

An Evening at the “Movies” (in this case, TED Talks)

Immigrant Justice Resource and Discussion Guide



This meeting kit is adapted from the resource and discussion guide provided by MSJC for use by Marianist communities (lay or religious) and parish groups who seek a deeper understanding and prayerful response to issues related to immigration justice in light of Catholic Social Teaching and the Marianist charism.

Introduction

There are five meeting kits dealing with Immigrant Justice, each of which is designed to be used for one evening. Choose one that seems most relevant or useful for your group and focus on that one at your meeting. All of the Immigrant Justice meeting kits use the same opening and closing prayers.

OPENING PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God, creator of all that is. While most of us live in safe homes with at least the basic necessities of life, we know that not everyone does. Those who suffer from inadequate income, food, or safety because of the color of their skin or the country

where they live are our neighbors. They may not live next door, but Jesus reminds us that even the stranger is our neighbor. Help us to be generous and welcoming as You have been to us. Show us how. Amen.

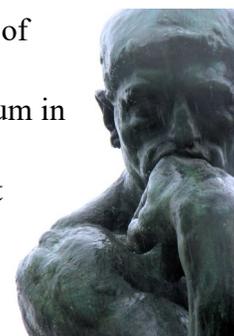
Food for Thought

These “Food for Thought” sections offer three video presentations on immigration. Consider the focus of each talk, preferably preview parts of each, and then choose one or at most two that you think will speak most effectively to your group. Note at the bottom of the screen on each of the videos are tabs that give more information. One of the tabs offers a way to print out a transcript of the talk, which participants in your discussion might find helpful.

Erika Pinheiro: *What’s Really Happening at the US-Mexico Border and How Can We Do Better?*
(13:55)

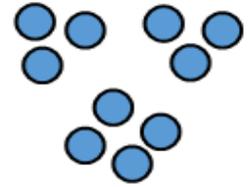
(https://www.ted.com/talks/erika_pinheiro_what_s_really_happening_at_the_us_mexico_border_and_how_we_can_do_better)

At the US-Mexico border, policies of prolonged detention and family separation have made seeking asylum in the United States difficult and dangerous. In this raw and heartfelt talk, immigration attorney Erika Pinheiro offers a glimpse into her daily work on both sides of the border and shares some of the stories behind the statistics—including her own story of being detained and separated from her son. It’s a clear-eyed call to remember the humanity that’s impacted by policy—and a warning: “History shows us that the first population to be vilified and stripped of their rights is rarely the last,” she says.



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are your feelings after viewing the video? What did you find most moving about the stories shared?
- What actions are you willing to take to address the issues raised in this video?
 - Become more informed about the issue of immigration. How will you do so? (One resource is the Immigrant Justice page of the MSJC website, <https://msjc.net/immigrant-justice-issue-team>.)
 - Make phone calls or email your elected representatives to encourage them to support more just immigration policies. Contact <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials> for phone or email information.
- Contact a local organization for information on volunteer opportunities.



Food for Thought

Juan Enriquez: “A Personal Plea for Humanity at the US/Mexico Border” (10:08)

(https://www.ted.com/talks/juan_enriquez_a_personal_plea_for_humanity_at_the_us_mexico_border#t-496)

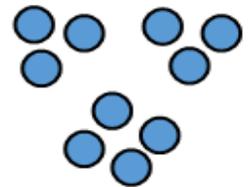
In this powerful, personal talk, author and academic Juan Enriquez shares stories from inside the immigration crisis at the US-Mexico border, bringing

this often-abstract debate back down to earth and showing what you can do every day to create a sense of belonging for immigrants. “This isn’t about kids and borders,” he says. “It’s about us. This is about who we are, who we the people are, as a nation and as individuals.”



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When have you noticed efforts to divide people by promoting a perspective of “us vs. them” when talking about immigrants?
- What could you do in your daily life to promote more respectful treatment of immigrants?



Food for Thought

Paul Kramer: “Our Immigration Conversation is Broken—Here’s How to Have a Better One” (16:24)

(https://www.ted.com/talks/paul_a_kramer_our_immigration_conversation_is_broken_here_s_how_to_have_a_better_one)

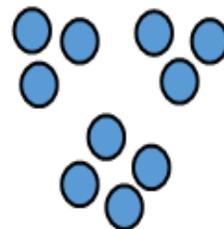
How did the US immigration debate get to be so divisive? In this informative talk, historian and

writer Paul Kramer shows how an “insider vs. outsider” framing has come to dominate the way people in the US talk about immigration. He suggests a set of new questions that could reshape the conversation around whose life, rights, and thriving matters.



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When you think of “us vs. them” or “being inside vs. being outside,” what feelings emerge from your personal experiences?
- Have you experienced discussions about immigration that assume that immigrants are outsiders?
- How might these personal experiences frame a better conversation about immigration?
- Mr. Kramer proposes reframing the immigration discussion to focus on three new areas:
 - Workers’ rights—how do existing policies make it harder for immigrant workers to defend themselves and easier to be exploited?
 - Responsibility—what role have the policies of rich countries like the US played in making it hard for many people in developing countries to stay in their home countries?
 - Equality—how can we build greater equality among nations by lessening the widening wealth gap around the world?



Do you agree? How can we move the immigration discussion in these directions?

CLOSING PRAYER

Merciful Jesus, as an infant you fled to Egypt with Mary and Joseph. You were a vulnerable family in a foreign land, looking for shelter and sustenance. Help us to welcome those like you who cross our borders

today. Give us hearts of compassion for all migrants; help us to shape a humane response to their needs and to pass laws and policies that respect the dignity of all who come to our country. Amen.

Some Actions to Consider

As Marianists and as Christians, what action might we commit to take (individually or as a community) to respond to this issue?

- Pray for immigrants, refugees, and all affected by the crisis at our borders.
- Study the immigration issue in more depth. Each person might take one of the resources or groups listed below and report back to the group.
- Participate in vigils, rallies, and other gatherings that advocate for immigrant justice.
- Visit or write to immigrants in detention facilities.
- Assist as volunteers at sites providing immigrant sanctuary.
- Become involved by writing letters to political leaders to uphold the dignity of life for asylum seekers and other migrants.

ACTION



Additional Resources

[Calling the Marianist Family to Renounce the Sin of Racism](#)

A call to action by the Marianist Social Justice Collaborative, with many specific action suggestions, that challenges the Marianist Family to commit to ending racism.

[Would Jesus, Mary and Joseph be Welcome in Our Country Today?](#)

A short reflection on this question

[Justice for Immigrants](#)

The campaign by the US Bishops to educate the public about Church teaching on migration and to create the political will for just and humane immigration reform.

[National Immigration Forum](#)

Advocates for the value of immigrants to our nation by promoting responsible federal immigration policy.

[Sojourners Immigration Action](#)

Immigration actions and resources from Sojourners, an interfaith social justice group.

[Interfaith Immigration Coalition](#)

A coalition of religious groups that calls on Congress and the Administration to enact humane and equitable immigration policy reforms.

[Hope Border Institute](#)

A Catholic-based organization that works on the Mexico/US border doing research, advocacy, and leadership development.

[Marianist Statement on Immigration Reform](#)

Sign up at <https://msjc.net/get-involved> to get the monthly *Justice Jottings* and *Immigration Update* from MSJC.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Related resources available at nacms.org include:

Things Marianist: "How Do Marianists Do Social Justice?", by Jim Vogt

The Marianist Founders and Social Justice, Felipe Melcher, SM

Introduction to Social Justice, William J. Ferree, SM

Marianist Charism and Our Life/Work Among the Poor, Joseph Jansen, SM

Marianist Community Meeting Kits are provided for the Marianist Family by the North American Center for Marianist Studies, NACMS. Additional kits, as well as other Marianist Studies resources, are available at <https://nacms.org/>.



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