

Concerned about asylum seekers and migrants being detained in substandard conditions? Want to see families reunited?

Members of our parish have been moved to research this issue and identify ways you can voice your concerns and lend tangible support to those working on behalf of asylum seekers and migrants. St. Luke's Advocacy Council believes we have a scriptural basis for sharing this information with the parish.

"Do not mistreat foreigners who are living in your land. Treat them as you would an Israelite, and love them as you love yourselves. Remember that you were once foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 19:33-36 Good News Translation (GNT)

Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

Matthew 19:13-15 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

We realize the broader immigration issue is a large and complex one. We also believe that many will agree with the Scripture's directives to love others as ourselves and to care for the children. Clearly, we can do better as a nation in how we provide accommodations and services to those in our care as they await the outcome of the judicial process.

If you feel moved to take action, here are some things you can do today:

- 1. Call your local, State, and Federal representatives and voice your feelings on the practices against immigrants at the border and throughout our country!**
- 2. Donate Money to Legal Services Organizations Representing Families and Children**
 - ActBlue has compiled a list of groups actively working to assist families at the border. You can donate to each group individually, or donate to ActBlue's Kids at the Border page, which evenly splits your gift among the organizations:
<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/kidsattheborder>
 - The American Bar Association lists how and where lawyers can donate their time:
<https://abaforlawstudents.com/2018/06/20/law-students-volunteer-opportunities-immigration/>
 - Lawyers for Good Government suggests that you contribute to the Project Corazon Travel Fund to send more lawyers (particularly Spanish-speaking immigration lawyers) to the detention centers and refugee camps: <https://www.lawyersforgoodgovernment.org/travel-fund-overview>
 - You can pledge your frequent flier miles to help send more lawyers to the border:
<https://www.lawyersforgoodgovernment.org/donatemiles>
 - ACLU works in courts, legislatures, and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties that the Constitution and the laws of the United States guarantee everyone in this country: <https://www.aclu.org/>
 - Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services (RAICES), a Texas non-profit which is using donations to pay the bond (between \$1,500 and \$10,000) for

parents held in detention, as well as related legal fees: <https://www.raicetexas.org/donate/> and our own Laurel Wells Thompson has started a fundraising team at <https://Instagram.com/CribsNotCages>

- Texas Civil Rights Project is raising litigation funds to assist separated families: <https://texascivilrightsproject.org/donate/>
- Kids In Need of Defense (KIND) protects unaccompanied children who enter the US immigration system alone to ensure that no child appears in court without an attorney: <https://supportkind.org/>
- ProBAR (South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project), based in Harlingen, Texas, provides free legal services to detained asylum-seekers. Recruits, trains, and coordinates volunteer lawyers, law students, and legal assistants: https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_interest/immigration/projects_initiatives/south_texas_pro_bono_asylum_representation_project_probar/

3. Volunteer or Give Money to Direct Services Organizations Working with Immigrants

- Registered nurses can sign up with National Nurses United to volunteer their services and potentially be deployed to immigrant detention centers: <https://www.nationalnursesunited.org/rnrn-deployments>
- Volunteer with Freedom for Immigrants to support their hotline, translation or interpretation, visiting people in detention, volunteer recruitment, fundraising, hosting and supporting asylum seekers in your community, providing transport, and other opportunities to help end immigrant detention: <https://www.freedomforimmigrants.org/join-us-1/>
- Support Annunciation House, which serves migrants at the El Paso Border: <https://annunciationhouse.org/>

4. Get Involved in Your Own Community: Support Immigrants & Denounce Inhumane Practices Against Immigrants

Atlanta is one of the cities targeted for ICE raids. Stewart Detention Center in Lumpkin, GA imprisons nearly 2,000 people. Irwin County Detention Center in Ocilla, GA imprisons more than 1,200 people. Robert A. Deyton Detention Facility in Lovejoy, GA imprisons nearly 800 people. Six Georgia counties have signed 287(g) agreements allowing local law enforcement to serve as an enforcement arm of ICE. Read more here:

<https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/287g-program-immigration>. Local organizations advocating on behalf of immigrants include:

- **El Refugio:** Opened a hospitality house offering meals and lodging at no cost, as well as offering friendship and comfort to the loved ones of immigrants who are detained at Stewart Detention Center in Lumpkin, GA: <https://www.elrefugiostewart.org/>
- **Tahirih Justice Center:** Advocates for women and girls fleeing violence in their home countries. Participates in national and local advocacy efforts to protect immigrant communities: <https://www.tahirih.org/about-us/>
- **Catholic Charities:** Assists local agency efforts to provide compassionate and professional care to meet the immediate, intermediate and long-term needs of immigrants and refugees. www.catholiccharitiesatlanta.org