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# SALT & LIGHT

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## ADVOCACY

At the root of all our Catholic advocacy efforts is the belief that all humans are created in the image and likeness of God and therefore should be treated with great dignity. Matthew 25 reminds us that the good and the harm we do to others is being done to Jesus himself. So whether you're traveling to D.C. for the March for Life this week, laying the groundwork for your parish's participation in advocacy for Dreamers during Public Policy Weekend, or working to create more just systems right here in Monroe County, we do so knowing that God is present in all those lives we seek to protect.

*"In the Catholic tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. As Catholics, we should be guided more by our moral convictions than by our attachment to any political party or interest group."* (Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, US Conference of Catholic Bishops)

## HOUSING

We've been hearing a lot in the news lately about Rochester housing issues. Here's a chance to learn more.

2017 Town Hall Meeting on Housing Justice  
Dugan Center, St. Mary's Church, 15 Church St.  
January 25; 6:30-7:30 pm

Tenants will share testimony and ask Leonard Skrill, from the NY State Commission of Homes and Community Renewal, for his response. Speakers will address tenant rights, homelessness, and expansion of housing options. Sponsored by the Catholic Worker House, House of Mercy, Take Back the Land, and the Tenants Union.

## MARCH FOR LIFE

Several busloads are heading to Washington D.C. from our diocese this week for the annual March for Life. You can add your voice for the unborn by advocating against the expansion of late term abortions in New York State. Go to <http://www.nyscatholic.org/nys-catholic-conference-action-center/>

## CHILDCARE

From MetroJustice and RocACTS: While Governor Cuomo has promised to reinstate funding cuts from 2017, allocated funds for early childcare remain grossly inadequate to cover even the most basic services for working parents, leaving workers underpaid, childcare facilities understaffed and parents without quality childcare.

On February 6th you can make your voice heard in Albany and remind your legislators that our children are our most important investment in the future.

Buses will be leaving at 6 am and returning around 7:30 pm - so be prepared for a full and rewarding day.

To register for the bus, go to <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScN7c9bLqmIcERkmS2wvFYs1TwvSIGKmFIAj3dtam-xiw2cQ/viewform>.

For more information, contact: Rynn Reed: [rynn.reed@gmail.com](mailto:rynn.reed@gmail.com) (214) 802-4420 or Mercedes Phelan: [mercedes@metrojustice.org](mailto:mercedes@metrojustice.org) (585) 397-3540

## DREAM ACT

On February 10/11, parishes throughout the Diocese of Rochester will participate in Public Policy Weekend by encouraging President Trump, our Senators and our Congressional Representatives to protect Americanized young people by passing a legislation that puts them on the path to citizenship. Parishes can choose to offer petitions, postcards or both which ask:

We members of the Catholic community in the Diocese of Rochester join with our United States Catholic Bishops to urge you to support the DREAM Act of 2017 (S.1615/H.R.3440) because we believe in the sacredness of the human person and in protecting the life and dignity of every human being.

The young people affected by The Dream Act, who were brought to the United States as children, are contributors to our economy, academic standouts in our universities, and leaders in our parishes.

They should not be forced to live in constant fear that they will be deported and separated from their families. It is both our moral duty and in our nation's best interest to protect them and help them reach their God-given potential.

## See p.2 for tips on holding a successful campaign.

"We need to participate for the common good. Sometimes we hear: a good Catholic is not interested in politics. This is not true: good Catholics immerse themselves in politics by offering the best of themselves so that the leader can govern."

*Pope Francis, 9/16/13, Morning Meditation*

## PUBLIC POLICY WEEKEND

Advocacy in parishes can be challenging and controversial, so it helps that Catholic leaders, from Pope Francis to Bishop Matano, at every level support our work on this issue. The U.S. Catholic Bishops, in cooperation with other Catholic organizations created the Justice for Immigrants Campaign (JFI) to support efforts to reform U.S. immigration policy. In addition to the materials posted by the Diocesan Public Policy Committee you can learn even more by going to JFI's pages: <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/what-we-are-working-on/immigration/daca-resource-page/>.

The Diocesan materials can be found at <http://www.dor.org/index.cfm/catholic-charities/public-policy/>. They include an introductory letter from Fr. Brian Cool, chair of the Public Policy Committee, a one-page backgrounder from JFI (for a cleaner copy go to <https://justiceforimmigrants.org/2016site/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Dream-Act-2017-1.pdf>), and both English and Spanish bulletin articles, announcements, prayers and petitions and petitions and postcards.

If you want specifics, you can find details about the Senate bill at <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/s1615> and the House bill at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/3440>.

### Postcards or Petition

The DPPC has offered parishes the option of using a petition or a postcard format for their advocacy. Which is right for your parish?

**Postcards:** The postcard sheet is set up with 4 postcards, one each for the President, each Senator and the individual's Representative. The signer needs to complete each postcard with their name and address. These will then be cut apart and sent in separate bundles to each addressee. This is probably the more effective advocacy if you think parishioners will take the time to complete them.

**Petition:** It's definitely easier to get people to fill out one line on a petition and these can also provide effective advocacy. However, if you have parishioners from multiple Congressional districts, it would be most effective if you offer petitions for each district. Rep. Slaughter's district includes most of Monroe County, but eastern and southern Monroe include parts of Chris Collins district, a bit of northwestern Monroe and all of Wayne County are in John Katko's district. Although an occasional out-of-district name is not a problem, if your parish draws heavily from multiple districts, you may want to set up separate petitions for each Representative. Please make 4 copies

of each petition so that we can deliver a copy to the President, each Senator and the individual's Representative.

### Suggested bulletin article for Jan 27/28

Public Policy Weekend—Support Dreamers Bishop Matano and the Diocese of Rochester Public Policy Committee are asking us to join them and the U. S. Catholic Bishops to advocate for passage of The Dream Act. During the weekend of February 10-11, \_\_\_\_\_ parish will provide an opportunity for parishioners to advocate on behalf of these young people.

In today's Gospel Jesus speaks in the synagogue and casts out an unclean spirit. Those who are present react with amazement. Later this becomes a cause of division among the people. As a nation we suffer many divisions including opinions about who we will accept as legal residents of our country. The DREAM Act has strong bi-partisan support because those who are eligible have already fulfilled certain conditions. They have been educated in our schools and earned a college degree or its equivalent in a two year training program or have served honorably in our military. Persons who qualify got through a step by step process including eight years of conditional residence to apply for legal permanent residence. Applying for citizenship status may require up to another five years of residence.

**Need Help? Have questions?** Contact Marvin Mich, [mmich@cfcrochester.org](mailto:mmich@cfcrochester.org) or (585) 465-2540 or Ruth Marchetti, [rmarchetti@cfcrochester.org](mailto:rmarchetti@cfcrochester.org) or (585) 267-9583.

In my Message for the 2018 World Day of Migrants and Refugees, I suggested that our pastoral response to the challenges of contemporary movements of migration can be expressed by four verbs: **to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate** [Emphasis added]. Welcoming means expanding legal and secure programs of reception for those who arrive, as well as offering suitable and dignified accommodations that guarantee their personal safety and access to basic services. Protecting involves offering trustworthy and verified information to migrants and refugees prior to their departure, defending their basic rights independent of their legal status, and watching over the most vulnerable, the young children. Promoting essentially means ensuring the conditions for the integral human development of all, migrants and natives alike. Integrating entails expanding opportunities for intercultural encounter, fostering mutual enrichment and promoting active citizenship.

Pope Francis, 9/22/17