



BUILDING IMMIGRANT SOLIDARITY FROM THE GROUND UP: A FIELD GUIDE FOR PASTORS

Purpose

This guide provides a low-barrier, step-by-step roadmap for parish clergy who feel called to support immigrant communities but currently lack established local networks, activist connections, or specialized infrastructure.

Step 1: Ground the Pulpit in Sacred Hospitality

- **Theological Foundation:** Proclaim the truth that the Incarnation is fundamentally an immigration story—Christ entering human history as an exile fleeing state violence into Egypt (Matthew 2:13–14).
- **Liturgical Alignment:** Utilize liturgical frameworks such as Bishop Greer’s homiletic series, *"Walking with Immigrants"* and *"Standing with Immigrants,"* to gently connect the Holy Eucharist to our sacred obligation toward the *Anawim* (the vulnerable).
- **Pastoral Posture:** Frame solidarity not as partisan politics, but as the lived sacramental duty of the Church.

Step 2: Host Low-Pressure Parish Entry Points

- **Liberation Cinema:** Host an informal film night in a parish hall or online to view educational documentaries such as “*Which Way Home*” or “*SB 1070: The Faces*.”
- **Justice Cafés & Parlor Chats:** Hold casual coffee discussions after liturgy to talk about community realities, human dignity, and practical compassion.
- **Identify "Second Tier" Leadership:** Use these gatherings to discover quiet champions in the pews—teachers, health workers, or empathetic parishioners willing to step into moderate-to-high responsibility.

Step 3: Activate the "Citizen Sector" of the Twin-Shield Model

- **Hospitality and Mutual Aid:** Prepare citizen parishioners to form supportive circles through a *Covenant of Solidarity*, committing to walk alongside vulnerable families with hospitality and practical aid.
- **Legal & Contingency Toolkits:** Distribute tangible resources prepared by the OFJHE, including emergency Power of Attorney (POA) guides, document organization plans, and food security guides.
- **Health and Welfare:** Explore simple grassroots initiatives like community gardens, communal kitchens, or connecting with *Promotoras de Salud* (Community Health Promoters).

Step 4: Form Local Ecumenical and Civic Partnerships

- **Engage Existing Workers:** Contact local ecumenical colleagues (such as neighborhood Lutheran or mainline clergy), faith councils, or community legal aid groups.
- **Offer Parish Space:** Often, established immigrant rights groups simply need safe meeting rooms, storage for supplies, or hospitality for families.
- **Listen and Align:** Offer parish assets to fill existing gaps rather than trying to build a separate organization from scratch.

Step 5: Connect to the International Office & Diocesan Extensions

- **Regional Backing:** Connect with your local Diocesan Extension of the Office of Faith, Justice, and Humanitarian Efforts to share resources and collective deliberations.
- **National Alignment Summit:** Participate (or send a designated parish delegate) in the **National Action-Oriented Webinar** on **September 11, 2026, at 8:00 PM (EST)** to receive ongoing tactical toolkits and national peer support.