

August 24, 2011

Dear Pastors, Parish Life Coordinators, and Pastoral Leaders,

On **Sunday, September 25th** a national effort is taking place in Catholic churches. It is called "Pray for the DREAM" Sunday/Weekend. This effort is being promoted by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops through their Justice for Immigrants (JFI) Campaign. Its intent is to support many of our immigrant students and youth who would be eligible for a pathway to citizenship if the DREAM Act passed. At this time, these young people have no way to any status in the United States. It is the hope of the bishops, through the JFI committee, that parishes across the country will support this effort of education, prayer and action, especially on September 25th.

It is important to ensure that our Catholic values are an essential component of the on-going national dialogue concerning innocent and hard-working youth who, because they were brought here as little children or infants, cannot receive any form of status in our country, even though this country is their only home. A good number of such students are here in our diocese and they keep hoping for their DREAM to come true.

Please consider one or all of the following as your parish's way to participate with this justice effort:

1. On September 25th, 2011, begin the Mass by making an announcement that your parish is participating in the national Catholic effort called "Pray for the DREAM Sunday". Ask parishioners to see the bulletin for 'Pray for the DREAM' explanation regarding immigrant youth

***OR** include paragraph 2 or 3 of the Sample Pulpit Announcement (which is attached) as your announcement at the beginning of Mass..*

2. Include an intercession or two in the prayers of petition.

Example:

-- that our legislators will soon pass the DREAM Act, which allows young immigrant students who have graduated from high school a chance to earn legal status and citizenship through higher education or military service, let us pray to the Lord...

-- for immigrant youth, that they continue to hope and dream and trust in God's care for them, let us pray to the Lord...

3. *In your bulletin insert the e-mail address of the USCCB Justice for Immigrants Campaign (justiceforimmigrants.org) and invite people to ACT by sending the prepared e-postcard on the homepage (in the middle) to the president and to their legislators.*

By participating in this national effort Catholics are taking a stand together for justice. You are also fulfilling a 'priestly' role as teacher of the faith. So many parishioners are not aware of the social justice stance and teaching of our church on key issues, among them immigration reform. You are so important to creating an attitude of justice and understanding, even through simple ways such as one or all of the above actions.

Thank you for your continuing efforts in your ministry of leadership.

S. Cecilia
Coordinator of Hispanic Ministry