

The human rights and dignity of migrants are of great concern to Catholics globally. Our religious tradition instructs us to exercise a preferential option for the poor, inspired by the words and deeds of Jesus Christ, who taught that “as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.”¹ This preferential option for the poor is also reflected in our church’s internal code, known as canon law, which states, “The Christian faithful are also obliged to promote social justice and, mindful of the precept of the Lord, to assist the poor.”² According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “The moral test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable members. The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of the nation. We are called to look at public policy decisions in terms of how they affect the poor.”³ Church teaching instructs us that the preferential option for the poor includes all those who are marginalized in any society, including migrants, victims of trafficking and all those who have suffered injustice and oppression.

Catholics, driven by our faith and compassion for others, are on the front lines of advocacy for the human rights of migrants, as well as providing them with critical services.

working for Catholic institutions who would willingly perform services prohibited by the Vatican are restricted from following the dictates of their own conscience by policies which do not allow them to provide these services. States continue the violation of the human rights of women and girls who are victims of violence when they allow hospitals and clinics to refuse to provide comprehensive reproductive healthcare services in favor of protecting the religious beliefs of some medical personnel who may object to certain procedures without also guaranteeing