

“Am I not here, I who am your mother?”

December 12, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

“The Lord hears the cry of the poor” (Psalm 34:7), and we, the Catholic bishops of California, as shepherds of the flock of Christ, have seen and heard the growing distress among you, our migrant brothers and sisters. We want to assure you that we, and our mother, the Church, stand with you in these days of anxiety. You are not alone.

We realize that the calls for mass deportations and raids on undocumented individuals and migrant families have created genuine fear for so many we shepherd in our dioceses.

Rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the sacred dignity of every person, we commit to accompanying and walking in solidarity with you, our migrant brothers, sisters, and families through this uncertain time. We will shepherd you spiritually, gather information and resources, and continue to advocate for your dignity and family unity.

Our nation’s immigration system is broken. The disarray at our southern border cannot be allowed to continue. We pray with you that any enacted policies restore a sense of security and peace for citizens as well as those seeking to find a home in this blessed land. To achieve that end, policies must reflect empathy and solicitude, with due regard for the rights of children and those fleeing violent and impoverished countries, while ceasing to provide respite for serious offenders.

Although the exact challenges that may arise are not yet clear, Catholic Charities throughout California will continue to serve as a trusted resource for those with questions or who need assistance. Our [website](#), which will continue to be developed as more information becomes available, includes a list of resources.

www.cacatholic.org/immigration

We invite our Catholic communities to follow the example of the Good Samaritan (cf. Lk. 10:34) and show compassion for our neighbors, especially the most vulnerable among us. Our parishes have the tradition of being havens of hope and solace for the lonely and the lost, embodying the peace that Christ gives. May Our Lady of Guadalupe, who reminded Juan Diego that he bore the image and likeness of God, remind all of us today and in the coming days that we are all beloved children of God, bearing his likeness, no matter our ethnicity or country of origin. May our care for each other speak to the dignity of every human being.

On this day, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, we are assured that we are never alone. In Our Lady's words to Saint Juan Diego on the hilltop of Tepeyac, we find the ultimate maternal example of compassion, protection, and love, with a promise that she is always with us:

*"¿No estoy yo aquí, que soy tu madre?" "Am I not here, I who am your mother?"
 Are you not under my shadow and protection? Am I not the source of your joy?
 Are you not in the hollow of my mantle, in the crossing of my arms?
 Do you need something more? Let nothing else worry you or disturb you"* (Nican Mopohua).

We entrust you to the heart of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas. May you find comfort in her maternal mantle, and may her presence and intercession guide us toward compassionate humility toward one another.



Robert W. McElroy
Cardinal Robert W. McElroy
 Diocese of San Diego

+ *José H. Gomez*
Archbishop José H. Gomez
 Archdiocese of Los Angeles

Salvatore J. Cordileone
Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone
 Archbishop of San Francisco

Oscar Cantú
Bishop Oscar Cantú
 Diocese of San Jose

Myron J. Cotta
Bishop Myron J. Cotta
 Diocese of Stockton

+ *Kevin W. Vann*
Bishop Kevin W. Vann
 Diocese of Orange

Michael C. Barber S.J.
Bishop Michael C. Barber SJ
 Diocese of Oakland

Joseph V. Brennan
Bishop Joseph V. Brennan
 Diocese of Fresno

+ *Daniel E. Garcia*
Bishop Daniel E. Garcia
 Diocese of Monterey

+ *Alberto Rojas*
Bishop Alberto Rojas
 Diocese of San Bernardino

+ *Robert F. Vasa*
Bishop Robert F. Vasa
 Diocese of Santa Rosa

Jaime Soto
Bishop Jaime Soto
 Diocese of Sacramento