

Who Is My Neighbor?

Stories of Migrants and Refugees

DISCUSSION GUIDE

PREPARATION

It is recommended that you watch the documentary in advance of your event to familiarize yourself with the sections and identify good points at which to take breaks. The size of your group and length of your event will help to determine your needs. Watching the documentary in advance may also give you ideas for questions that are relevant to your discussion group. Do not feel you have to discuss all of the questions; members of your group may want to explore fewer questions but in more depth.

Note: The display of English or Spanish subtitles is optional. Some interviewees speak heavily accented English, so English subtitles may help. Please refer to your device for viewing options.

PROPOSED AGENDA

The United States

Louisiana

New Jersey

Break

Around the World

The Philippines

Rome

Break

The United States

Mississippi

Arizona

INTRODUCTION

Introduce yourself and the documentary. You may wish to say why this documentary was selected as a discussion topic and who chose it.

Let participants know how your event will unfold, whether and when breaks will occur, and when the discussion or discussions will take place.

Before the start of the film, ask participants how they feel about migrants and refugees, but decide ahead of time whether you want them to silently think about this or share their feelings aloud to the group.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

PART 1: THE UNITED STATES

Louisiana

- How did it make you feel when you heard that Rigoberto had been declared by the government as a “high-priority removal”?
- How did you feel when Rigoberto was deported to Mexico?

New Jersey

- Discuss the point of view of Fr. Timothy Graph, who said, “I’m not involved in politics. I’m involved in morality.”
- Mical Alvarado Diaz, the DACA recipient from Ciudad Juárez near El Paso, said her parents came to the United States because the 1990s was not a good time for women in Mexico. Do you remember this time? How do you feel about her parents’ decision?
- Did you know “there is no line” meant a DACA recipient is not eligible for a green card solely on the basis of being a DACA recipient?
- Discuss Joseph Cardinal Tobin’s statement, “The law has been broken, but it is a broken law”?
- Discuss Cardinal Tobin’s statement, “The question is not so much ‘who is my neighbor?’ It’s rather, ‘How am I to be a neighbor, especially to those in greatest distress?’”

Break

PART 2: THE REST OF THE WORLD

The Philippines

- In this section’s introduction, Fr. Charles Vijay Kumar asks about your point of view. Do you think immigration is a worldwide problem or do you tend to see it from your local perspective? Does your opinion differ depending on how many immigrants come to your local area?
- Did you know the Philippine government works to find jobs abroad for its citizens as domestic workers? What do you think of that policy?

Rome

- Did you know half the population of Toronto comes from a country other than Canada? What do you think of Toronto's policy? Is your town more like Toronto (new) or Rome (ancient, with long cultural identity)?
- The Most Reverend Michael Brehl, CSsR, asked, "Are we afraid of migrants because they are different than us? Do we expect migrants to be the same as us?" He concluded with, "I think until we meet people and talk to them, it's going to be impossible to solve the present crisis." Discuss.
- Bishop Borys Gudziak, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Eparchy of Paris, said that when we have a personal encounter with someone from a different background or tradition, we come to see our common, God-given dignity in humanity. He thinks that place of encounter needs to be carefully nurtured and that the encounter be not like this [fists hitting each other] but that it be a loving touch and embrace [hands embracing].
- *[Ask participants to reflect on the following. Read the list slowly so they can visualize.]* Pope Francis said, "In many cases, people are forced to move: by conflict, natural disasters, persecution, climate change, violence, extreme poverty, and inhumane living conditions."
- Pope Francis concludes, "Our shared response can be expressed by four action verbs: to welcome, to protect, to promote, and to integrate." Can you think of ways we can practice what His Holiness asks us to do?

Break

PART 3: THE UNITED STATES

Mississippi

- What did you feel when you heard Vicky Lubiani say people thought Martín was the caretaker of the house? *[Pause for answers.]* Did your view of migrants change a bit when you learned he was the homeowner?
- Claudia Henson, one of the three people interviewed in the church, said, "If a person is illegal, they should be deported." After learning of the work of the Redemptorist priests and brothers, she changed her mind and said, "They might be illegal, but they should be treated with compassion." Discuss.

- Fr. Charles Vijay Kumar asked the three people in the church if they were concerned they might be labeled based on their view of the migrant situation. Did the responses of the three people mirror your own understanding of Catholic social teaching??
- Derrick Fauchaux, the third of the three people interviewed in the church, said, "Whatever the Church stands for, the Church stands for. That's not a 'political thing.' That's a 'being a Christian thing.'" What do you think of his statement?
- Vicky Lubiani said, "The US is founded on the principles of immigration to 'Give me your tired, your poor.' I don't know what it is like for them [migrants and refugees] to come here. I don't know the process." Do you feel like you know the process? Do you get a sense of the fear of newcomers to our country?

Arizona

- How did you feel when you saw the Border Control dump the drinking water that was placed by volunteers?
- What did you think of the work of Fr. Ricardo Elford, CSsR, and the work of the Redemptorists in the Tucson desert?
- Fr. Elford said, "Fear, fear, fear. People living in these gated communities and listening to American talk radio where there is a lot of racism. Good people get this fear so that a brown face, a black face is trouble." Can you picture the people who fear non-whites? Do you empathize with their fear?
- Billy Peard, the lawyer in Tucson, said, "The justification in the last twenty years, in this scenario, has always been: 'There are people who come here legally and they are deserving. And there are other people who come here not legally and they are not deserving.' To that argument I would say, 'We have used the law many times in the past, in our own history, to accomplish the same goal—to divide people, to designate some people as deserving and other people as not deserving.'" How do you interpret this explanation?
- Does America follow the words of Emma Lazarus that are emblazoned on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty? ("Give me your tired, your poor. Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.")