

Michigan Catholic Conference



30 April 2007

Dear Member of Congress:

It was just over one year ago, we recall, that the American public witnessed on television and read in the newspaper reports of immigration marches across the country that included the participation of millions of individuals. As we have just passed the anniversary of those rallies, and as the Catholic Church prepares to celebrate the feast of St. Joseph the Worker on May 1, the Catholic Bishops of Michigan are calling upon Congress to pass *this year* comprehensive immigration reform.

Supporting the principles of social justice, respect for human dignity, and protection of the rights of workers, a statement composed by the bishops of our state calls for the adoption of three important points in forthcoming immigration legislation:

- 1. Immigration legislation should permit the prompt reunification of families.*
- 2. Immigration legislation should open a path toward the legalization of undocumented workers currently living and working in the United States.*
- 3. Immigration legislation should create an efficient system for the future entrance of temporary workers as well as permanent legal residents.*

Catholic social teaching is clear regarding the treatment of immigrants and provides a reference point for impending legislation: regardless of their legal status, migrants, like all persons, possess inherent human dignity, which should be respected. Government policies that respect the basic human rights of the undocumented are necessary and, we believe, can be accomplished through legislation that includes the policy recommendations mentioned above.

As written in their statement, the Catholic bishops of Michigan urge your support for immigration reform that brings justice to immigrants and ensures workers and families will be treated with the proper respect due to every human being.

With cordial regards, I am

Sincerely,

Sister Monica Kostielney, RSM
President and Chief Executive Officer