



January 8, 2015

Dear Priests, Pastoral Coordinators, Deacons, and Principals,

Our immigrant communities hold in high esteem their local parishes. They view the Church as a safe and trustworthy source for information about immigration questions. We sincerely thank you for providing them with such good pastoral care. Over the coming months, our parishes and schools will be asked to again support our immigrant brothers and sisters as the result of President Obama's Executive Actions on Immigration.

One of these actions expands the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that was initiated in 2012. DACA covers people who were brought to the U.S. before age 16. Another category will give parents of U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents the opportunity to defer their deportation for three years and receive work authorization. This is known as DAPA, which stands for Deferred Action on Parental Accountability. Applications for the expanded DACA will not be accepted until probably February and DAPA applicants will likely have to wait until May at the earliest. These actions will offer some temporary relief and keep families together.

Both categories of Deferred Action (DACA and DAPA) permit an individual to remain in the United States temporarily but do not provide a path to permanent residence or citizenship. Because these recent actions, while welcome, do not fix our country's currently deficient immigration system, the U.S. bishops will continue to urge Congress to pass comprehensive reform legislation.

We encourage parishes and schools to help immigrants considering applying for administrative relief. The attached list provides some suggestions. We ask you not to invite OneAmerica to sponsor forums in our parishes and schools because its positions on some issues are not in concert with Church teaching. This could cause confusion among our people and even thwart our efforts to educate about the need for immigration reform. Finally, we ask your assistance in distributing the attached letter from us to immigrants.

Sincerely in Christ,

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Most Rev. J. Peter Sartain
Archbishop of Seattle

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Most Rev. Eusebio Elizondo, M.Sp.S.
Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle

Enclosure

What Parishes & Schools Can Do Now

- **Provide immigrants with the documentation** they need to make application for deferred action
 - Because many details are not public yet, people should consult the www.AdminRelief.org website for a document checklist.
- **Encourage people to seek out *qualified* legal assistance**
 - Find a licensed immigration attorney or BIA accredited representative:
 - <http://www.cliniclegal.org/affiliates/directory>
 - www.aialawyer.com
- **Share up-to-date information**
 - Immigrants cannot apply yet
 - www.adminrelief.org or www.cliniclegal.org/adminrelief
- **Encourage Catholics to respond to Action Alerts on Immigration Reform**
 - www.justiceforimmigrants.org
- **Pray:**

LOVING FATHER,
remembering that the Holy Family fled violence
and lived for a time as refugees,
we ask that you protect all refugee families fleeing
persecution,
and provide them a place of safety and comfort.

For children who are making perilous journeys,
often alone and without the protection of loved ones,
we ask that you reunite them with their families
and protect them from violence on the journey.

For all migrants,
that they not feel compelled to migrate
but have opportunities in their homeland
where they can thrive and live fully human lives.

Open our hearts so that we may provide hospitality
for those who come in search of refuge.
through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever. Amen.