

“Pray for the *DREAM*”
Sample Agenda and Elements of a Powerful Event

There are several key components you may want to include in your agenda that can help ensure your event is meaningful and powerful including:

1. **An opening and closing prayer and/or reflection** that connects to the moral calling to support immigrants and DREAM Act eligible youth. Make sure that this prayer and/or reflection connects the values and the prophetic voice of the Church to the work we are doing to support our immigrant brothers and sisters.
2. **Introduction and Sharing:** – A brief introduction of who you are and who you represent (your JFI Committee/Parish/Diocese/etc.), and what motivates you to work in support of the Justice for Immigrants (JFI) campaign and DREAM Act eligible youth.
3. **Testimonies/Stories** – Find at least two or three DREAM Act eligible youth or friends and allies (teachers, pastors, social workers, etc.) who can share their stories about how this issue affects them. Make sure they are prepared and that their testimonies are brief (preferably less than two minutes long). It is important that their presentation is heartfelt and clearly depicts the injustices that undermine Catholic values. Connecting an otherwise political issue to a human face and a personal story can truly change hearts and minds. The human face of suffering may be some of the best education our parishioners can receive. We must make sure, however, to protect people and let them know the risks that they may be taking if they choose to share their stories. It is important to give people the option to use a pseudonym, to speak behind a screen, or have friends or family members share their stories on their behalf. The testimonies of DREAM students and youth are often the most compelling for those that are on the fence regarding the immigration issue.
4. **JFI Research, Messaging and Values** – Please refer to the JFI website (www.justiceforimmigrants.org) and the JFI Parish Kit to view DREAM Act resources as well as tools for organizing, updated issue briefs, statements from the Catholic bishops regarding immigration and much more. Here are some quick links:
 - Myths and Facts about the DREAM Act:
<http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/documents/DREAM-Act-Myths.pdf>
 - DREAM Act Questions and Answers:
<http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/documents/dream-act-qa.pdf>
 - UCLA report regarding the economic benefits of supporting DREAM Act eligible students:
<http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/documents/no-dreamers-left-behind.pdf>
 - [Cardinal Roger M. Mahony: The DREAM Act is Essential for Our Country's Future](#)

5. **Call to Action** – Urge everyone at the event to take action in support of the work you are doing. The simplest task is asking everyone to go to the JFI website and send an electronic postcard to President Obama asking him to protect vulnerable populations, including DREAM Act eligible youth and parents of citizen children, from deportation. Another option would include asking participants to call, write letters or visit the offices of their lawmakers in order to garner more support for our DREAM youth. You might want to consider raising money for your local JFI committee to support their work. The most committed call to action might be to ask everyone to join a JFI committee that will meet on a monthly basis in support of the Justice for Immigrants campaign.

To encourage leadership development and to truly engage the community, consider asking various individuals to take different pieces of the agenda. This creates ownership, unity and inclusivity, and teaches ordinary people how to be powerful in a public way. It is also much more exciting to see ordinary people from the community take these roles and show their leadership. The small mistakes and imperfections are what make us human and special. However, with practice and preparation (make sure to practice the entire agenda at least once or twice with everyone that is participating), this will not take away from the power of what is being presented, but will make it real and genuine. Lastly, do not hesitate to be creative and include music, poetry, skits and all ages and backgrounds into the planning and pieces of your agenda.

We are “the salt of the earth and the light of the world.” Thank you for your participation in the Pray for the *DREAM* Sunday events!