

# Executive Summary

Christian scripture and tradition honor family life, teaching that God created families for good. Jesus celebrated families and modeled concern for an ever-widening circle of people, calling his followers to love their neighbors, particularly those who are marginalized and vulnerable.

These teachings, together, call us to cultivate a common life in which all people are empowered to meet their family responsibilities. Yet, many new parents and family caregivers in the United States struggle to secure time to care for loved ones without financial strain or fear of job loss. The average American household, for example, experiences a drop in income during the months before and after a child is born, placing parents and children, especially those in low-income households, in a precarious position in one of the most demanding phases of family caretaking.

The lack of paid family leave in the United States is one of many ways our society falls short of hospitality to family life. We believe that paid family leave can and should be achieved in the United States. It should ensure universal minimum benefits, prioritize those who are vulnerable, support diverse cultural conceptions of kin, and promote administrative simplicity. Policymakers should move toward this vision by establishing a universal benefit for new parents and end-of-life caregivers, and by guaranteeing all workers at least two weeks of annual paid leave for health and caregiving needs.

