

## **Catholic Church and Immigration:**

### **The Clarity of Jesus' Call**

Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church has been blessed to have a vibrant and growing Hispanic community that has contributed greatly to the success of our parish. In these times of uncertainty and instability, we must remember that we are all children of God, created in His image and likeness. This means that we all have inherent dignity that must be respected and protected regardless of our nationality, origin or immigration status. As Our Lord said, *“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me. Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me”* (Matt 25:35,40).

As Catholics, we are committed to promoting and protecting the common good of all human beings. Let us pray and work for a future that promotes the common good of every individual, united in solidarity with one another and respecting the sanctity of all with whom we share our humanity. Our Christian faith teaches us that we have the moral obligation to consider the resident and the stranger. When Moses went up Mt Sinai, The LORD instructed him to tell the Israelites, *“You shall not oppress a resident alien; you well know how it feels to be an alien, since you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt”* (Ex 23:9).

We recognize that our immigration system is broken and that addressing this issue is complex. The Church clearly understands the need for secure national borders. This is not in question. However, we must consider the needs of our citizens as well as those seeking refuge. The truth is that many immigrants face dire conditions in their home countries, often the victims of criminal cartels, drug traffickers, human traffickers, and intolerable economic and political persecution. But from the beginning, immigrants have greatly contributed to our country by their labor, their creation of new businesses, and their support for our Catholic parishes. The reality is that immigrants are among the most law-abiding, religious, hardworking, and community-minded individuals in our country.

Today, throughout the world, the suffering of displaced persons—immigrants and refugees—is a cry of brothers and sisters waiting to be heard, seen, and found. The Bishops of the United States have declared: *“Together, we must be the voice of the multitudes who yearn to breathe freedom and demand that our government provide just and humane treatment of our dear brothers and sisters. It is our hope, our prayer, that we can all work together in developing a reform of the current immigration system.”*

As Catholic Christian citizens, we are called to be partners in mission with every person of good will and to join in a concrete effort of solidarity, presence and joy. As a parish family of faith, dedicated to the Gospel of Jesus, we commit ourselves to:

Be one with our sisters and brothers in their moments of need.

To honor their sense of anguish.

To support one another and those we serve.

The Body of Christ consists of people of all races, cultures, and ways of life. All people are beloved sons and daughters of the Heavenly Father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus on the Cross, and of God's infinite love for every person without exception. May we, the parish of Saint Francis Xavier, with all people of good will, commit ourselves, by the grace of God, to live the Gospel message of Jesus in loving service to our sisters and brothers who are suffering at this time. In this way, we truly fulfill our vocation.

Fr. Joe Culotta  
Pastor