



**Nine Immigration Themed Resources for Lent—
Encouraging Faith Commitments in Solidarity with Refugees & Immigrants**

Focus: Unaccompanied Children & Expedited Removals

Scripture: *Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. John 12:24-26*

Reflection: Sometimes, people say, “I did my part” for a particular cause. Today, immigrants have no right to an attorney in immigration court; asylum seekers are locked up for more than 2 years before they receive a hearing and expedited removals, deportations without a hearing, occur frequently. As long as these injustices continue, we, who enjoy freedoms and comforts, have not done our part for justice for immigrants. While we do not have to give our lives, God calls us to sacrifice, as needed, to prevent injustice.



Story: As an immigration lawyer, I worked in the Rio Grande Valley when the large wave of mothers and children and unaccompanied minors came across the border from the Northern Triangle. Children were taken from non-related adults at the border to prevent trafficking; but then they would become unaccompanied minors. And no undocumented person has a right to a lawyer or a jury in immigration proceedings. No exceptions. I once watched a toddler crawl around the floor under the defendant table while the judge scratched his head because she had no attorney. There was no one to speak on behalf of this baby. The case was a pathetic, telling, farce. How do you deport a baby? Or even a teenager? To where do we deport them? Ironically, I suspected that, if I posted this story, many people would offer to adopt that child. There is room in our hearts and homes for all God’s children.

Actions/Resources:

- ⇒ Call your Congressman/woman to tell them, as a person of a faith, you believe immigrants deserve quicker hearings and attorney representation.
- ⇒ In order to sympathize with those who lack a voice, spend one day in Lent and fast from giving an opinion or preference. Let it be done unto you.
- ⇒ Educate yourself regarding immigrant attorney access rights. Go to: <http://www.immigrantjustice.org/index.php/issues/access-counsel>
- ⇒ Read about 98,000 Texas asylees and others in jail who have been waiting for their hearing for more than 2 years: <https://www.austinchronicle.com/news/2018-01-26/immigrant-women-stuck-in-detention/>
- ⇒ Read about ways you can be an advocate for change: <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/10-ways-youth-can-engage-in-activism>

Prayer:

“First, they came for the Communists, and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out because I was not a Socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me.” *Amen.*

—Pastor Martin Neimuller



**INTERFAITH
IMMIGRATION
COALITION**

*Devotion by Sister Mary Ellen Lacy, Daughters of Charity
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