

Diocesan Immigration Task Force Update

You may recall that at our last Diocesan Convention in October 2017, the delegates unanimously approved a **Resolution [link to PDF of the resolution]** to establish a Task Force on Immigration. The mandate of the Task Force is to further the Diocese's ministry in supporting migrants through the following activities:

- Identify ministry partners
- Coordinate related activities throughout the Diocese
- Support congregations in the education, discernment and response activities to support immigrants in the Diocese

In December, Bishop David named us, Deacon Nancy Key (St. James Cathedral, Fresno) and Tom Hampson (St. Paul's, Modesto), to co-chair the Task Force under the supervision of Canon Anna Carmichael. In January, the Task Force met for the first time. Our membership includes:

Northern Deanery

Lyn Morlan
Wil Colon
Edward Dondi
Amy Larsen
Tom Hampson (co-chair)

Central Deanery

Jim Mendez
Jim McDonald
Nancy Key (co-chair)

Southern Deanery

Jan Dunlap

Since January of this year, the Task Force has met monthly, alternating between face-to-face meetings in Fresno and conference calls. In addition to developing our identity as a team, our focus in the Task Force has been to discern attitudes and engagement toward immigrant issues within the congregations in our diocese, and to increase our own familiarity with issues being faced by immigrants in our diocese. To date we have:

- Conducted a survey of all the parishes regarding past and planned efforts on behalf of immigrants in their communities. See below for some parish highlights.
- Carried out an orientation to the work of Faith in the Valley - our primary partner in this work.
- Completed a "Know Your Rights" orientation with the Task Force and facilitated similar events in other parts of the Diocese. These orientations provide guidance on how to respond in case of a raid by ICE.

- Have established regular contact with the leaders of the with the L.A. Diocese Immigration Task Force and consulted with the Immigration and Refugee Policy staff at the Episcopal Office on Governmental Relations in Washington, DC.
- Established a Facebook page for the Task Force, [EDSJ: A Safe Place for All God's People](#). Please visit and "Like" it!
- Begun initial planning for a Task Force web page
- Developed ongoing **list** [link in FR article] of ways for local congregations to be involved in ministry to immigrants. Take a look!
- Received unsolicited contributions to date of \$4,000.
- Selected by Province VIII to receive a grant to fund a Non-Violence Training workshop with professional trainer. The training event is one Saturday, May 12, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Cathedral in Fresno. ***We have a few openings left. If you are interested in participating, please contact Deacon Nancy Key at deaconnancy@diosanjoaquin.org.*** There is no charge for the training. Lunch will be provided.

Some parish highlights:

- St. Paul's Modesto has collected over \$9000 to provide seed money for a Stanislaus County Legal Defense Fund for undocumented people who otherwise wouldn't be able to afford legal representation. They are looking to partner with other groups in the county to raise more funds. Faith in the Valley in Fresno has been able to raise over \$100,000 from non profit, corporate and private donations for a legal defense fund for Fresno County.
- St. James Cathedral has been working with Faith in the Valley in preparing a candidate forum for the Governor's race. St. Paul's in Modesto is working with Faith in the Valley to hold similar fora on local races.
- Parishioners from St. Paul's Modesto, St. Anne's in Stockton, St. James in Sonora, and St. James in Fresno have all participated in "Know your rights" trainings.
- Parishioners in Bakersfield have participated in training offered by Kern Welcoming and Extending Solidarity to Immigrants (KWESI) in order to be able to visit immigrants in detention at the Mesa Grande detention facility in Bakersfield and to help with post-release needs.
- St. Anne's in Stockton did a Lenten Study series on immigration issues using a video series from Trinity Church, Wall Street.
- St. James in Sonora and several other parishes have begun to regularly include the concerns of immigrants and the work of the Diocesan Task Force in their Sunday intercessory prayer.

As you can see, there are many ways to be involved! We will be providing updates on a more frequent basis now that the Task Force is established. Look for more in coming issues of Friday Reflections, including the EDSJ Task Force Idea Box:



EDSJ Task Force Idea Box

Source: <https://itep.org/immigration/>