



*Scriptural reflections, linked as devotions with the suffering steps of refugees & immigrants.*

**Scripture:** *“Brothers and sisters, our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

**Reflection:** Citizenship implies a place of belonging, a home. Paul reminds us that our truest home is eternal life in God, but here on Earth we also need a place of belonging. Most of us are citizens of the country in which we were born. Some of us chose citizenship in another country, perhaps holding dual citizenship. Millions of undocumented persons in the U.S. today, who have fled poverty and violence in their home countries, have built lives here, raised families here, and contribute to the economy. They yearn for citizenship, but Congress has blocked their way—so they live in the shadows, still contributing to U.S. society but living in fear of deportation.



By the President’s executive order, thousands of young people who were brought here as children have received deferred action, DACA, but this is temporary. Another executive order in Nov. 2014 called to expand “DACA” and to establish “DAPA” (which would offer deferred action for parents of DACA recipients.) But, the order was challenged by 26 states and now awaits a decision by the Supreme Court. A number of faith organizations have filed an “Amicus Brief” with the Court in support of the President’s order of relief.

Those of us who are U.S. citizens are called to support and encourage those undocumented persons who may live, work and worship with us, and urge our legislators to offer them an earned path to citizenship.

**Story:** Roxana arrived in the U.S. on a tourist visa from El Salvador in 2002 and remained here after her visa expired, working as a housekeeper in hotels and cleaning countless houses to provide for her three daughters. American Friends Service Committee helped two daughters to gain DACA status, but Roxana never had another option. She was thrilled when DAPA was announced, looking forward to getting a better job and helping a daughter pay for college. When DAPA was put on hold, she was extremely disappointed and is fearful of being separated from her family. (From a prayer resource from CLINIC, Catholic Legal Immigration Network)

### **Action/Resources:**

1. Reflect on your own family story of immigration, whether it be recent, or a hundred years ago, or many generations ago. Be grateful for your citizenship.
2. Increase awareness in your worshipping community about the need for undocumented persons who have made a life here to be provided with an earned path to citizenship.
3. Join efforts to urge the Supreme Court to allow the executive order for extended DACA and DAPA to stand. See [www.interfaithimmigration.org/issues/administrativeaction](http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/issues/administrativeaction).

**Prayer:** Psalm 27: “Hear, O Lord, the sound of my call; have pity on me and answer me. . . I believe that I shall see the bounty of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord with courage.”



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