ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL & MINNEAPOLIS

United in Faith, Hope and Love

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MESSAGE REGARDING EXECUTIVE ORDER ON REFUGEES

From Archbishop Bernard A. Hebda

Anyone taking the Green Line between Saint Paul and Minneapolis can see that there's something in the DNA of our community that has historically favored a generous response to the call to welcome the stranger. How inspiring it is to see those who had been welcomed here a generation ago, after fleeing their homelands, now in turn welcoming the latest wave of refugees who have sought refuge in a land that aspires to be "one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." It's the experience of Israel, loving the alien, the stranger, because there was a shared remembrance of the time when the Israelites themselves were strangers in the land of Egypt (**Deuteronomy 10: 19; Leviticus 19:34).**

Even if it were not part of the fabric of our civil society, those of us who are Christians know that welcoming the stranger is part of the Gospel imperative. The mission entrusted to us by Christ is to hear the cry of those in need and respond with mercy and generosity. Pope Francis has reminded us that each of them "has a name, a face, a story, as well as an inalienable right to live in peace and to aspire to a better future for their sons and daughters." In welcoming them, we welcome Christ and in doing so we have the opportunity to strengthen the country that we love. As Pope Francis has insightfully noted, "authentic hospitality is a profound gospel value that nurtures love and is our greatest security against hateful acts of terrorism."

At a time when anxieties are running high, let us respond to fear with love and prejudice with principle. It's in that way that we can be faithful to our calling and continue the long history that distinguishes Minnesota as a place of great welcome.