

Resources for Catholic Teach-In on Migration

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the Catholic Teach-In on Migration (CTOM). The CTOM aims to create a “culture of encounter” that leads to greater understanding and empathy on the issue of undocumented immigration by bringing together undocumented immigrants and U.S. born Catholics in a prayerful, intimate, and safe place. Developed by the Jesuit Social Research Institute (JSRI), there is also has an explicit advocacy goal for these events: to engage more Catholics in the pews and in our schools in the struggle for immigration reform.

The Jesuit network’s [Campaign for Hospitality includes a CTOM toolkit](#) which contains all the documents (in easy to edit formats) you will need to conduct a CTOM at your parish or school. An ideal location for a CTOM is a large room, such as a parish hall or school cafeteria, with tables that can each seat six to ten people, including one or two brave undocumented immigrants willing to tell their stories, a bilingual interpreter, a table facilitator who will ask prepared questions and moderate the discussion, and six to eight U.S. born parishioners or students. (Everyone should have a name-tag, first names only. You may want to number nametags so that people who come together sit at different tables.)

The CTOM organizers will be responsible for engaging and recruiting key CTOM “personnel:”

- 1) **Undocumented immigrants** willing to tell their personal and often painful migration stories during small group listening sessions. Undocumented immigrant participants who have been recruited to speak at JSRI’s Teach-Ins include members of local immigrant organizing groups and adult ESL students from one of the organizer’s ESL class. The Peace and Justice Commission of the Archdiocese of St. Louis has worked closely with the local Catholic Charities to engage their immigrant teen clients (with parental permission) to share their stories with Catholic high school students.
- 2) **Interpreters.** JSRI was able to recruit bilingual Spanish/English speakers through local social justice organizations and universities to interpret at Teach-Ins.
- 3) **Table Facilitators.** JSRI initially used a list of Just-Faith graduates to recruit Table Facilitators. Leaders in the hosting parish can also be recruited to serve as Table Facilitators. Table Facilitators should receive a brief training in the basics of facilitating discussions and how to ask the “Questions for Listening Session” (included in the toolkit packet) to the immigrants at their assigned table. The questions provided in the toolkit for facilitator use are intended to help the immigrant tell her story. Table facilitators should be advised to use the questions only as prompts. If the immigrant is comfortable telling her story without prompts, then the facilitator should let the immigrant speaker tell her story in her way.
- 4) **Co-Leaders:** Two individuals comfortable in public speaking and facilitating large groups need to be recruited to lead the Teach-In. The co-leaders are identified as Speaker One and Speaker Two in the CTOM script. Ideally at least one of the co-leaders is Latinx.

A typical Catholic Teach-In on Migration lasts two hours, and most to date have been held in a church parish on a weekday evening from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. Outreach in the host parish is

essential to guaranteeing a good turnout. This packet contains a sample flier and bulletin announcement to promote a CTOM. Host parishes should provide light refreshments, such as cookies and bottled water, for participants at the event.

Evaluations of CTOMs have been overwhelming positive. Immigrants have often expressed how supported and affirmed they felt by the process, while U.S. born participants have frequently expressed gratitude for such powerful face-to-face encounters and how the experience opened their eyes to a reality they were mostly unaware. (Evaluation forms are included in this packet.)

JSRI staff have used the contact information from U.S. born participants they have collected at the Teach-Ins in several immigrant advocacy campaigns, including sign-on letters to support immigration reform legislation, emails to Congress to advocate for the resettlement of refugees from Syria, and to urge Teach-In alumni participation in public actions and media events that JSRI has organized to promote immigrant justice.

For more information on the Catholic Teach-in on Migration, please see this video by the Loyola Institute for Ministry which further explains how to host a Teach-In:

https://loyno.adobeconnect.com/_a1003397705/p6oe35zgu2e/?proto=true You are also welcome to contact the co-developers of the CTOM, JSRI Migration Specialist Sue Weishar at sweishar@loyno.edu or JSRI Associate Mary Baudouin at mbaudouin@jesuits.org with any questions you might have. Here are two articles from describing actual Catholic Teach-Ins on Migration:

http://www.loyno.edu/jsri/sites/loyno.edu.jsri/files/JSQ%20Fall%202014%20Teach%20In_0.pdf and <http://www.loyno.edu/jsri/sites/loyno.edu.jsri/files/May%202015.pdf>