



THE DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

September 6, 2019

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

May the peace of Christ be with you!

I know these are uncertain and difficult times for you, our Hispanic brothers and sisters. I want to assure you that you are in my prayers daily. Since 2004, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration has resolved to make immigration reform a major priority within the Church. As you know, it is a complicated matter. I want to assure you that the Church states in its Catholic Social Teaching that the life and dignity of each person is one of its strongest values.

In Matthew 25, Jesus tells us "In so far as you did this to one of the least of these, you did it to me." These times of workplace raids and deportations, as well as the detention of refugees at the border, are examples of not treating our neighbor with dignity. I ask everyone to examine themselves about how they treat 'their neighbor' and then treat one another as you would want to be treated.

On Thursday, October 3, 2019, at 11:30 AM, the Office of Hispanic Ministry will be holding a prayer service at the Office of Representative Mike Bost, 302 West State Street, O'Fallon, Illinois. I invite you to stand with them in prayerful attentiveness in this hour of need.

I also ask that you continue to pray for Vocations to the Priesthood.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend Edward K. Braxton, Ph.D., S.T.D.
Bishop of Belleville

Office of the Bishop
222 South Third • Belleville, Illinois 62220-1985
Phone (618) 277-8181 Ext. 108 • Fax (618) 277-0387
E-mail: ebraxton@diobelle.org