



For Immediate Release

Contact: Bob Bozek – CMSM Associate Director for Operations and Communications
301-588-4030
Annmarie Sanders, IHM – LCWR Director of Communications
301-588-4955; 301-672-3043 (cell)

May 11, 2010

Catholic Religious Leaders Call for Action on Immigration Reform

[Silver Spring, MD] The presidents of the national conferences of men and women religious, comprised of leaders of US orders of Catholic priests, brothers, and sisters, issued a statement calling President Obama and Senate and House leaders to work for comprehensive immigration reform now.

The members of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) represent the majority of the country’s Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious priests, a number of whom work directly with immigrant families and communities.

The statement refers to a previous joint statement issued in 2007 in response to the failure of comprehensive immigration reform, and which stated: “The status quo is morally unacceptable, as millions of immigrants are relegated again to the shadows in our nation.”

The current statement was prompted by the “recent draconian enforcement-only legislation in the state of Arizona and the introduction by Senator Schumer and others of a ‘Conceptual Proposal for Immigration Reform’” which once again underscores “the absolute necessity for Congress to act soon and comprehensively to fix our broken immigration system.”

While acknowledging the right of the United States “to control its borders,” the presidents affirm the need for a “just and humane approach to immigration reform” which “must include a path to citizenship, family reunification and protection of workers’ rights.”

The statement emphasizes both religious values inherent in the “Catholic faith and missions of many of our Religious Institutes” and the national US value of being a “welcoming people.”

-30-

The **Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM)** and the **Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR)** supports and offers resources for U.S. leaders of Catholic men’s and women’s religious institutes. There are more than 78,000 religious priests, sisters and brothers in the United States.

8808 CAMERON STREET | SILVER SPRING, MD 20910