



ROMAN CATHOLIC  
**DIocese**  
**OF CHARLESTON**  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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Feb. 7, 2025

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Gospel of Matthew emphasizes the values of faith, mercy and justice, and how they relate to Judeo-Christian tradition. We recall the words of our Lord in the Gospel of Matthew, “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me” (25:35-6). Jesus taught us that this is the standard by which we will be judged on the last day. It is important to keep this message at the forefront of our daily living and always strive to fulfill our commission to love and serve others.

We believe that every person is created in the image of God and must be treated with dignity and care as his son or daughter. We will continue to ensure that our churches, schools and missions remain places of worship, education, hospitality and grace for those who live in our midst.

Our shared faith calls us to walk alongside and accompany the most vulnerable, and we remain committed to serving every member in our communities with the love and understanding that Christ modeled for us. Pope Francis, in his letter for World Day of Migrants and Refugees, said that “God not only walks with his people, but also within them ... he identifies himself with men and women on their journey through history, particularly with the least, the poor and the marginalized.”

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that Catholic teaching does not support an open border policy in this modern world; however, the *Catechism* does emphasize a commonsense approach where the duty to care for the stranger is practiced in harmony with the duty to care for the nation.

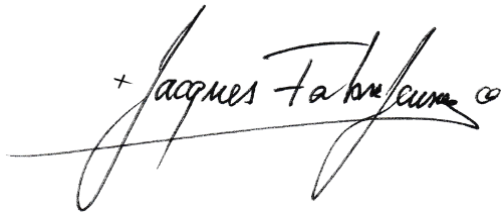
As your bishop and pastor, I offer my gratitude for all those immigrants in the Diocese of Charleston who, through their goodness and faithfulness, contribute so much to our Church and to our country. Over several generations, immigrants have settled within the diocese from many foreign nations. Catholics from different continents have enriched our diocese with their great faith and devotion to our Lord, with their families and service to Christ’s Church across South Carolina. Their presence is a gift to us all, and we are grateful to God for them. We pray for their faithfulness, resilience and perseverance now in the face of many uncertainties.

As a Church, we will be always concerned with the dignity of the human person and basic human rights. The Church recognizes that there are persons residing in this nation without legal documentation, and we do not excuse this violation of our country's laws. Every country has the right to protect and maintain its borders.

Pope Francis encourages us to participate in Christian charity through welcoming, protecting and accompanying. We can see firsthand the contributions of our brothers and sisters from many nations to our communities and to this state. We will continue to accompany them along the faithful way, as Christ accompanies us on our journey through this life. Though Catholics all over the world differ in our expressions of faith and our perspectives, we are united by the Great Commission to stand as one Church, loving God and our neighbor.

May we, as one Body in Christ, unite in faith and understanding as we move forward. May the Lord grant us the wisdom and courage to act with justice and mercy. And may the Holy Spirit guide us to promote a culture of peace, respect for life and the dignity of every human person.

In Christ's love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Jacques Fabre-Jeune ©". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small cross at the beginning and a circled copyright symbol at the end.

Most Rev. Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS  
*Bishop of Charleston*