

Answering the Call:

In response to the growing distress in our immigrant communities from the mass deportation program, there were two important developments in the US Church and the OFS toward the end of 2025. The USCCB’s [Special Message on immigration](#) from 11/12 is a milestone for catholic unity. It calls the whole Church to act in support of immigrants.



In support of the Bishops, the OFS national fraternity approved, in a near unanimous vote, a [Call to Franciscan Accompaniment](#) on 12/11. It calls all OFS in the country to be present in this moment. Both of these documents are products of sincere and difficult dialogue. Both are subject to an acknowledged charge that they are insufficient. To have an effect, statements must be honored by visible actions. So please let everyone know. Every secular should read both of these and every fraternity should be discussing them. We are being asked to stand up and be counted.



The US Church has been in the forefront on this issue for decades, always supporting [comprehensive immigration reform](#). Today, the call is stronger than ever. It is important to be familiar with the initiatives of the Church. The USCCB web site is a comprehensive resource. You can sign up for alerts to track legislation. You can link to Catholic Charities in every state. Their initiative, [Justice for Immigrants](#), is a good place to start. Also, [“You are not alone”](#) is a resource for a variety of actions that Catholics can get involved in. ([Spanish version](#))



A message from Brother David Buer, OFM, Spiritual Assistant to the national JPIC Commission:

“Dear Secular Franciscans,

We live in an era of Nation States and many of our brothers and sisters, through no fault of their own, are forced to flee from their homeland to another country. Our past few Popes have written sympathetic letters to the faithful urging a compassionate response to their plight. ... Pope John Paul II preached about immigration in his 1979 outdoor mass in Chicago's Grant Park along Lake Michigan. (I know because I was there.) And Pope Francis was outspoken on immigration from the beginning of his papacy. Pope Leo is continuing that legacy. **Let's do what we can, where we are.** I'm in process of signing up with the Archdiocese of St. Louis to accompany migrants around the courthouse downtown. Blessings, David Buer, OFM, ”

Secular Franciscans have reported to the national council that they are responding, in San Francisco, in Los Angeles, In Arizona and New Mexico, in Iowa and Chicago, in St Louis, in Erie, PA. They join people of other faiths and walks of life by attending court proceedings, to be witnesses and to assist when possible. Others are bringing necessities to those afraid to go out. Let us all join this collective response. The JPIC office of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Province, OFM, has a list of suggested actions (attached, and at [this link](#).)

Suggested activity for Permanent (ongoing) formation:

Article 44 of our General Constitutions says we should be: *“reflecting on events in the Church and in society in the light of faith and with the help of the documents of the Magisterium [Catholic Social Teaching] consequently taking consistent positions”* Exercise: If there is not a local situation, adapt one of the stories from the [Kino Border Initiative](#) (of a migrant experience.) [Example: How do I Start Over?](#) and share it with the fraternity in discussion groups. Look at the case with the eyes of Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching, and ask the members to arrive at a “consistent position.” Conclude with prayers for the person.

**Through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe,
May our actions be visible, our voices heard,
And our hearts made whole in the love of the risen Christ.
Amen.**

