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Statement of the Bishops of Kentucky on the Feast of the Epiphany

January 4, 2026

In November 2025, the Catholic Bishops of the United States issued a Special Message on the growing concern for the current situation facing many immigrants and refugees in our country. In continuity with that message, and with our joint statement in December 2024 with the bishops of Tennessee, as we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord and recognize Jesus Christ as the light that guides all nations on earth, we now wish to address ourselves specifically to the immigrant members of our Kentucky communities.

Nations have a right and responsibility to control their borders and to enforce laws meant to protect the population, but all laws must be enforced in a just and predictable manner that respects the God-given dignity of each human person. Pope Leo reminded us of this when he stated, “No one has said that the United States should have open borders...I think every country has a right to determine who and how and when people enter.” The Holy Father then added that “we have to look for ways of treating people humanely, treating people with the dignity that they have.”

Accordingly, we are increasingly concerned about the rapidly developing challenges facing immigrants, whether documented or undocumented. Regular reports of immigrants with legal status having that status arbitrarily revoked; increasing incidents of political leaders vilifying immigrants; the elimination of sanctuary protections for churches, hospitals, and schools; and proposals at the state level targeting the ability of immigrants to live and pursue their dreams in Kentucky, combine to create an understandable climate of hostility, anxiety, and fear. We oppose all efforts to stigmatize immigrants as a group or to spread fear based on national or ethnic origin.

We stand with all of our immigrant brothers and sisters who have been victimized by unjust government action or by harmful rhetoric and vilification. We call on all of our political leaders to work to reform our broken immigration system in a way that allows for the peaceful and orderly migration of people who are searching for peace, stability, religious freedom, and economic opportunity, as well as one that respects family unification and a realistic possibility of potentially obtaining citizenship.

We reiterate the call and commitment we made with our brother bishops in Tennessee: “We invite the whole Catholic community...to learn more about the plight of immigrants, to understand the values that form our Catholic Teaching on the matter, and to join us in advocating for just and comprehensive laws and policies that respond to the requirements of human rights and dignity and reflect the desire for the common good in our nation. We stand ready to be a part of bringing this about.”

**Most Reverend
Shelton J. Fabre**
Archbishop of Louisville

**Most Reverend
John C. Iffert**
Bishop of Covington

**Most Reverend
John Stowe, OFM Conv.**
Bishop of Lexington

**Most Reverend
William F. Medley**
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