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National Migration Week opens

by Thomas C. Fox

NCR Today

This is National Migration Week, as declared by the U.S bishops. What a wonderful opportunity for all of us to proclaim our church's positions on immigration policies.

The theme of the week, of course, is "We are Strangers No Longer: Our Journey of Hope Continues." Our bishops say this theme reminds us of our responsibility as Catholics "to help newcomers integrate in ways that are respectful, culturally sensitive and responsive to social needs, and of the ongoing need for comprehensive and compassionate immigration reform."

Our bishops have been actively supportive of open and compassionate immigration policies. They have been quite critical of many current aspects of U.S. immigration laws. They have supported the DREAM act as one step in an effort to liberalize U.S. policies.

This is what they have written about the DREAM act.

In the absence of comprehensive immigration reform, DREAM Act-eligible children are among the most vulnerable of the unauthorized population in the United States today. We have a choice as a nation ? either to ensure that these capable and patriotic long-term members of U.S. society fulfill their promise and serve our country or to separate them from their families and communities and return them to nations they do not know. It is morally incumbent upon us as a nation to choose the former, not the latter.

The U.S. Catholic bishops ask Congress to put aside partisan politics and advance this important piece of legislation to its eventual passage. We stand ready to support Congress in doing so.

An Obama administration official, meanwhile, said the president plans to push for immigration reform this month. He and the U.S. bishops will need our support.

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