

LIGHT A CANDLE

Some mothers are forced to leave their children behind to give them a better life. Others must send their children away to keep them safe. There are those who live quiet, undocumented lives to protect their children, and those who care for them loudly and proudly in refugee camps and detention centers while awaiting their fate. All of their stories are bound together by strength, determination, faith, and love.

For immigrant, refugee, and all other mothers separated from their children by forces beyond their control, let us light a candle, take a moment of silence and honor the lives of these brave women.

SPACE

- Choose, a safe, public area
- Make sure there's enough room for unexpected arrivals
- Notify surrounding businesses (if necessary)

PEOPLE

- Invite mothers to speak
- Give as much notice as possible – make the time and date clear!
- Assign well-defined roles and instructions

MATERIALS

- Candles
- Lighters
- Megaphone/speakers
- Cameras/recording devices (Livestreaming is highly recommended!)

AGENDA

- Introduction: Why do this?
- Guest speakers /Read Stories of Moms
- Light candles
- Moment of silence
- Closing statements

A MOTHER'S STORY

I came to the United States from an African country in search of asylum. I was separated from my two older kids for about two to three years. I fled my country to escape genital mutilation while I was pregnant with my third child. Upon arrival, I immediately started the process with an attorney to file for asylum. Once granted asylum I applied for a travel document and sought help in filing for my children. After both children had been approved and had their immigrant visa added to their passports, I traveled with my youngest to an adjacent African country. My older children were brought to me by a family member and we traveled together to the U.S.

We arrived between the two travel bans at the beginning of this year and for some time I was not able to contact those who had helped me with my documents. They worried that I had not been able to board the flight. Eventually I was able to let them know we had made it into the country. I am now starting the process to become a permanent resident. My youngest is already a U.S. citizen, while the other two will be able to apply for their permanent residency once they've been here for a year.

We are a family of mixed immigration status, but we are finally reunited.

Story provided by Kentucky Equal Justice Center

HOW ELSE CAN I SUPPORT IMMIGRANT MOTHERS?



Collaborate

Find an immigrant-rights organization near you and work together!

Educate



Help others to learn about challenges faced by immigrant families.



Advocate

Civic action is integral to change: make sure your voice heard!

Participate

Here are some ways you can show your support for immigrants and refugees this Mothers Day:

- Visit **MamasDay.org** to send a free e-card to a Muslim or immigrant mother demonstrating your support and appreciation. The cards are commissioned by Forward Together, a non-profit devoted to strengthening cross-cultural networks.
- **MomsRising** will be delivering a letter of support for immigrants, along with mini, biodegradable Statues of Liberty carved out of wood to the White House, the Attorney General, and the Senate. You can sign on the letter by visiting <http://tinyurl.com/lazarusletter>

Do you know of another great way to support immigrant and refugee mothers? Let us know know on Twitter: @interfaithimm !