



COMMUNION OF SYNODAL CATHOLIC CHURCHES

27 February 2017
Monday of the Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

When an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him. The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Leviticus 19: 33-34

Pastoral Letter on Immigration Policy

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Our Communion and all People of good will,

This letter is limited to one topic: the violation of the will of God by the treatment of aliens in our national life. God's will as expressed in the Hebrew Bible as well as the New Testament is clear and unequivocal. Therefore we, as Synodal Catholic bishops must be equally clear and straightforward.¹

The attitude, as well as the rules, concerning the treatment of aliens recently promulgated by President Trump are contrary to the will of God and therefore immoral.

We are a people who have been called to love our neighbor as ourselves. We cannot be said to truly love our neighbor when we demand rights for ourselves that we do not equally demand for our neighbors. We, your bishops, will no longer demand privilege because of the accident of our birth that we do not equally demand for our brothers and sister who may have been born in a foreign land.² We fully understand that following the will of God often involves personal and communal risk. Like Jesus, we are willing to accept that risk. We will not cooperate with any government agent or agency that seeks to deport or bar our brothers and sisters who flee to our country to avoid persecution or economic deprivation. We farther pledge ourselves to resist said government policy even at the risk of our freedom and material comfort. We urge the people of our Catholic communities and indeed, all people of good will to do the same.

¹ Matthew 25:34-46, Exodus 22:21-24, Exodus 23:9, Leviticus 19:33-34, Deuteronomy 10:14-22, Deuteronomy 24:16-18, 2 Chronicles 6:32-33, 1 Kings 8:43, Isaiah 56:1-8, Jeremiah 7:6-7, Zechariah 7:9-10

² Exodus 12:49, Leviticus 24:22, Galatians 3:28

We are especially mindful of members of various police agencies and of the National Guard who may be called upon to enforce immoral rules against aliens. We urge them to seek the guidance of the Scripture, their clergy as well as their own conscience.³ For those who refuse to enforce discrimination against the alien we offer our unambiguous and full support.

In Christ, our hope and refuge,

Most Rev. Steven M. Rosczewski,
Presiding Bishop and
Ordinary, Diocese of Florida

Most Rev. Martin de Porres Griffin,
Ordinary, Diocese of California

Most Rev. Joseph A. Menna, aihm,
Ordinary, Diocese of St. Thomas of Villanova

Most Rev. David C. Strong,
Ordinary, Diocese of Washington

Most Rev. Charles R. Grande,
Bishop emeritus, Diocese of California

Most Rev. Charles M. Leigh,
Bishop emeritus, Diocese of Florida

³ Jeremiah 22:3–5, Psalm 94:1–13, 20–23, Ezekiel 22:7, Ezekiel 22:29–31, Malachi 3:5