

## Western Province Statement on U.S. Immigration Policies and Enforcement



Even before St. Vincent de Paul founded the Congregation of the Mission 400 years ago, he arrived at a moment of moral clarity regarding the plight of the poor and forgotten. He devoted his life and built our community, the Vincentians, around an unwavering commitment to those who suffer in our communities, including refugees.

In a similar moment of moral clarity and guided by the principles handed down by our founder, we, the Vincentians of the Western Province, are compelled to speak out on the increasingly aggressive, violent, and alarming actions and tactics by our nation's immigration enforcement personnel in communities throughout the United States.

While we support the broad goals of law enforcement to reduce violent crime and make our communities safer, we cannot condone the indiscriminate and often harsh targeting of immigrants whose only offense is that they entered the U.S. outside of the established legal immigration procedures. We cannot condone unnecessarily violent law enforcement practices, racial profiling, or retaliation against those who are lawfully protesting the actions of immigration personnel.

We stand with refugees, especially those who have fled violence and abject poverty in their home countries. We stand with those who have joined and contributed to our communities, and we stand with families, as well as with law enforcement personnel who protect the rights and safety of all.

We call on our leaders in government to enact sensible, humane immigration policies that recognize the dignity of every person and that reflect the American values that have stood for generations in this nation of immigrants.

Finally, we pray that our representatives in government step back from this precipice and reflect on the words of our savior: "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me." (Matthew 25: 31-40)

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