



September 8, 2026

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write with deep pastoral concern in relation to the growing number of Haitians being forcibly repatriated to Haiti from the United States and to humbly request your assistance.

Recently, at least 47 people were brutally murdered, more than 20 injured, and over 50 kidnapped in an unconscionable act of violence perpetrated by gang members in Port-au-Prince. Perhaps worst of all, the victims were displaced families – young children among them – taking shelter at a church. Together with our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, my brother bishops and I express our spiritual closeness with the victims and pray for the swift release of all hostages.

As citizens of this great country, we have been entrusted with a tremendous moral responsibility, and this is true most of all for you as our head of state, Mr. President. To this end, I respectfully ask: What good is the immense wealth, prosperity, and influence with which we have been blessed as a nation if not used in service of our humanity?

I recognize, as I expressed when we met earlier this year, the importance of regulating immigration and enforcing federal immigration law. I also acknowledge that the troubles in Haiti long precede your time in office, in addition to being complex and multifaceted. At the same time, I know you understand the essential role the United States plays in promoting the inherent value of human life.

In this 250th year of American independence, we are reminded of our country's humble, yet idealistic and inspired, beginnings. Among those ideals has always been, no matter where we are born, the belief that people are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights. I urge you today, Mr. President, to uphold these fundamental rights, with the right to life being chief among them.

I very much wish this recent and tragic example of human life being extinguished, virtually with impunity, was an irregularity in Haiti. Unfortunately, it is not. I implore you to

President

The Most Reverend Paul S. Coakley, S.T.L.
Archbishop of Oklahoma City



avoid further endangering innocent human life by ceasing the deportation of large numbers of people to Haiti at this time, particularly while there is not an adequate system in place to provide for their safe and orderly reception and reintegration. The current approach will only contribute to the country's already deepening crisis, undermining your own strategic objectives for the Western Hemisphere.

Please exercise your authority under the U.S. Constitution to provide deferred enforced departure for Haitians peacefully residing in the United States.

Of course, individual Haitians could still be disqualified from this relief on a case-by-case basis, preserving your Administration's ability to advance justice and public safety. Simultaneously, you would be recognizing the significant economic and social contributions made by so many of these men and women, including in critical areas such as health care. The Catholic Church is also sensitive to the ways many families, especially mixed-status families, would benefit from this relief. The strength of our communities depends, in large part, on the well-being of such families.

Beyond this short-term relief, you can be assured of the U.S. bishops' abiding support and prayers for the long-overdue reform of our nation's immigration laws. We pledge to continue working with your Administration and Congress to achieve this for the benefit of our country and all Americans. At the same time, the Church will continue doing her part, in coordination with the U.S. and Haitian governments, to accompany the people of Haiti, through spiritual and corporal works of mercy, as they seek to build a safer and more stable country that allows for integral human development.

I sincerely thank you, Mr. President, for your consideration of this request. Please continue to count on my prayers for you and your Administration.

As always, I remain, respectfully in Christ,

The Most Reverend Paul S. Coakley
Archbishop of Oklahoma City

President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

CC: The Honorable Marco Rubio, Secretary of State
The Honorable Markwayne Mullin, Secretary of Homeland Security

President

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