

Nael's Story



**storming
heaven &
earth**

prayer
dignity
justice
solidarity
compassion

The Dominican Sisters ~ Grand Rapids invite you to join us in prayer for Nael S. and his family during this incredibly difficult time. Nael is a husband and devoted father from Genesee County who has been separated from his family since August 7, 2025, after being taken into ICE custody. A legal immigrant who came to the United States as a small child, Nael has lived nearly his entire life here, forming deep roots in family, community, and work. Nael's detention is tied to a crime he committed in 1983, for which he served his sentence in the U.S. justice system more than four decades ago.

Nael was born in Jerusalem, Palestine, a homeland shaped by conflict and displacement. It is not a country he can realistically return to. He now faces the possibility of being sent to Israel, currently at war with Nael's home country.

"I was born in Palestine, and they're trying to send me to Israel," Nael shared. "I don't know nobody in that country... I was born in Palestine, and there's no more Palestine." (East Village Magazine)

We acknowledge that Nael committed a crime decades ago and served his sentence. Guided by the Gospel, we reject endless punishment and do not believe it is just to deport him to Israel, a place that is not his homeland and where he has no family, community, or protection.

We invite you to hold Nael and his family in prayer—for justice rooted in truth, for peace amid uncertainty, and for the reunification of this family.

This story reflects the most accurate information available as of January 16, 2026, shared in a spirit of prayer and solidarity.

"First and foremost, notice the human person before us" is a foundational commitment of the Dominican Sisters ~ Grand Rapids. **Storming Heaven & Earth** is a call for attention to the human beings detained by ICE in the Midwest United States' largest immigration detention center: GEO North Lake Prison and Processing Center in Baldwin, Michigan. Personal experiences and prayer requests will be shared regularly with family permission as an act of solidarity and hope, reflecting our commitment to those most vulnerable among us. Please join us calling for prayer, dignity, justice, compassion, and solidarity.

The Gospel teaches us that every person is made in the image of God. Why can't immigration policies and practices reflect this fundamental dignity?

Articles about Nael S.

ABC 12 News
<https://tinyurl.com/yu6rksxv>

MLive
<https://tinyurl.com/2x2k428w>

Newsweek
<https://tinyurl.com/5dp2mepc>

East Village Magazine
<https://tinyurl.com/52cf4rj5>

Change.org
<https://tinyurl.com/msr6byup>

We Pray for Nael

Loving God,

We praise you and we bless you; we thank you for your unending love and compassion. We come to you to pray for Nael.

Our brother Nael is grieving the loss of his freedom and the pain of being separated from his family and friends after being taken to the ICE detention center.

We pray that Nael and his wife, children, and grandchildren be comforted. May he and his family know your grace of your Loving presence during this difficult time.

May he and his family know your grace and mercy and justice through the community of helpers. May all their needs: financial, spiritual, therapeutic, and legal, be fulfilled in a way that is skillful, wise, and will be effective.

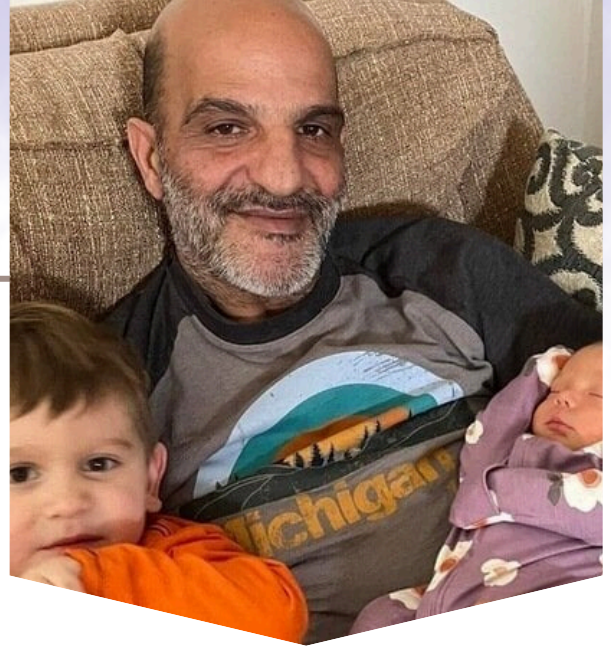
Tender God, as Nael is away from his family, keep him safe in the care of law enforcement personnel. May they recognize their shared humanity with Nael and act with empathy, restraint, and justice.

We pray, fervently and faithfully, believing all peoples, O God, are made in your image and likeness, that the power of Love can break through the chains of fear that separate us.

We pray that your Peace, O God, emboldened by our faith gives us the courage to continue to speak truth to those who have the power to give Nael his freedom.

We ask this through Jesus who lived, died and lives now through us. Amen.

Prayer adapted from the Christian Community Development Association by Dominican Associate Karen Malmsten and Sister Ann Walters, OP



Nael was 9 years old when he and his family arrived in America, seeking a better life. America is the only home he has ever known. He grew up here. He built his life here. He is a legal citizen, a husband to Christina, father of four, and grandfather of two. He is scheduled for deportation for a crime he committed in 1989 and for which he served his time in the U.S. justice system. Photo Credit: East Village Magazine



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