



# DIocese of Superior

## Office of the Bishop

January 24, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

It is with concern for our shared understanding of human dignity that I write to you. Let us begin by praying for the unborn, the migrants and immigrants in our country, and for our new President Trump and his administration. We pray for Christian wisdom to prevail, and for reasonable liberty and justice for all as new immigration policies are announced.

There has been much national news on the announcement that President Trump's Acting Secretary of Homeland Security has rescinded a 2021 memo that designated schools, churches and other community services as protected areas from immigration enforcement. The announcement quotes the Secretary as stating that law enforcement officers should use discretion and common sense. At this time, it is unclear whether enforcement activities will take place on school or church property.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Migration, Bishop Mark Seitz (Diocese of El Paso, TX, born in Milwaukee) stated yesterday, and I agree:

“... our parishes, schools and other church institutions recognize that the dignity of those we serve is not dependent on the person's citizenship or immigration status. We recognize the need for just immigration enforcement and affirm the government's obligation to carry it out ... However, non-emergency immigration enforcement in school, places of worship, social service agencies, healthcare facilities, or other sensitive settings where people receive essential services would be contrary to the common good ... we are already witnessing reticence among immigrants to engage in daily life ... Turning places of care, healing and solace into places of fear and uncertainty for those in need will not make our communities safer. Our organizations stand ready to work on a better path forward ... that ensures our borders and immigration system are governed with mercy and justice.”

As your Bishop, I want to assure you that I am actively working with staff advisors to prepare and advise our priests and parish leaders on what could be coming our way. We are aware that new government policies may impact many of our area Catholics that have arrived here from other countries. I will confer with my brother bishops in Wisconsin and obtain legal and practical advice to share with our parishes and schools.

Until then, The Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC) has a variety of resources to help immigrants through the complexities of immigration to the United States. To assist those worried about being confronted by any officials regarding their immigration status, CLINIC

provides “Know Your Rights” cards and flyers - <https://www.cliniclegal.org/issues/know-your-rights>. I have recommended that parishes have some of these cards and flyers available for individuals at the back of church and in their offices.

Here is the link to the CLINIC website available for any immigrants who inquire about needing help. There is a list of Wisconsin and Minnesota affiliates located on the site:

<https://www.cliniclegal.org/find-legal-help/affiliates/directory>. The closest to our diocese are:

- ECDC Multicultural Community Center, 300 N 3rd St #212, Wausau, 715-907-7082, [www.ecdcwausau.org](http://www.ecdcwausau.org)
- Catholic Charities, 3710 East Ave, La Crosse, 608-782-0710, [cclse.org](http://cclse.org)
- Catholic Charities, 1825 Riverside Dr, Green Bay, 920-272-8234, [catholiccharitiesgb.org](http://catholiccharitiesgb.org)
- Immigration Law Center of Minnesota, 450 N. Syndicate St., St. Paul, MN, 651-641-1011 x231, [www.ilcm.org](http://www.ilcm.org)

Please be patient and as optimistic as possible that the news will not turn into worst-case scenarios for our non-citizen neighbors. Let us all remember all of our beloved sons and daughters of God and participate in the power of prayer in these changing times.

Faithfully Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Most Rev. James P. Powers".

Most Rev. James P. Powers  
Bishop of Superior