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Bishop Joe Vasquez of Austin, Texas, chairman of the U.S. bishops' migration committee, responds to a reporter's question during a Nov. 13 news conference at the fall general assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore. (CNS/Bob Roller)

Bishop Joe Vasquez of Austin, Texas, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, told his fellow bishops Nov. 13 that more than 100 U.S. dioceses have participated in the "Share the Journey" campaign launched by Pope Francis Sept. 27.

He said many more took part in the campaign's week of prayer and action for migrants and refugees, which took place Oct. 7-13.

The two-year campaign "calls on Catholics and others of goodwill to encounter migrants and refugees, breaking down barriers of fear and suspicion, building bridges of understanding and hospitality," Vasquez said in a report on the initiative the first day of the U.S. bishops' fall assembly in Baltimore.

It is a call to prayer, reflection and action, he said. It calls attention to 65 million people displaced from their homes around the world.

The campaign began across the U.S. with special Masses, prayer vigils and events involving local migrants and refugees.

Vasquez thanked the bishops for participating in the campaign, which includes sharing personal photos on social media.

"It was a great effort and a sincere show of solidarity with our sisters and brothers on the move," many of them fleeing violence, terrorism and disaster, he said.

"Their journey is our journey," the bishop added.

One component of the campaign is sharing stories about migrants and refugees, the struggles they face and why they chose to seek a better life elsewhere.

In the upcoming year, the campaign will continue promoting solidarity with migrants and refugees with various events, he said. He urged others to share the message and spirit of the campaign focused on the words: welcome, protect, promote and integrate. He asked the bishops to continue supporting the pope's efforts by "encouraging the spirit of encounter among people of diverse backgrounds in our dioceses, parishes and institutions."

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Share the Journey is an initiative of Caritas Internationalis, the global network of Catholic charitable agencies. U.S. partners in the effort are the USCCB and its Migration and Refugee Services, Catholic Relief Services and Catholic Charities USA.

A Share the Journey toolkit is available in English and Spanish at www.sharejourney.org. It includes prayers, suggestions for activities for families, prayer groups, classrooms and clergy, and utilizing social media with references to #sharejourney.

This story appears in the **USCCB Fall 2017** feature series. View the full series.