

# A LIGHT UNTO OUR FEET:

*How Does the Bible Orient  
Us Toward Immigration?*

with  
**Dr. M. Daniel  
Carroll R. (Rodas)**

Convocation & Synod  
November 1-3, 2018



**DIOCESE of  
CHRIST our HOPE**





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*Materials designed by Robert Hocutt in conjunction with the Convocation & Synod Steering Team*

# INTRODUCTION

There is an emerging need for our people and our churches to develop a coherent, biblical understanding of the prescient topic of immigration. This contentious topic elicits a variety of emotions and can lead to misconceptions and divisions both within the church and without.

## **The Complexity of the Topic**

What makes immigration particularly difficult is its position at the intersection of ‘compassion’ (caring for the immigrant) and ‘justice’ (upholding the laws of the land which are meant for the good of society). The question is, how do we, as Christians, balance those two tenets of our faith? Complicating immigration further are the politics of our day. Those politics are important, but they must be informed by our faith, making this discussion timely and imperative.

## **Dr. M. Daniel Carroll R. (Rodas)**

We count it a blessing to have Dr. Danny Carroll with us to address how our faith and the Scriptures should inform our thoughts about immigration and determine the ways in which we speak into current-day realities and even political policies. Dr. Carroll will lead us through some of the many accounts of migration in the Old Testament, the prevalence of the stranger in OT Law, and the significance of people movement for Christian Mission.

## **Synod Q&A**

After Danny’s plenaries will be a Q&A session featuring panelists from around our diocese and the ACNA, each with a unique connection to the immigration discussion. Details on these panelists are available on page 12. Our hope is that our people and our churches will gain a desire to learn more about this issue, to do justice and mercy for the immigrants and ‘strangers’ in our midst, to speak winsomely in a culture divided, and to undertake more effective cultural engagement.

We do not desire a divisive spirit nor a provocative tone for Convocation and Synod. Rather, done well, we believe we can model the healthy and constructive engagement often lacking in our cultural discourse.

Blessings to you,

The Diocese of Christ Our Hope Staff



**DIOCESE of  
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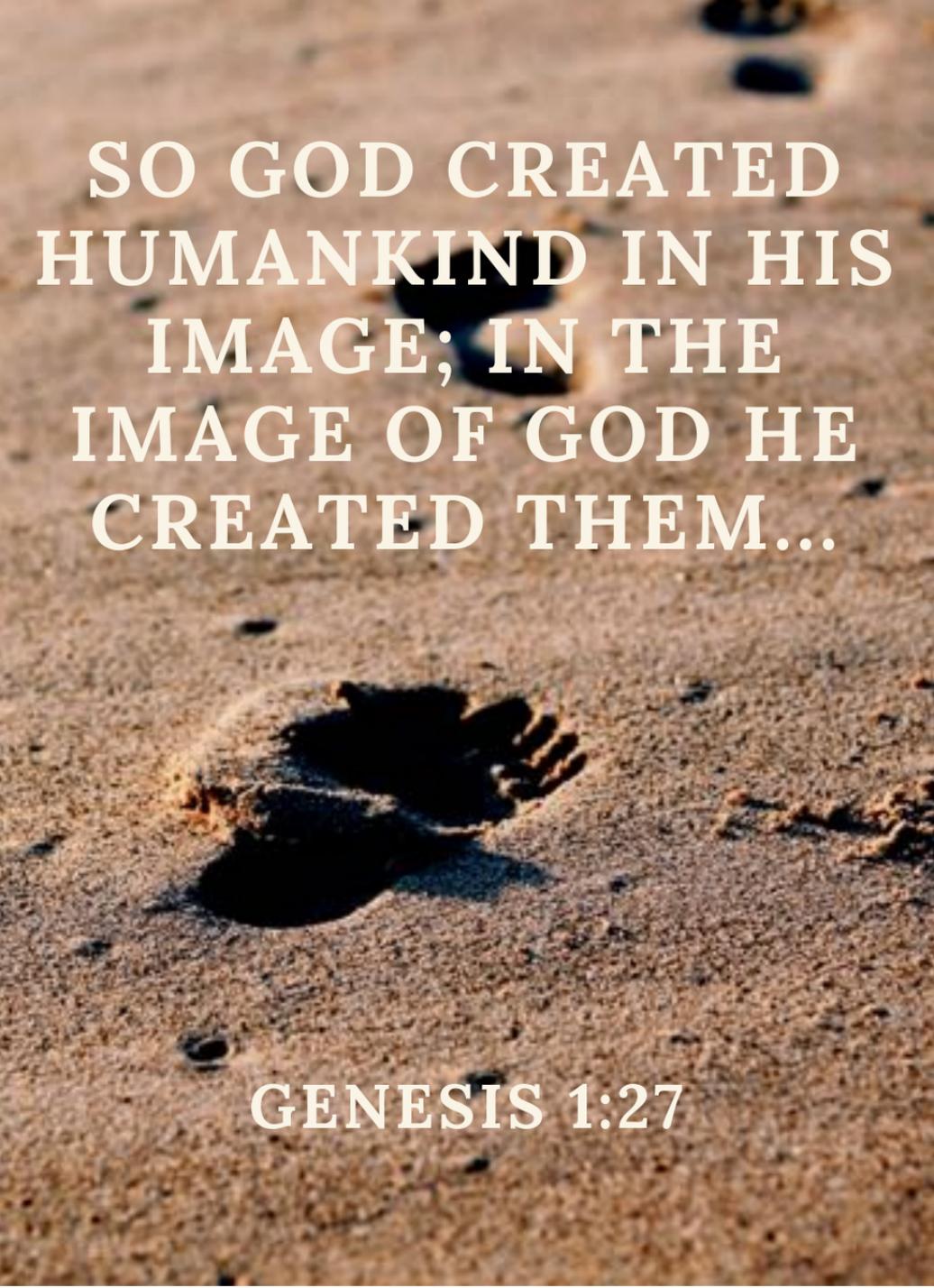
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Seminary**

**B.A. Rice  
University**

# ABOUT DANNY

Dr. Carroll is half-Guatemalan and was raised bilingual and bicultural. In his youth, he spent many summers in Guatemala and later taught at El Seminario Teológico Centroamericano in Guatemala City for thirteen years. The realities of Central America sparked Dr. Carroll's fascination with the Old Testament. The relevance of the biblical text for the challenges of poverty, war, and politics in those developing countries led him to a passionate focus on Old Testament social ethics and the social sciences.

Experiences in this country and abroad have led him to a deep appreciation for the unique contributions that ethnic minorities, women, and the global church make to the interpretation of the Old Testament. Before his current position at Wheaton College, Dr. Carroll taught Old Testament at Denver Seminary for many years and founded a Spanish-language lay training program there. At Wheaton, he hopes to model a commitment to connecting careful biblical scholarship with the mission of the church as it engages today's complex realities. He has been married to Joan for 42 years, with whom he has two sons and three grandchildren.



SO GOD CREATED  
HUMANKIND IN HIS  
IMAGE; IN THE  
IMAGE OF GOD HE  
CREATED THEM...

GENESIS 1:27

# STORIES OF MIGRATION

THINKING  
SELF-  
CONSCIOUSLY

Long before we can have a theological discussion, let alone debate the merits of the current immigration system, we must begin with the image of God presented in Genesis 1. Too often we reduce immigrants to their legal status, rather than seeing them the way God sees them according to Scripture: created in His image and loved infinitely by Him.

In addition, we must recognize that the immigrant's story is, to a great extent, the story of humanity. God commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the *whole* earth. This, of course, could not be done without the movement of people from place to place. Seen this way, migration is not only humanity's story, but humanity's commission.

Indeed, from the Fall onward, the Old Testament is the account of people on the move.

- Genesis 1 is a divine claim on Christian attitudes and actions towards immigrants irrespective of their legal status.
- How does the OT show us that migration is part of the human story, and part of the story of God's people?



**... THE BIBLE OFFERS THE  
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AND AMAZINGLY TRUE-  
TO-LIFE CHARACTERS...**

**THESE PEOPLE ARE PART  
OF THE PLAN OF GOD FOR  
THE UNFOLDING OF  
WORLD HISTORY AND THE  
DIVINE MISSION**

**DR. M. DANIEL CARROLL R.,  
CHRISTIANS AT THE BORDER**

# THE OLD TESTAMENT

## ORIENTING THE DISCUSSION

A nation's laws make a statement about that nation's values. Ancient Israel's laws were given by God, so their laws actually say something about the values of the God of Israel.

In the Law we see that God values the weak and vulnerable of society, including the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the stranger. Indeed, the laws found in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy call in various ways for foreigners to be treated as if they are Israelites themselves.

These types of laws are unique in ancient history and illustrate a beautiful melding of provision for great physical need with profound invitation into a life with God.

The context of Ancient Israel is different than 21st Century America, of course, but what lessons can we take from our spiritual ancestors?

- The laws of the OT regarding the foreigner say something about the heart of the God who commanded them.
- How might OT Law orient our thinking about modern migration legislation?



# THE NEW TESTAMENT

CONNECTING  
WITH CHRISTIAN  
MISSION

That Jesus was a refugee is a profound reality that must inform any immigration discussion that Christians undertake.

Also in play is the Great Commission. Similar to God's command in Genesis for Adam and Eve to fill all the earth, Jesus commands his followers to go and make disciples of all nations. This, of course, requires the movement of people across borders.

Interestingly, we also see in the New Testament that the early church was birthed in "diaspora communities." That is, many of the first churches began among communities of people who had been dispersed to other lands.

This process came with its own difficulties, however. We see ethnic tensions in several places throughout Paul's letters, reminding us that this is not a new discussion, nor one that will be solved easily.

- Obedience to the Great Commission's charge to make disciples of all nations was critical for the birth and expansion of the early church.
- How might we begin to think about the movement of people as central to the mission of God?



**SOMETHING IS  
MISSIOLOGICALLY  
MALIGNANT WHEN WE ARE  
WILLING TO SEND PEOPLE  
ACROSS THE OCEANS...**



**BUT WE ARE NOT WILLING TO  
WALK NEXT DOOR AND  
MINISTER TO THE  
STRANGERS LIVING THERE.**

**J.D. PAYNE,  
STRANGERS NEXT DOOR**



Rachel Thompson  
Immigration Attorney  
Poarch Law Firm  
Roanoke, VA



Chris Schutte  
Rector  
All Saints Church  
Durham, NC



Valerie Sagero  
Youth Minister to East  
African Refugees and  
Immigrants  
Greensboro, NC



Danny Carroll  
Professor of Old Testament  
Wheaton College  
Wheaton, IL



Heather Ghormley  
Director  
Anglican Immigrant Initiative  
South Bend, IN

## PANELISTS

Our Q & A Panel is a hand-selected group of individuals with a variety of experience and expertise in the realm of immigration. From lawyers and policy-makers to ministry professionals and first-generation immigrants, each panel member is invested deeply in both the theology and politics of immigration in the United States and the world. We hope you find their insights truly engaging and challenging.

# PANEL DISCUSSION

Why is it so important to understand the Bible rightly concerning immigration?

Why don't immigrants just come here legally? How difficult is the immigration process really?

How can churches support immigrant families in ways that are truly constructive and helpful?

How can pastors work with their congregations to become more hospitable to immigrants when opinions on immigration vary widely within the congregation?

What is the Anglican Immigration Initiative and how might it help my church minister to immigrants in my community?

**Please Note:** If you have a question that did not get answered, please seek out Dr. Carroll or any of the other panelists during breaks, meals, etc. You can also save your question for the Regional Retreats where there will be further time for discussion.

# DIGGING DEEPER

Bauman, Stephan, Matthew Soerens, and Issam Smeir. *Seeking Refuge: On the Shores of the Global Refugee Crisis*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2016.

Daniel, Carroll R. M., and Sánchez M. Leopoldo A. *Immigrant Neighbors among Us: Immigration across Theological Traditions*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2015.

Payne, Jervis David. *Strangers next Door: Immigration, Migration, and Mission*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012.

Soerens, Matthew, and Jenny Yang. *Welcoming the Stranger: Justice, Compassion & Truth in the Immigration Debate*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, an Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2018.

Tira, Sadiri Joy, and Tetsunao Yamamori. *Scattered and Gathered: A Global Compendium of Diaspora Missiology*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2016.

Quezada, Sarah. *Love Undocumented: Risking Trust in a Fearful World*. Harrisonburg: Herald Press, 2018.



# CHURCH RESOURCES



If your church interested in serving immigrants, refugees, or other migrant people groups, be sure to engage the resources below from around the ACNA:

**Anglican Immigrant Initiative:**

[www.anglicanimmigrantinitiative.com](http://www.anglicanimmigrantinitiative.com)

**Restoration Anglican Immigration Legal Aid:**

[www.restorationarlington.org/rila/](http://www.restorationarlington.org/rila/)

**Matthew 25 Initiative:**

[www.matthew25i.org](http://www.matthew25i.org)

Also see Appendix II of *Christians at the Border* by Dr. Carroll for a fuller list of resources and organizations both supporting and opposing immigration initiatives.



Revelation describes a wonderful scene of multilingual, multicultural, and multinational people singing praises in heaven to the Father and to the Lamb (Rev. 7:9-17). That is the goal to which the church should strive. Until then we must learn to live out the truth that there is neither Jew nor Greek; all are one in Christ (Gal. 3:28), because the walls of separation have come down (Eph. 2:11-22).

Dr. M. Daniel Carroll R.,  
*Christians at the Border*

# SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

## Stories of Migration

*Migration as a Metaphor for the Christian Faith*

Eph. 2:11-22; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 13:14; 1 Peter 2:11

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## The Old Testament

*Orienting the Discussion: The Image of God*

Gen. 1:26-28

*Experiences of God's People*

Gen 12:10-2, 37-50; Exod. 1-5; Ruth; Jer. 29:1-7

*Laws Pertaining to the Enduring Value of the Foreigner*

Deut. 4:5-8

*Laws Pertaining to the Vulnerability of the Foreigner*

Exod. 12:45-49; Exod. 20:10; Exod. 22:21; Exod. 23:12; Lev. 16:29; Lev. 19:9-10; Lev. 19:18,34; Deut. 1:16-17; Deut. 5:14; Deut. 10:17-19; Deut. 14:28-29; Deut. 19:18-34; Deut. 24:14-15; Deut. 23:9; Deut. 24:17-22; Deut. 27:19; Deut. 31:8-13

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## The New Testament

*Jesus' Life and His Teachings About Outsiders*

Matt. 2:13-23; Matt. 8:5-14; Matt. 25:31-46; Mk. 7:24-30; Lk. 4:16-30; Lk. 7:1-10; Lk. 10:25-37; Lk. 14:15-24; Lk. 17:11-19; Jn. 4

*Migration, Mission, and the Plan of God*

Lk. 14:12-14; Acts 8:1-8; Acts 9:11; Acts 11:19-30; Acts 13:1-3; Acts 13:14-52; Acts 14:1-5; Acts 16:37-38; Acts 17:1-4; Acts 17:10-12; Acts 17:16-17; Acts 18:1-7; Acts 18:18-28; Acts 19:8-10; Acts 21:29; Acts 22:3; Acts 22:25-29; Rom. 1:16-17; Rom. 13; Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 1:12; 1 Cor. 3:4-6; 1 Cor. 3:22; 1 Cor. 4:6; 1 Cor. 16:19; 1 Cor. 16:12; Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 2:11-22; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8; Titus 3:13; Heb. 13:2; 1 Pet. 4:9

# NOTES

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