

A CALL TO FAST AT LENT

Pray, Fast and Act for Citizenship: The Moral Obligation to Pass Immigration Reform

The struggles for freedom and dignity led by Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. and Cesar Chavez showed the world that faithful sacrifice and courageous nonviolent action can break the bonds of injustice. We now humbly attempt to follow their example to deepen our commitment to God's call, to ensure dignity and respect for all immigrants, including the 11 million undocumented immigrant brothers and sisters within our borders. Our faith requires nothing less.

Lent is a forty-day time period of sacrifice, fasting, repentance and spiritual preparation for Easter.

Today we pledge to fast every Wednesday during the season of Lent to repent from an immigration system that tears apart families. Together we fast as a prophetic witness to the moral urgency of commonsense immigration reform so that all might have the opportunity to be citizens with equal respect and dignity.

As the House of Representative makes halting gestures toward passing critical reforms and openly suggests waiting even longer, the time for patience has passed. Historically, our leaders of great social movements were told to wait and be patient, but they could not wait any longer, just as we cannot stand by idle as families are separated by deportations, students are trapped in limbo and workers are brutally exploited.

This is why we fast, pray and act because we are called by our faith, because we hear the cries of community members, and we will continue to mobilize to demonstrate that we will accept neither excuses nor delays. We will continue to pray, fast and act until the bonds of families are no longer broken and citizenship is no longer a dream, but a reality for 11 million aspiring Americans.