



**ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE of ORANGE**

PASTORAL CENTER: **BISHOP'S OFFICE**

13280 CHAPMAN AVENUE, GARDEN GROVE, CA 92840

June 10, 2014

Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord,

We have just celebrated the great feast of Pentecost, the birthday of the Church. From the accounts of Sacred Scripture we know that the Apostles gathered in the Upper Room where the last Supper was celebrated and were transformed into courageous and joyful witnesses to the Gospel. From that Upper Room they were sent forth to preach the Good News of the Gospel and build up the Body of Christ. We know from the Acts of the Apostles and other contemporaneous accounts that they went to all parts of the known world. They migrated, in fact, and in doing so forged with the "Fire of the Holy Spirit" this Body of Christ which continues to give witness in all parts of the world to the Lord's enduring presence and love.

The celebration of Pentecost, as the "Birthday of the Church" reveals the great work of the Holy Spirit in forging the Body of Christ in unity and diversity of peoples. From the many languages of faith comes the language of praise to God in all of our liturgical and prayer celebrations around the world. The history of the Catholic Church in the United States, from its very beginning, reflects this reality. The Church in the United States has been forged and built by the histories and stories of Catholic people who migrated here to find a better life and to find, in fact, freedom. They responded to the Statue of Liberty and the poem of Emma Lazarus which said, and still proclaims "Give me your tired, and your poor, and your huddled masses yearning to be free."

Realizing this reality, and reflecting on it, parish leaders in the Diocese of Orange have led the way in making this history known, and responding to our current challenges faced by our immigrant brothers and sisters from around the world. For example, you may remember the prayerful procession in the streets of Brea last year, when 2000 people gathered to pray and walk. A couple of months later, over 3000 people gathered to pray on the campus of Christ Cathedral to witness to the necessity of comprehensive immigration reform for the common good of our country.

As a continuation of these efforts and this witness, *I am inviting all of you - each parish and religious community - to bring a delegation of leaders to join me at the Mass for Immigrants which is to be held at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles, on Sunday, July 20, 2014 at 3:00 PM.*

I am suggesting a delegation of ten leaders from each parish, center and religious community led by pastors, administrators, priests, deacons and religious, with a leader appointed to carry a parish banner in procession. While much of the energy and support around comprehensive immigration reform has been carried courageously by the Latino community, it certainly affects all of our brothers and sisters from around the world who make their home among us in Orange County: Korean, Filipino, East Asian, Chinese, African, Middle-Eastern, European descent, and other places as well.

MOST REVEREND KEVIN W. VANN, J.C.D., D.D.
BISHOP OF ORANGE

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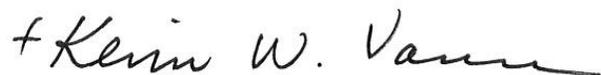
I invite all to join Archbishop Gomez and me and other Bishops in Los Angeles on July 20 to give witness to our immigration stories and to pray for the struggles of immigrants, which Archbishop Gomez calls “one of the great human rights issues of our time” and Cardinal O’Malley reminds us is, indeed a “pro-life” concern. I myself have seen personally how concern for the life of the unborn and our immigrant families often are found together in the same individuals! Pope Benedict XVI in Washington DC, and more recently Pope Francis has also spoken about the importance of the human rights and the care for immigrant peoples.

May Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas and the Star of the New Evangelization, unite us and draw all peoples to her son Jesus.

Again, I would like to encourage your witness and participation in this event on July 20. Please forward to the Office of Life, Justice and Peace the name of the parish leader carrying the banner and the names of the other 9 or more leaders by Tuesday, July 8 at eramirez@rcbo.org.

Thank you for your witness of Faith and all that you do for so many whose lives intersect ours in the Body of Christ.

Gratefully yours in the Lord,



Most Reverend Kevin W. Vann, J.C.D., D.D.
Bishop of Orange

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