News



A group processes from St. Joseph's Catholic Church to St. Peter's Catholic Church in Washington as part of a celebration of Las Posadas on Capitol Hill to draw attention to the struggles of migrants. During the Dec. 18 procession, a representation of the Holy Family's travel to Bethlehem, participants sang traditional Mexican Christmas songs. (CLINIC/Alex Grego)



by Maria Benevento

View Author Profile
mbenevento@ncronline.org

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

December 19, 2017

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Editor's note: Welcome to NCR's Justice Action Bulletin, where every Tuesday we bring you the latest news on active nonviolence in the service of peace and justice. Do you have news you would like to share? Contact Maria Benevento at mbenevento@ncronline.org.

WASHINGTON — Advocates are calling attention to the struggles of migrants as they celebrate Las Posadas Navideñas, a Latin American Advent tradition that commemorates Joseph and Mary's search for a place to stay in Bethlehem.

The Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC) and the Archdiocese of Washington's Office of Cultural Diversity and Outreach collaborated to organize the Dec. 18 event on Capitol Hill, according to a press release from CLINIC.

Participants traveled from St. Joseph's Catholic Church to St. Peter's Catholic Church, following a Las Posadas guide developed by CLINIC.

The guide includes traditional elements of Las Posadas, such as a call and response between a group that stands outside representing Mary and Joseph and groups that stand inside representing innkeepers; Mary and Joseph are turned away at each house until the final one. It also includes true stories of modern-day migrants such as Elena, a law student and DACA recipient who came to the U.S. at age seven.

Mancos United Methodist Church in Mancos, Colorado, is also planning a posada to draw attention to immigration issues, according to a Dec. 16 report from The Journal, based in Cortez, Colorado. On Dec. 23, they will honor Rosa Sabido's 200th day in sanctuary at the church and host speaker and immigration activist Jeanette Vizguerra, who spent 86 days in sanctuary earlier this year.

SYRACUSE, NY — Four churches in Syracuse, New York, including two Catholic churches, have announced that they will serve as sanctuaries for immigrants threatened with deportation, according to a Dec. 11 report from syracuse.com.

All Saints Catholic Church is prepared to shelter an immigrant in a suite of rooms in its parish annex, while St. Lucy's Catholic Church, University United Methodist Church and Plymouth Congregational Church will provide support.

Meanwhile, an immigrant from Mexico, Samuel Oliver-Bruno, moved into the CityWell United Methodist Church in Durham, North Carolina, on Dec. 10, Durham's The Herald Sun reported Dec. 13. Oliver-Bruno was detained in 2014 while trying to enter the U.S. to be with his sick wife; he initially received a stay of removal because of his wife's medical condition.

Advertisement

On Dec. 13, Church of the Advocate in North Philadelphia also offered sanctuary to an immigrant mother, Carmela Apolonio Hernandez, and her four children.

The family fled to the U.S. seeking asylum in 2015 after being extorted, threatened and assaulted by gang members who had killed several of their relatives, the Philadelphia-based Inquirer reported Dec. 13. They had been ordered to leave the U.S. by Dec. 15 after their application was denied but are attempting to appeal the decision.

NEW YORK — Members of the New York Catholic Worker community, Voices for Creative Nonviolence, Kairos Community, Pax Christi Metro New York and Dorothy Day Catholic Worker, D.C., are among over 20 activists participating in vigils and a week-long fast in front of the U.N. to protest the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

Martha Hennessy, granddaughter of Catholic Worker movement founder Dorothy Day, wrote on the World Beyond War website that the protesters oppose U.S. complicity in military attacks on Yemen and a blockade that has caused severe famine since Yemen imports 90% of its food. The fast began Dec. 10.

According to Washington-based RT America, Hennessy was also one of 14 people who were taken into custody Dec. 11 after they refused to disperse during the protest at the U.N.

[Maria Benevento is an NCR Bertelsen intern. Her email address is mbenevento@ncronline.org.]

This story appears in the **Justice Action Bulletin** feature series. View the full series .