

December 12, 2024

Today, as we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas, the New Jersey Catholic Conference wishes to share the following Letter of Pastoral Interest, published by Bishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the United States Military Services, and the President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Bishop Mark J. Seitz of the Diocese of El Paso and Chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Migration, and Bishop Jaime Soto of the Diocese of Sacramento, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Compelled by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and recognizing the inherent dignity of each person as a child of God, we stand in firm solidarity with our immigrant brothers and sisters who live and labor in these United States.*

From the founding of our nation, immigrants have been essential to this society's growth and prosperity. They come to our shores as strangers, drawn by the promises this land offers, and they become Americans. They continue to provide food security, health services, and many other essential skills that support our prosperous nation.

Our country deserves an immigration system that offers fair and generous pathways to full citizenship for immigrants living and working for many years within our borders. We need a system that provides permanent relief for childhood arrivals, helps families stay together, and welcomes refugees.

We hope that our country can develop an effective asylum system for those fleeing persecution and an immigration system that keeps our borders safe and secure, with enforcement policies that focus on those who present risks and dangers to society, particularly efforts to reduce gang activity, stem the flow of drugs, and end human trafficking.

The United States should have an immigration system that protects vulnerable migrants and their families, many of whom have already been victimized by criminal actors. Together, we must speak out on behalf of the "huddled masses yearning to breathe free" and ask our government to provide fair and humane treatment for our beloved immigrant brothers and sisters. It is our hope, and our prayer, that all of us can work together to support a meaningful reform of our current immigration system.