



DIOCESE OF
FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND
SECRETARIAT FOR COMMUNICATIONS

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**Message to the Faithful of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend
from Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Regarding the Work of Catholic
Charities in Support of Refugees and Immigrants**

Fort Wayne, IN - Certain news outlets continue to make claims that Catholic Charities participates in illegal immigration and human trafficking, earning large profits while doing so. As your Bishop and Chairman of the Board of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, I can assure you these are false claims levied against our Catholic Charities agency. In fact, the complete opposite is true. Our diocesan Catholic Charities participates in pathways for legal immigration and supports survivors of human trafficking, while operating those programs at a fiscal deficit.

Inspired by Catholic Social Teaching, Catholic Charities follows the Gospel imperative to serve the most vulnerable among us and in alignment with the truth that we are all created in the image of God. This does not mean that we support open

borders and disregard the rule of law. While the Catholic Church recognizes and respects the right of every nation to regulate its borders for the common good, we must balance this with the rights of vulnerable migrants to access protection, and with the fundamental right of all to life and dignity as human persons; as well as the rights of parents and the family, the cradle of life and love, the first and most vital cell of society.

False statements have also been made about the U.S. Refugee Admission Program (USRAP), which our Catholic Charities agency has participated in since inception of this federal program in 1980. USRAP is the formal process by which people are legally resettled in the United States as refugees. Resettlement through USRAP is distinct from the U.S. asylum process. Any person resettled through USRAP is first screened, vetted, and approved by the U.S. government while outside of the United States. They also receive medical evaluations, a cultural orientation, and other services that maximize their ability to successfully integrate and contribute productively to American communities. Economic self-sufficiency (as measured by independence from the public welfare system) and successful community integration are the primary outcome measures of the Program.

Catholic Charities is a contracted resettlement agency working under the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Funds received are used to provide financial support for the first 90 to 240 days after arrival, until the refugee families become economically self-sufficient; provide immigration legal services as they study to become U.S. citizens; as well as to partially pay for the staff that provide those services. In their latest fiscal year, Catholic Charities received \$3.0 million in contract revenue and spent \$3.2 million to administer the program.

For accurate information of the Migration Services provided by our Diocesan Catholic Charities agency, as well as their other good works, please visit their website at ccfwsb.org.

I am grateful for the countless contributions that our refugees and immigrants provide to our communities. During this time in our nation, I particularly ask the Catholic faithful to remember Jesus, Mary, and Joseph — the Holy Family — who were compelled to leave their land and migrate to Egypt. Let us pray to the Holy Family for migrant families compelled to leave their homelands because of violence, extreme poverty, or persecution and are now exposed to grave danger. May the Lord protect them and may the Lord inspire our nation to exercise justice and compassion.

ABOUT THE DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend comprises 14 counties of northeastern Indiana and has a Catholic population of more than 160,000. There are 81 parishes throughout the Fort Wayne and South Bend areas. The Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades was installed as the Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend on January 13, 2010. Visit the [Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend](#) website for more information.