



CONNECTICUT CATHOLIC PUBLIC AFFAIRS CONFERENCE
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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

These past months have been marked by escalating tensions at our southern border. Most recently we were confronted with the tragic images of the drowning deaths of Óscar Martínez and his 23-month-old daughter, Angie Valeria, who were fleeing the dangers of El Salvador for the safety of the United States. Other immigrants have crossed the border with their lives, but have been captured and are now detained in overcrowded conditions as a result of political gridlock in our nation's capital.

We, the Catholic Bishops of Connecticut, urge our government to act for a complete overhaul of existing immigration policies. Those responsible in government need to undertake an examination of conscience as to what they have done and have failed to do when it comes to respect for human persons and the enactment of fair and balanced legislation. This overhaul needs to ensure a welcome for immigrants in keeping with our history and laws as a land of immigrants as well as the integrity of our borders.

In recent decades U.S. governments led by both of our major parties have fallen woefully short of enacting immigration reform and of honoring the basic humanity of migrants and refugees. According to the U.S. Border Patrol, over the last twenty years there have been an average of 357 immigrant deaths annually in our southwest border sectors. The governments of other nations also need to be encouraged and aided where necessary to remedy the conditions that force people to flee their homeland.

As one nation under God, not only founded by immigrants, but made what it is in large part by immigrants, the United States can and must do better. Those fleeing the hazardous conditions of their homeland to make the perilous journey to the safety and freedom of America are currently facing treatment that undermines our shared values of freedom and belief in human dignity.

We urge everyone to work and pray for a better way forward in addressing this humanitarian crisis.

+ *Leonard P. Blair*

Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair
Archbishop of Hartford

+ *Frank J. Caggiano*

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
Bishop of Bridgeport

+ *Juan Miguel Betancourt, SEMV*

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