

## Catholic Social Teaching Quotes Migration/Immigration

Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence with the confines of his own state. When there are just reasons in favor or it, he must be permitted to emigrate to other countries and to take up residence there. The fact that he is a citizen of a particular state does not deprive him of membership in the human family, nor the citizenship in that universal society, the common, world-wide fellowship of women and men.

**Pacem in Terris (“Peace on Earth”)**, Pope John XXIII, 1963, #25.

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Among man’s personal rights, we must include his right to enter a country in which he hopes to be able to provide more fittingly for himself and his dependents. It is therefore the duty of the state officials to accept immigrants and—so far as the good of their own community, rightly understood permits, to further the aims of those who may wish to become members of a new society.

**Pacem in Terris (“Peace on Earth”)**, Pope John XXIII, 1963, #106.

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When workers come from another country or district and contribute to the economic advancement of a nation or region by their labor, all discrimination as regards wages and working conditions must be carefully avoided.....public authorities must help them bring their families to live with them and to provide decent dwelling...and incorporated into the social life of the country or region

**Gaudium et Spes (“The Church in the Modern World”)**, Vatican II, 1965, #66.1.

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....permanent emigrant or seasonal workers should not be placed at a disadvantage in comparison with other workers in that society...the need for work should not be an opportunity for financial or social exploitation.

**Laborem Exercens (“On Human Work,” Donders translation)**, Pope John Paul II, 1981, #23.

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Recommit as a church to work so that every person’s dignity is respected, the immigrant is welcomed as a brother or sister and all humanity forms a united family which knows how to appreciate with discernment the different cultures which comprise it. We call upon all people of good will, but Catholics especially to welcome the newcomers in their neighborhoods and schools, in their places of work and worship with heartfelt hospitality, openness and eagerness.

**Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity**, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2001.

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In solidarity, we will continue to advocate on your behalf for just and fair migration policies. We commit ourselves to animate communities of Christ's disciples on both sides of the border so that yours is a journey of hope, not despair.

**Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey**, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Conference of Mexican Bishops, 2003.

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As regards immigrants and refugees, building conditions of peace means in practice being seriously committed to safeguarding first of all the right not to emigrate, that is, the right to live in peace and dignity in one's own country..., the possibility to satisfy basic needs such as food, health care, work, housing and education; the frustration of these needs forces many into a position where their only option is to emigrate. Equally, the right to emigrate exists. This right, Bl. John XXIII recalls in the Encyclical *Mater et Magistra*, is based on the universal destination of the goods of this world. It is obviously the task of Governments to regulate the migratory flows with full respect for the dignity of the persons and for their families' needs, mindful of the requirements of the host societies. In this regard, international agreements already exist to protect would-be emigrants, as well as those who seek refuge or political asylum in another country. There is always room to improve these agreements.

**Message of the Holy Father John Paul II for the 90th World Day of Migrants and Refugees**, 2004, #3.

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If the "dream" of a peaceful world is shared by all, if the refugees' and migrants' contribution is properly evaluated, then humanity can become more and more of a universal family and our earth a true "common home."

**Message of the Holy Father John Paul II for the 90th World Day of Migrants and Refugees**, 2004, #6.

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Yet it must be acknowledged that this same economic growth has been and continues to be weighed down by malfunctions and dramatic problems, highlighted even further by the current crisis. This presents us with choices that cannot be postponed concerning nothing less than the destiny of man, who, moreover, cannot prescind from his nature. The technical forces in play, the global interrelations, the damaging effects on the real economy of badly managed and largely speculative financial dealing, large-scale migration of peoples, often provoked by some particular circumstance and then given insufficient attention, the unregulated exploitation of the earth's resources: all this leads us today to reflect on the measures that would be necessary to provide a solution to problems...

**Caritas in Veritate ("Charity in Truth")**, Pope Benedict XVI, 2009, #21.

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Another aspect of integral human development that is worthy of attention is the phenomenon of migration. This is a striking phenomenon because of the sheer numbers of people involved, the social, economic, political, cultural and religious problems it raises, and the dramatic challenges it poses to nations and the international community. We can say that we are facing a social phenomenon of epoch-making proportions that requires bold, forward-looking policies of international cooperation if it is to be handled effectively.

**Caritas in Veritate (“Charity in Truth”)**, Pope Benedict XVI, 2009, #62.

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Every migrant is a human person who, as such, possesses fundamental, inalienable rights that must be respected by everyone and in every circumstance.

**Caritas in Veritate (“Charity in Truth”)**, Pope Benedict XVI, 2009, #62. (citing from Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Instruction *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi* (3 May 2004))

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We, the Roman Catholic Bishops of Minnesota, are deeply concerned about the nation’s immigration policy. It is inconsistent, ineffective, and does not promote the common good...We seek to reiterate our support for comprehensive immigration reform at the federal level, as well as propose the relevant principles that should guide those reforms. We recognize that finding solutions to the plight of immigrants today will sometimes necessitate the overcoming of boundaries in the heart, not just on the land.

**Unlocking the Gates in our Hearts**, Catholic Bishops of Minnesota, 2012, #1.

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The Church’s perspective on immigration is rooted in her teaching that every person is created in God’s image and has God-given dignity, rights, and duties.

**Unlocking the Gates in our Hearts**, Catholic Bishops of Minnesota, 2012, #2.

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The human right to life – the foundation of every other right – implies the right to emigrate. A dignified existence that preserves life requires food, shelter, clothing, and economic opportunity. Political instability, economic distress, religious persecution, or other conditions that offend basic human dignity may require one to seek these basic necessities in another country.

**Unlocking the Gates in our Hearts**, Catholic Bishops of Minnesota, 2012, # 2.

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Catholic teaching also recognizes the sovereignty of nations to secure their borders... Yet, we must always make sure that we are not exaggerating these concerns in ways that deny the basic humanitarian needs of good people seeking refuge in our country.

**Unlocking the Gates in our Hearts**, Catholic Bishops of Minnesota, 2012, #2.

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It is often true that undocumented workers may break immigration laws to come to the United States. We wish to emphasize that a concern for upholding the law supports the common good. But it is also true that laws that undermine human dignity, separate families, and which prevent the exercise of basic human rights are unjust laws in need of reform. Good laws should not and need not exclude the possibility of mercy.

**Unlocking the Gates in our Hearts**, Catholic Bishops of Minnesota, 2012, #2.

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Christian communities are to pay special attention to migrant workers and their families by accompanying them with prayer, solidarity and Christian charity, by enhancing what is reciprocally enriching, as well as by fostering new political, economic and social planning that promotes respect for the dignity of every human person, the safeguarding of the family, access to dignified housing, to work and to welfare.

**Message for the 2012 World Day of Migrants and Refugees**, Pope Benedict XVI, 2011.

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It is essential to draw near to new forms of poverty and vulnerability, in which we are called to recognize the suffering Christ, even if this appears to bring us no tangible and immediate benefits. I think of the homeless, the addicted, refugees, indigenous peoples, the elderly who are increasingly isolated and abandoned, and many others. Migrants present a particular challenge for me, since I am the pastor of a Church without frontiers, a Church which considers herself mother to all. For this reason, I exhort all countries to a generous openness which, rather than fearing the loss of local identity, will prove capable of creating new forms of cultural synthesis.

**Evangelii Gaudium (“Joy of the Gospel”)**, Pope Francis, 2013, Chapter 4, #210.

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In our changing world, the growing phenomenon of human mobility emerges, to use the words of Pope Benedict XVI, as a “sign of the times.” While it is true that migrations often reveal failures and shortcomings on the part of States and the international community, they also point to the aspiration of humanity to enjoy a unity marked by respect for differences, by attitudes of acceptance and hospitality which enable an equitable sharing of the world’s goods, and by the protection and the advancement of the dignity and centrality of each human being.

### **Message for the 2014 World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis, 2014.**

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From the Christian standpoint, the reality of migration, like other human realities, points to the tension between the beauty of creation, marked by Grace and the Redemption, and the mystery of sin. Solidarity, acceptance, and signs of fraternity and understanding exist side by side with rejection, discrimination, trafficking and exploitation, suffering and death. Particularly disturbing are those situations where migration is not only involuntary, but actually set in motion by various forms of human trafficking and enslavement.

### **Message for the 2014 World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis, 2014.**

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Every human being is a child of God. He or she bears the image of Christ! We ourselves need to see, and then to enable others to see, that migrants and refugees do not only represent a problem to be solved, but are brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected and loved.

### **Message for the 2014 World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis, 2014.**

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Changes in climate, to which animals and plants cannot adapt, lead them to migrate; this in turn affects the livelihood of the poor, who are then forced to leave their homes, with great uncertainty for their future and that of their children. There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. They are not recognized by international conventions as refugees; they bear the loss of the lives they have left behind, without enjoying any legal protection whatsoever. Sadly, there is widespread indifference to such suffering, which is even now taking place throughout our world. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our brothers and sisters points to the loss of that sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women upon which all civil society is founded.

**Laudato Si' ("Praise Be")**, Pope Francis, 2015, Chapter 1, #25.