

MEMO:

To: Pastors, Parish Life Coordinators and all Parish Leaders

From: Office of Hispanic Ministry; S. Cecilia Hellmann, ASC--Coordinator

JUNE 12: Hispanic Youth Day

On June 12th we will be having our annual Diocesan Hispanic Youth Day. We would appreciate your announcement of this event in your parish bulletin at least once in the month of May. Your announcement might read:

The annual Diocesan Hispanic Youth Day will be held at the Diocesan Pastoral Center on Saturday, June 12th from 9:00 to 4:30. Hispanic youth, ages 11 to 21 are invited. The purpose is to encourage youth in their faith and life. There is no charge. Bus transportation is provided from some areas. For more info please call Sr. Cecilia Hellmann at 618-235-9601 ext. 129.

You, or an organization of your parish, are invited to support these young Catholics of our diocese by contributing an attendance prize. *Please see the attachment letter regarding this request and the theme of the day.*

JULY 15: Convocation V

You, your staff, your teachers, PSR instructors and interested laity are invited to attend the **Convocation on “Immigrants Among Us”** sponsored by the Hispanic Ministry Office on July 15th from 9:00 to 2:00 p.m. Along with information regarding the justice issues related to immigration and the need for reform, there will be immigrants present who will share their story. A luncheon will be served. Catechist certification credit will be given for attendance. *The registration form and other details are given on a separate attachment.*

Post Card Campaign:

Thank you to those pastors who announced the USCCB Postcard Campaign and provided cards for parishioners to sign. Our office staff personally delivered those signed cards that were returned to our office. We spent more than a half hour in dialog about this issue with Representative Costello and with key staff persons in the offices of Representative Shimkus, Senator Durbin and Senator Burris. We spoke of the Catholic teaching regarding immigration and repeated the message of the bishops in asking for reform that included ‘keeping immigrant families together, having smart and humane enforcement policies, and ensuring that immigrants without legal status have a pathway toward citizenship’.

There is hope that immigration reform legislation will come up for discussion in Congress and a vote in the coming months, though heated and partisan bickering is expected to interfere with quick progress. If you have not participated in this important justice issue, it is not too late to become involved. The postcard campaign is a good beginning. So much education is still needed to allay fear, to confront a sense of righteousness about who owns this country, and to act toward our neighbors in the spirit of Jesus Christ. If you wish postcards, please be in touch.