



August 27, 2025

Dear brothers and sisters who have sought refuge in Ohio,

We, the Bishops of Ohio, offer you the peace of Christ, a peace that surpasses worldly understanding. That same peace which Pope Leo XIV announced during his first appearance to the world as successor of St. Peter, "... the peace of the risen Christ. A peace that is unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering. A peace that comes from God, the God who loves us all, unconditionally."

Many of you face significant hurdles to experiencing peace due to precarious circumstances in your countries of origin and an uncertain future in Ohio, despite your efforts to navigate the complex and rapidly changing immigration processes to obtain legal status. Our brother bishops in your home countries continually express the need for humanitarian relief from the conditions that forced you to flee in the first place, including Haiti, Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Cameroon, Ukraine, and other areas of the world.

It pains us to hear that our brothers and sisters, even those with lawful immigration status, live in fear of going to work, worshipping at the local parish, or participating in community events. Daily routines now needlessly bring angst of the unknown and the threat of being detained. Additionally, long-term visa and green card holders have faced forced departure without due consideration for their circumstances. We regret that our nation's immigration system has failed to offer predictability and stability to those living as law-abiding residents and supporting themselves and their families.

As we visit parishes and communities across Ohio, your priests, friends, employers, and some public officials share that you are valued community members. Your work strengthens society, and your prayers and service build up the body of Christ. We thank you for your contributions to our parishes and the common good of Ohio through your faith, work ethic, and cultural enrichment of our communities. We also thank those who have welcomed and accompanied you.

St. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, "there are many parts, yet one body... if [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it." The possibility that you may be forced to return to your home countries while perilous conditions persist there deeply grieves us. As you suffer in this uncertainty, our communities and the Church suffer with you.

In reflecting on the parable of the Good Samaritan, Pope Leo XIV recently shared, "God has looked upon us with compassion; he wanted to walk our same path and come down among us. In Jesus, the Good Samaritan, he came to heal our wounds and to pour out upon us the balm of his love and mercy." We pray that the same compassion that moved the heart of the Father and now moves us may also motivate policymakers to recognize your circumstances and contributions to society and establish reasonable pathways for you and your loved ones to fully integrate as Ohioans.

Please know of our spiritual closeness to you and your pastors as they accompany you in navigating uncertainty. May our parishes continue to be a refuge from your sorrows, where the faithful welcome you in your time of need. Hold onto the peace of the risen Christ and let us all bear witness to the unity and reconciliation found in the Gospel, remembering that we are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28).

May Our Lady of Consolation attend to your every need.

In Christ's peace,

+ Robert G. Casey

The Most Rev. Robert G. Casey
Archdiocese of Cincinnati

+ David J. Bonnar

The Most Rev. David J. Bonnar
Diocese of Youngstown

John Michael Botean

The Most Rev. John Michael
Botean
St. George Byzantine Catholic
Diocese

+ Bohdan J. Danylo

The Most Rev. Bohdan J. Danylo
Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of
St. Josaphat in Parma

+ Earl K. Fernandes

The Most Rev. Earl K. Fernandes
Diocese of Columbus

+ Edward M. Lohse

The Most Rev. Edward M. Lohse
Diocese of Steubenville

+ Edward C. Malesic

The Most Rev. Edward C. Malesic
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+ Robert M. Pipta

The Most Rev. Robert M. Pipta
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of
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+ Daniel E. Thomas

The Most Rev. Daniel E. Thomas
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+ Michael Woost

The Most Rev. Michael Woost
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