



THE DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON

March 18, 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Bishops of The United States have consistently called for a comprehensive federal immigration reform that would enable contemporary immigrants to be part of our wonderful country as so many of our ancestors have been. It is no secret that many are here in our country in an undocumented status – a situation that demands attention from Congress. Passage of the “Dream Act” would have been a magnificent first step in addressing this major pressing issue. However, as we know, this was a missed opportunity, with the bill not able to get through Congress. The failure of this measure has probably added more resolve to so many on state and local levels to vent their frustration with our nation’s inaction by attempting to address the issue themselves.

Some states have enacted quite restrictive legislation that may well jeopardize family life and lead to general mistrust of people who should be able to treat each other as brothers and sisters. I urge all people of good will in our state of South Carolina and our lawmakers in particular to reflect carefully on the “collateral damage” such legislation may have for our state.

I urge all Catholics to reflect on the social teaching of the Church which demands that human dignity, human rights and family considerations must be respected at all times.

The immigration system in our country is broken, but let us strive to fix it in ways that none of God’s children be hurt and in ways that will be just and compassionate.

In the Lord’s Peace,

Most Reverend Robert E. Guglielmo
Bishop of Charleston