

STUDY GUIDE

A MAP OF FAITH

Sharing the Journey with the Uprooted

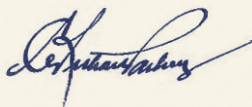
EPISCOPAL MIGRATION MINISTRIES INVITES YOU TO SHARE THE JOURNEY OF THE UPROOTED WITH *A MAP OF FAITH*

Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM), the refugee resettlement and immigrant advocacy program of the Episcopal Church, is pleased to share with you the stories of both hosts and guests in an incredible ministry of hospitality. Every day, we are inspired by the work of Episcopalians with some of the world's most vulnerable persons who are refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, and, most recently, hurricane evacuees. And we believe *A Map of Faith* will raise critical questions for you about ministry, spiritual journeying, and the prospects for transformation through your own encounters with the stranger in our midst.

It is our hope that the study guide for *A Map of Faith* will encourage the viewer to more deeply explore the benefits of ministry with the uprooted. A downloadable version of the study guide and additional resources can be found on EMM's website at www.episcopalchurch.org/emm.

May your willingness to journey with the uprooted lead you on a road of spiritual discovery!

Faithfully,



C. Richard Parkins
Director, Episcopal Migration Ministries

INTRODUCTION: A MAP OF FAITH STUDY GUIDE

A Map of Faith is a video resource for faith formation that explores the theme of spiritual journeying as it examines the church's ministry of accompaniment with uprooted persons. It begins at the place of encounter between those forced onto a new path – refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, and hurricane evacuees – and those who assist them, and follows them along the road they travel together. It demonstrates how by reaching out to a few of the many millions who have fled violence, persecution, and/or circumstances beyond their control, faithful Episcopalians find themselves on a new spiritual course.

The video is 45 minutes in length, and can be viewed in its entirety or in 15-minute segments, or three chapters. Because Hurricane Katrina brought the reality of uprootedness onto the shores of the United States, each chapter of *A Map of Faith* opens with an account of Gulf Coast evacuees who found hope in the generous welcome extended to them by Episcopal churches.

The study material provided here for each of the chapters is designed to support a 30-minute discussion session. Material for longer and more probing dialogue and links to related resources are available on the Episcopal Migration Ministries website at www.episcopalchurch.org/emm.

CHAPTER 1: JOURNEYING WITH EVACUEES AND REFUGEES

This section explores what is both common to and distinctly different about the experience of hurricane evacuees and overseas refugees. It opens with the welcome of Gulf Coast evacuees from Hurricane Katrina by a church in Madison, Connecticut, and continues with stories of how youth in the Diocese of Kentucky and two parishes in the Diocese of Lexington embrace the challenge and gift of showing hospitality to overseas refugees.

Spiritual Formation Themes

Spiritual Growth in Adolescence; Empathy; Faithful Risk; Hospitality; Seeking and Serving Christ in All Persons; Accompaniment; Fellowship through Shared Ministry

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How has the experience of Katrina evacuees influenced your understanding of the displaced from all over the world? Has your notion of forced flight changed? What questions does this raise about the intersection of government policy, church teaching and human tragedy?
2. *A Map of Faith* describes different faith journeys. How would you describe the map of your spiritual life? Where have the turning points been? Have moments of unexpected crisis informed your faith experience?
3. Read the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10.29-37), a passage that reveals much about the nature of radical hospitality. Why do you think those with respectable credentials passed by the half-dead man? How do you identify with the pain and suffering of others? Has your willingness to offer hospitality to strangers changed in any way since 9/11 and the climate of fear it has created?

Refugees

- Cross borders into other countries; are often forcibly displaced.
- Flee persecution and violence.
- There are 10-15 million refugees and 25 million more internally displaced persons in the world today.

4. As you listened to refugees' stories in *A Map of Faith*, what touched you most deeply? Do you agree that the church should play a role in assisting refugees? If so, what should that role be?

But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.

Luke 10:33

CHAPTER 2: JOURNEYING WITH MIGRANTS

The story of a Lawrence, Massachusetts, parish reaching out to hurricane evacuees who are undocumented immigrants leads to a consideration of the strain of migration on our nation and on migrants lives and culminates in an expression of hope for immigrant justice at the U.S.-Mexico border by churches in the Diocese of Arizona.

Spiritual Formation Themes

Caring for the Stranger; Serving Christ in Others; Spiritual Courage; Acting in Faith

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Try to put yourself in the place of those who make the decision to cross the border into the United States. What kinds of pros and cons might weigh most heavily in such a decision? Have you ever been in a situation in which you had to make a similarly difficult decision and step out in faith into unknown territory for a larger good, such as love of family? How does your experience influence your attitude toward migrants?
2. In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus tells us that when we feed, cloth, welcome and visit "the least of these," we are doing the same to him. Likewise, when we neglect to serve others, we neglect Jesus. What are the obstacles, personal and societal, that prevent us from serving our neighbors in ways Jesus asks us to?
3. The witness and hospitality shown by church folk in this section was sometimes tangible, as in the clinic, and sometimes more symbolic, as in the prayer march along the border. Reflect on the approaches you and/or your parish have taken when responding to challenging social problems.
4. Marchers wore bright yellow T-shirts proclaiming, in English and in Spanish, "God Has No Borders." The idea raises questions about how community is formed. Who is included and who is excluded? If you were to design a T-shirt to promote an immigration policy for the United States, what would it say and how would it look? How would it reflect scriptural and church teachings?
5. As you consider the reality faced by migrants in the U.S., what do you find most compelling? And what most surprising?

Migrants

- Enter the U.S. to work, some without proper documentation; are vital to the health of our nation's economy.
- Face the threat of detention and deportation.
- 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. are denied basic rights; hundreds perish each year attempting to cross the U.S.-Mexico border.

I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

Matthew 25:35

CHAPTER 3: JOURNEYING WITH ASYLUM SEEKERS

The concern shown for a Katrina evacuee by one parish is a window into a long tradition of committed service by dozens of congregations in the Diocese of Massachusetts sharing the struggles of those who seek protection in the U.S. from certain violence against them in their home countries.

Spiritual Formation Themes

Embracing the Unknown; Sharing the Suffering of Others; Discerning a Call to Ministry; Celebrating the Successes of Others

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In Leviticus 19:33-34, God commands His people to love the alien as they love themselves, reminding them that they were once aliens in Egypt. In what ways have you felt the sting of alienation and how has it informed your treatment of the outsider?
2. The EMM logo is an image of Joseph, Mary and the infant Jesus fleeing to Egypt from the threat of Herod's persecution, as described in Matthew 2:13-23. How does it feel to think about the Holy Family as asylees?
3. In this section, a parishioner wonders if she was called by God to assist the uprooted. Reflect on times when you felt a sense of call for service in God's mission. Can responding to the uprooted be a ministry opportunity on your faith journey?
4. Boston-area parishes serve asylum seekers effectively through clusters, which are groups of parishes focusing on the same ministry. Is this model of joining with other churches for a common purpose right for your parish? Why or why not?
5. The international dinner sponsored by Refugee Immigration Ministry is a celebration of many things: hospitality; diversity; the end of a long, unpredictable road to safety; trust and faith; the gift of the stranger in our midst. How does your parish celebrate its participation in bringing about God's kingdom?

Asylum Seekers

- Arrive in the U.S., often without proper documentation.
- Make claims for protection, because they are denied basic rights in their home countries.
- *New laws threaten to dismantle the right to due process for asylum seekers and diminish the U.S. tradition of hospitality to the most vulnerable.*

When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.

Leviticus 19:33-34