



**Nine Immigration Themed Resources for Lent—
Encouraging Faith Commitments in Solidarity with Refugees & Immigrants
Focus: Immigrant Detention & Family Separation**

Scripture: *“Be mindful of prisoners as if sharing their imprisonment, and of the ill-treated as of yourselves, for you also are in the body.” Hebrews 13:3*

Reflection: There are over 200 immigrant detention centers across the U.S. They hold fathers, mothers, and children, often separated from one another. Some recently crossed the border and asked for help, while others were picked up by ICE for being undocumented. Both are subject to harrowing conditions within these centers, some of which border on human rights abuses.



Women in California's largest immigrant detention center, in Adelante. Detainees in orange denote a non-felony crime. Business Insider, 5/9/17. Photo credit: Lucy Nicholson, Reuters.

No detainees are entitled to legal representation because they are not U.S. citizens. This means that they are often pressured to sign documents they don't understand and end up being deported, even though some are eligible for asylum or forgiveness of deportation. As we fight against a prison-industrial complex that swallows the lives of our neighbors and friends, we also pray for those who are incarcerated for simply wanting a better life.



Maribel & family at left before her deportation. At right, faith partners in Cincinnati speak out for Maribel's return to her family.

Story: Maribel Trujillo had been in the U.S. for 15 years when she was detained outside her home. She had been given a work permit by the previous presidential administration because she was seen as a low priority for deportation, but that was not enough to protect her under the new administration's policies. Maribel did not have a chance to say goodbye to her children before being transferred to detention center. Her detention led to social media campaigns, vigils, and comments from prominent figures, but Maribel was deported in April 2017. Although Maribel's family is suffering without her, they were pleased to learn that her case would be re-examined in 2018. A panel of judges found that her deportation ignored evidence supporting a legitimate fear of returning to Mexico.

Actions/Resources:

- ⇒ Sign up for [e-mails from Detention Watch Network](#), a non-profit dedicated to exposing the issues behind detention centers and organizing around them. Their website also contains numerous factsheets to educate yourself and your community on detention centers.
- ⇒ Read here to learn more about criminalization of immigrants, even though immigrants are less likely to commit crimes: <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/criminalization-immigration-united-states>.
- ⇒ Follow recent developments in Maribel's case here: <http://wapo.st/2CaSLfK>, and continue to hold her in prayer.

Prayer: God, give us the strength to break the chains of those dreaming of freedom, safety, community, and justice. Their cries are muffled through the haze of ignorance and willful obscurity, but we will still walk towards them. We will help end their cries by tearing down walls of greed and hatred and building bridges of compassion and unity. *Amen.*

**INTERFAITH
IMMIGRATION
COALITION**

*Devotion by Paola Marquez, Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.
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