percent of households headed by U.S.-born citizens do. Studies demonstrate that immigrants pay more into the tax system than the benefits they receive. Second, the purchasing power of and establishment of small business by immigrants contributes to the economy. Finally, after two to three years in the workforce, immigrants become net contributors to the economy.

- Assertion: Undocumented immigrants take jobs away from U.S. workers and drive down wages
Response
- Assertion: My ancestors came legally—why can't they?
Response

Common Belief: Undocumented immigrants take jobs away from U.S. workers and drive down wages.

Reality: Studies show that undocumented immigrants (and legal) complement rather than compete with the native-born workforce. Immigrant workers labor in key industries such as farm work (50%), food preparation, building maintenance, grounds cleaning (33%), and construction (22%) – jobs that most Americans generally do not want. According to the Pew Hispanic Center, foreign-born workers accounted for 49 percent of the labor-force growth between 1995 and 2005.

Americans, at the same time, are more educated (only 12% without high school degrees) and the fertility rate has fallen below the replacement level (to 1.86 children per woman). The Department of Labor reported a shortage of workers in all major industries in 2010. Immigrant workers help to fill this critical labor shortage.

The White House Council on Economic Advisors reported that roughly 90% of native-born workers experience wage gains from immigration, totaling between 30 – 80 billion per year.



Common Belief: My ancestors came to the U.S. legally—why can't these new immigrants?

Reality: They may have come legally at the time, but there might not have been laws governing immigration at the time. Until the late 19th century, there was virtually no regulation of immigration in this country – if someone could get here, they would be let in. If an immigrant arrived in a port of entry such as Ellis Island, they would be inspected and, unless they fell into any of the exclusion categories such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 or were considered insane, they would be allowed to enter and remain. Before the 20th century, there was no bureaucracy for enforcing immigration laws. The U.S. land borders were virtually unguarded and there was virtually no money for deportation of those here illegally. A 1924 law first set up a consular system which required visas obtained from a U.S. consulate abroad before admission.

Before 1924, there were no caps on legal immigration – the first caps on limitations of Europeans came after the great wave of immigration to the U.S. The Immigration Act of 1924 created a quota system that favored West Europeans and, for the first time required immigrants to present medical certificates to the U.S. consulates abroad prior to obtaining a visa to enter the U.S.

Below are responses to common beliefs made by some Catholics about the Church's position on immigration reform. These are adapted from www.justiceforimmigrants.org "Hot Button Issues in the Immigration Debate" also found in *Enriching Our Diversity*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2012. 102-104.

Once exclusions and restrictions were placed on immigration to the United States, illegal immigration began in this country. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 led to an "illegal" Asian immigrant population. Laws were adopted to keep out less desirable groups such as Eastern and Southern Europeans, and the undocumented population grew. In 1925, the Immigration Service reported that 1.4 million immigrants were living in the U.S. illegally. At the same time, many Europeans here illegally benefited from "amnesties." A 1929 law, the 1929 Registry Act, allowed "law-abiding aliens who may be in the country under some merely technical irregularity" to register as permanent residents for a fee of \$20 if they could prove that they lived in the U.S. since 1921 and were of "good moral character." Between 1925 and 1965, 200,000 undocumented Europeans legalized their status under the law.

Common Belief: Undocumented immigrants should just get in line and play by the rules like everyone else.

Reality: Yes, they should and they would if there was any hope of them immigrating legally. However, our immigration system is so flawed that they do not have a realistic chance of entering the U.S. legally, at least not in a timely manner. There are not enough legal avenues, or visas, available to accommodate those who want to come, nor those who we need. In reality, there is no "line" for them to get into. For instance, there are only 5,000 permanent visas for low-skilled and unskilled foreign born workers to enter and work and live in the U.S. each year. There are a handful of seasonal visa programs (H-2A agricultural workers, H2-B service workers, H-1B high-tech), but these numbers are limited and temporary.

STAGE SIX: BUILDING COMMUNITY FOR THE COMMON GOOD

This section includes the following materials designed to help facilitators guide the group toward building community within their parish on the principle of the common good and as a home where the stranger is welcome.

- Discussion: Interdependence and Human Solidarity
- Exercise One: Which Way Home?
- Exercise Two: The River Training
- Exercise Three: Celebrating Our Cultural Differences

**Discussion: Interdependence & Human Solidarity****Introduction**

The following reading anchors community building in Catholic Social Teaching. Invite a member of the group to read the following passage designed to generate discussion about interdependence and human solidarity.

The Reading:

The fulfillment of human needs, we know, is not the final purpose of the creation of the human person. We have been created to share in the divine life through a destiny that goes far beyond our human capabilities and before which we must in all humility stand in awe. Like Mary in proclaiming her Magnificat, we marvel at the wonders God has done for us, how God has raised up the poor and the lowly and promised great things for them in the Kingdom. God now asks of us sacrifices and reflection on our reverence for human dignity—in ourselves and in others—and on our service and discipleship, so that the divine goal for the human family and this earth can be fulfilled. Communion with God, sharing God's life, involves a mutual bonding with all on this globe. Jesus taught us to love God and one another and that the concept of neighbor is without limit. We know that we are called to be members of a new covenant of love. We have to move from our devotion to independence, through an understanding of interdependence, to a commitment to human solidarity. That challenge must find its realization in the kind of community we build among us. Love implies concern for all—especially the poor—and a continued search for those social and economic structures that permit everyone to share in a community that is a part of a redeemed creation (Rom 8:21-23) (ECJ4A, #365).

Discussion prompts:

- How does this reading challenge us to reconsider the individual as the center of community?
- What is the role of the "neighbor" within this teaching? What are group members' relationships with their neighbors in their neighborhoods and parish communities? What are some elements of our everyday lives that can present obstacles to knowing our neighbors? How might we try to overcome them?
- How do our communities, parish and otherwise, show concern for the poor? How can we extend this to immigrant and other vulnerable populations within our parish and neighborhood communities? What ways do you and your family engage in this work? What would be some ideas for doing so in the future?
- How are we as members of the human family interdependent? How does our faith support this vision of life? How can each of us engage in an act within the coming week that expresses human solidarity with our neighbors?

Exercise 1: Which Way Home? Part 1

Objective: To engage participants in reflecting on the meaning of “home” from the perspective of Catholic Social Teaching.

To begin a conversation about how a parish community does and can create a “home” for “strangers as neighbors.”

To offer a different view of immigration than that presented in the media.

Tools: “Which Way Home” (2009 Documentary), TV/DVD player or equipment to stream from laptop. Documentary available online www.imdb.com/title/tt0489342/ and through Amazon Prime.

Summary: “Which Way Home” is a feature documentary film that follows unaccompanied child migrants, on their journey through Mexico, as they try to reach the United States. We follow children like Olga and Freddy, nine-year old Hondurans, who are desperately trying to reach their parents in the U.S.; children like Jose, a ten-year old El Salvadoran, who has been abandoned by smugglers and ends up alone in a Mexican detention center; and Kevin, a canny, streetwise fourteen-year old Honduran, whose mother hopes that he will reach the U.S. and send money back to her. These are stories of hope and courage, disappointment and sorrow. They are the children you never hear about; the invisible ones.

Steps:

1. Invite participants to reflect back to the groups’ discussions about family and home and ask members to share what “home” means to them and what leaving it entails.
2. Share the following passages related to Catholic Social Teaching about “home”:
Augustine asks Christians, “Where is your home?” Of all the needs of the human spirit, the need for roots is one of the most important. The concept “home” seems simple at first, but home is never truly understood until one leaves home and then feels the uprootedness of not being in a place of one’s own. Migration is never a causal life choice. It almost always entails an experiential crisis which must, ideally, engender the Church’s pastoral care.
3. Ask participants to reflect on the above passage – what does that mean to them? What events might cause them to leave their current home?
4. Invite group members to keep the above reading in mind as they watch the documentary “Which Way Home.”

Exercise 1: Which Way Home? Part 2

The following steps help the facilitator guide the group in reflecting on the documentary after viewing.

Steps:

Invite participants to offer any general responses to the documentary. The following prompts may generate further conversation:

1. Which of the children making the journey spoke to you the most and why?
2. What surprised you the most about the depiction of immigration in the documentary?
3. How does the documentary present a different view of immigration than that offered in mainstream U.S. media?
4. What does “home” mean for the children in this documentary?
5. What are the various factors that motivate these children to leave and return “home”?
6. How does the conception of “home” in the documentary reflect that of Catholic Social Teaching?
7. Ask participants to consider the following passage related to Catholic Social Teaching:
8. *Because Christians are strangers in a strange land, they should participate in a special outreach to the foreigner; or those uprooted from home. Formal houses of hospitality were created by the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.). They were called zenodochia, or homes for strangers, and were primarily places for restful spiritual conversations, apparently including inter-religious dialogues with Muslims and Jews.*
9. Prompt discussion about this passage through the following questions:
10. How are these children treated by others during their journey?
11. How were they shown hospitality and from whom?
12. In what ways can Christian teachings about the stranger and hospitality inform how group members think and talk about people who migrate?



Exercise 2: The River Training

Objective: To engage participants in considering how their parish provides services to those who struggle within their community.

To reflect on how group members may decide to welcome the strangers in the parish community through direct action and awareness raising.

To introduce participants to Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) to assess their community's assets and how to use them to move forward in achieving shared development goals.

Tools: Large Piece of Butcher Paper, Large Marker or Chalk/Whiteboard and writing implements

Steps:

1. Share with the group the following explanation of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) and frame as a tool that groups can use to examine the strengths already present in their community that can be leveraged to achieve its vision of the common good.
2. *ABCD is a strategy for sustainable community-driven development. Beyond the mobilization of a particular community, ABCD is concerned with how to link micro-assets to the macro-environment. The appeal of ABCD lies in its premise that communities can drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilizing existing, but often unrecognized assets, and thereby responding to and creating local opportunities.* (For more information on ABCD, www.abcdinstitute.org/toolkit/index.html).
3. Ask group members to keep this approach which focuses on the assets as opposed to the needs of a community as the starting point for addressing its development.
4. Share the following story with the group:
There was a nice little town that developed downstream and along the banks of a beautiful but wild, raging river. One day, some of the townspeople noticed someone was being washed down the river and was struggling just to keep their head above water. Consequently, one of the townspeople decided to jump in and rescued the frowning victim. However, before that person could even catch their breath, they noticed a second person being washed down in the rapids; and then another and another. The townspeople worked tirelessly to try to rescue as many people as they could, and they soon developed all different ways to help rescue people out of the water. Some had boats, while others had nets, life preservers, and all kinds of rescue gear. In fact, they got so good at it that they were actually able to rescue about 70 to 80 percent of the people being washed down in the rapids. However, every once in a while one of the townspeople would say: "I wonder what's going on upstream that's getting all these into deep water."
5. Ask group members what the moral of this story is. See if they can connect the need to find the source of what's happening, and the need to make the journey upstream to understand the root of the problem for all of these individuals struggling just to stay above water.
6. On the large paper or chalk/whiteboard, draw the river and the many stick figures being washed into the water. Ask what kinds of issues the group sees in its local and parish community that get people into deep water. Hopefully, different issues will be mentioned such as health care, access to college, immigration, crime, gangs, affordable housing, poverty, hunger, homelessness, etc. As group members identify different issues, write each one next to a different stick figure.

7. Ask the group to identify different service agencies, including services provided at or through the parish, that help rescue people who are struggling in the river. Have the group look at the issues listed and think of social agencies that deal with each. Homeless shelters, food banks, health clinics, social services, literacy centers, etc. will hopefully be mentioned. Group members may want to engage in some quick Internet searches to identify agencies in the immediate area.
8. Discuss the roles that agencies play in terms of those they serve who are struggling in the river. Focus on how these agencies provide services for the people in the river, but they do not necessarily do anything about the root causes that pull people into the water.
9. Return to the principle idea of ABCD and invite group members to brainstorm the assets of people within the group. Invite them to think of different skill sets that they have from cooking and sewing to accounting and website development. Ask them to consider how the group could leverage its talents to assist immigrants within the parish community. This may include ideas from arranging for a cultural celebration in the parish and a coat drive in the winter to tax assistance. Raising awareness about immigrants in the community would also involve ABCD. Encourage group members to also focus on the assets that members of the immigrant community, who may very likely belong to your discussion group, bring to this work.
10. Prompt the group to discuss how Catholic Social Teaching invites members of the Church to engage in ABCD as a way to "welcome the stranger" as part of a commitment to the common good.
11. Conclude by asking one or two members of the group to read the Prayer of Archbishop Romero. Prompt the group to reflect on the poem by asking the following questions:
 - What does this poem tell us about the nature of our role in God's work?
 - How does this poem reflect on the relationship between an immigrant's journey and our own spiritual and communal journeys?
 - How does "power" operate differently from the perspective of this poem than in mainstream society? To what ends do we imagine doing the work to "welcome the stranger" in our parish?



Exercise 3: Celebrating Our Cultural Differences

Objective: To engage the group in a culminating celebration of cultural differences within the group and/the parish community.

To create a space within the local parish that links its members to global context of today's society and the Church.

To offer the opportunity for group members to practice the principles of ABCD in terms of specifying their specific assets in the organizing of the event.

To reframe cultural "clashes" as opportunities for celebration.

Tools: These will vary widely depending on how the group decides to organize its event: space for the event, different foods brought by members of the community, items for food and drink service, music.

Steps:

1. Read the following passage to the group when introducing the project of creating a cultural celebration as the group's culminating event.
"Sadly, the way we usually get to know other people's cultures is by bumping into them, by seeing them all in the same pew on Sunday morning, for example. And these encounters sometimes take the form of cultural clashes, instead of cultural celebrations. We don't have the chance to learn about the other person's beliefs and values in areas like the meaning of beauty and cleanliness, and their sense of space and order" (Unity in Diversity, 139)
2. Ground the organizing of this event within the globalized context of the Church by sharing the following passage:
The complex notion of Christendom – a Christian world – created at least theoretically the model for a borderless world where people could move freely in peace...As Christianity – Catholicism included – has become a self-consciously global religion, the responsibility of people beyond the national community gets more and more relevant. In the age of globalization, the language of the Christian faith remains deeply tethered to the human phenomenon of migration.
3. Ask group members to respond to the above two passages: How do these passages inform each other? How does celebrating different cultures relate to "welcoming the stranger," "home," "hospitality," and the original conception of the "parish"? How does this celebration align with the global orientation of Christianity as global religion?
4. Devote the remaining time together as a group to plan and organize the cultural celebration that may only include members of the group or could be expanded to include the entire parish or specifically members of the immigrant communities within that parish. The celebration should be focused on food, music, and other cultural traditions that the group identifies. This event can be as simple as a final potluck meal where members of the group, individually or collectively, make dishes representing their culture and bringing them to share with others in a group experience.

PRAYER OF ARCHBISHOP ROMERO

*It helps, now and then, to step back
 And take the long view.
 The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,
 It is even beyond our vision.
 We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
 Of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
 Nothing we do is complete,
 Which is another way of saying that
 They kingdom always lies beyond us.
 No statement says all that should be said.
 No prayer fully expresses our faith.
 No confession brings perfection.
 Not pastoral visit brings wholeness.
 No program accomplishes the church's mission.
 No set goals and objectives includes everything.
 This is what we are about.
 We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
 We water seeds already planted,
 Knowing that they hold future promise.
 We lay foundations that will need further development.
 We provide years that produces effects
 Far beyond our capabilities.
 We cannot do everything,
 And there is a sense of liberation in realized that.
 This enables us to do something,
 And to do it very well.
 It may be incomplete,
 But it is a beginning,
 A step along the way,
 An opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter
 And do the rest.
 We may never see the end results,
 But that is the difference
 Between the master builder and the worker.
 We are workers, not master builders,
 Ministers, not messiahs.
 We are prophets of a future that is not our own.*

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NOTES



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