

R3: A Resolution for Consideration the 209th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio

Submitted by the vestry of the St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Maumee Ohio and the rector, The Rev. Dr. J Paul Board

DIGNITY, NOT HATE, NOT MASS DEPORTATION, NOT SILENCE

*He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.
(Lk 4:18-19)*

Resolved, that this 209th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio approves the following resolution for submission to the 82nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, that the 209th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio as people of faith, honor our baptismal covenant to seek and serve Christ in all persons loving our neighbors as we love ourselves, to strive for justice and peace among all people and to respect the dignity of every human being. Therefore we affirm (reaffirm) our support for Migration with Dignity, the immigrant justice policy adopted by the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church (Resolution C031); and be it further

Resolved, that "dignity" is not just a word, but rather a framework of principles declaring that all migrants have: 1) a universal right of movement; 2) the right to be secure from arbitrary and abusive detention, forced labor and sexual violence; 3) the right of equality; 4) the right to a basic quality of life; 5) the right to access services; and 6) civil and political rights. Therefore, we oppose all policies and actions that deprive migrants of these rights including, but not limited to, the U.S. Government's current program of mass detention and deportation; and be it further

Resolved, that we oppose U.S. Government actions that: 1) halt refugee resettlement programs; 2) terminate temporary protected status (TPS) and humanitarian parole for many categories of migrants; 3) sharply restrict migrants' ability to seek asylum; 4) conduct mass arrests of migrants; 5) deport migrants without due process to foreign prisons and countries other than their countries of origin; 6) give the green light to enforcement within houses of worship, schools and hospitals; 7) defy U.S. courts by failing to carry out their orders; and 8) harass or detain public officials for investigating detention facilities or accompanying migrants to court hearings;

Resolved, that the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio call upon all Episcopalians in the diocese to advocate that local, state, national and international governing bodies promote Migration With Dignity by cancelling and repealing these actions and

programs and by enforcing existing laws and policies on behalf of refugees, migrants, asylum seekers and displaced persons and enacting new laws and policies guaranteeing their welcome, protection and integration into our communities; and be it further

Resolved, that, acknowledging the current state of emergency for migrants and their families and the daunting challenges facing migration ministries across the Church, we urge the presiding bishop, president of the House of Deputies and the Executive Council of the Church to establish the Task Force on Migration With Dignity as called for in the Migration with Dignity resolution (C031) adopted by the 81st General

Convention to: 1) inventory current assets and resources of the Church for serving and supporting migrants; 2) conduct a gap analysis to identify missing elements that could strengthen the Church's response; 3) recommend a whole-of-church strategy for supporting migrants and for information and resource sharing; and be it further

Resolved, that we urge the presiding bishop, president of the House of Deputies and the Executive Council to establish an annual Migration with Dignity Sunday for The Episcopal Church during the season of Epiphany as called for in resolution C031; and be it further

Resolved, that the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio is invited to participate in a Migration with Dignity formation program to engage Episcopalians in this diocese with the plight of refugees, migrants, asylum seekers and displaced persons and encourage actions that can be undertaken to assist them and advocate on their behalf; and be it further

Resolved, that the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio strongly oppose the 287(g) program, which delegates federal immigration enforcement authority to local law enforcement, resulting in racial profiling, erosion of community trust, and separation of families. We call for the immediate termination of all current 287(g) agreements in our state and urge local jurisdictions to reject participation in any form of this program. We affirm that public safety depends on trust between immigrant communities and local authorities, and that such trust is undermined when police act as immigration agents.

Rationale:

This resolution is an affirmation and continuation of the Diocese of Ohio 2023 R-3, A Resolution to affirm Migration with Dignity, a set of immigration policies that assure equal and respectful treatment of all people. 2023 R-3 passed at the Diocese of Ohio Convention and also the dioceses of Chicago, Eau Claire, El Camino Real, Fond du Lac, Michigan, Milwaukee, Northern California, Rio Grand and Washington, DC. The resolution became C031 and passed at the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church 2024.

The current resolution under consideration was drafted by the Episcopal Migration Caucus of the Episcopal Church. The intent is for the Diocese of Ohio to join other dioceses in promoting

this resolution at the 2027 General Convention. Currently, the other dioceses considering it are Washington DC, Chicago, Northern California, Los Angeles, Long Island, and the Convocation in Europe. More will join over the next year.

The Episcopal Church has a long-standing commitment to human rights as they pertain to just treatment of the world's refugees, asylum-seekers, and all migrants.

This resolution is needed to reaffirm the principles of Migration with Dignity. They are even more important than in 2024. The original Migration with Dignity resolution defined a human based approach to global migration that is grounded in the teachings of Jesus and our Baptismal covenant and are summarized in this resolution.

Even more than reaffirmation, the situation today is urgent. The US Government's approach to immigration has become far more punitive and oppressive. Our immigrant siblings are living in fear. It is time to take action on the practical steps outlined in the original resolution. C031 2024 General Convention said a Migration with Dignity Task Force should be empowered immediately to begin the important work of strengthening our church's efforts on behalf of immigrant justice. Migration with Dignity Sunday from the previous resolution should be established on the official church calendar as a reminder and educational tool for all Episcopalians. These steps are long overdue and we urge the church to follow through on the commitments made at the 2024 General Convention.