

Saturday
February 11, 2012

On Saturday , February 11th, as we remember our day of fast and prayer, we are invited to *“see with the eyes of God and with women’s hearts, the distress of millions of immigrants and displaced persons, of children and women victims of human trafficking seeking a more human life.”*

(Chapter Document, 2007)

Legalization for the Undocumented

(second of three parts)

• **Legalization would improve wages and working conditions for all workers.**

By legalizing the labor force in a way which allows immigrants to become permanent residents, wages and working conditions would improve for all workers. According to a North American Integration and Development Center study, a new legalization program would increase the wages of immigrant workers by 15 percent, similar to the effect after passage of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act. Legalization also would allow workers to organize and assert their rights, leading to better working conditions and wages for all workers.

• **Legalization would help create new job opportunities for Americans.**

Increased legal and illegal immigration in the past fifteen years has not increased the number of people living in poverty in the United States. In fact, the number of people living in poverty decreased during this period as U.S. economic growth expanded, and native-born Americans attained higher levels of education and new job skills. Legalization combined with a new worker program would likely continue this trend, creating additional middle-class job opportunities for native-born workers.