



FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

The nonpartisan public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Florida

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An Appeal to the President and to the Governor

December 22, 2025

We, the Bishops of the Catholic Church in Florida, appeal to President Trump and to Governor DeSantis to pause immigration enforcement activities during the Christmas holidays.

The border has been secured. The initial work of identifying and removing dangerous criminals has been accomplished to a great degree. Over half a million people have been deported this year, and nearly two million more have voluntarily self-deported.

At this point, the maximum enforcement approach of treating irregular immigrants *en masse* means that now many of these arrest operations inevitably sweep up numbers of people who are not criminals but just here to work. It should be noted that a significant majority of those detained in Alligator Alcatraz have no criminal background.

Sometimes, these roundups include those with legal authorization to be here. Eventually these cases may be resolved, but this takes many months causing great sorrow for their families. A growing majority of Americans say the harsh enforcement policies are going too far. A climate of fear and anxiety is infecting not only the irregular migrant but also family members and neighbors who are legally in the country.

Since these effects are part of enforcement operations, we request that the government pause apprehension and round-up activities during the Christmas season. Such a pause would show a decent regard for the humanity of these families. Now is not the time to be callous toward the suffering caused by immigration enforcement.

Our nation is richly blessed. Despite challenges confronting our nation, we Americans enjoy a peace and prosperity that is the envy of the world, made possible by our special constitutional order which protects our liberties. It is no wonder that so many seek to come here. While enforcement will always be part of any immigration policy, such enforcement can be carried out in a way that recognizes due process as well as the humanity and dignity of all affected including those carrying out those policies. A pause during this holy season can lower the temperature within our partisan divisions, ease the fear and anxiety present in many of our immigrant and even non-immigrant families and allow all of us to celebrate with greater joy the advent of the Prince of Peace.

Most Rev. Thomas G. Wenski
Archdiocese of Miami

Most Rev. Gerald M. Barbarito
Diocese of Palm Beach

Most Rev. Frank J. Dewane
Diocese of Venice

Most Rev. John G. Noonan
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Most Rev. Gregory L. Parkes
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Most Rev. William A. Wack, C.S.C.
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