

17 February 2026

Message to the People of God on Pilgrimage in the Americas

From the Bishops of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the Latin American and Caribbean Episcopal Council (CELAM)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Gathered in a spirit of profound communion, aware that we do not represent isolated Churches or fragmented realities, but rather one Church on pilgrimage throughout the Americas, we wish to address you with a message of closeness, hope, and shared responsibility.

We have experienced days of fraternal joy, united in prayer, sincere dialogue, and pastoral discernment. We give thanks to the Lord for the grace of this encounter, which has allowed us to renew our commitment to walk together as the Church in the Americas, strengthening the bonds that unite us beyond our borders and cultural differences.

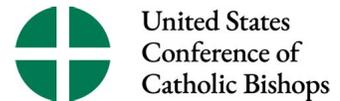
Our prayer and our conversations have focused on how to better guide the People of God with wisdom and courage in a time marked by profound changes and challenges. Although our national contexts are diverse, we recognize that our peoples experience similar anxieties and that our episcopal ministries face common challenges that invite coordinated, compassionate, and profoundly evangelical responses.

Aware of the historical moment we are living through and the complexity of the challenges affecting our societies, we have renewed our commitment to walk together in a synodal way as a Church that embraces the north and south of the continent, bearing clear and consistent witness to Jesus Christ, Crucified and Risen, the living hope for all peoples.

Among the issues we have considered are our concern for the poor and vulnerable, the dignity and rights of indigenous peoples, the painful scourge of human trafficking and narco-culture, the growing polarization that wounds public discourse and weakens social cohesion, and, in particular, the extreme vulnerability of migrants who live, travel through, and seek a future in our countries.

Regarding the phenomenon of migration, we affirm clearly: no migrant is a stranger to the Church. In every person who leaves their homeland seeking safety, opportunities, or dignity, we recognize a brother, a sister; we recognize the very face of Christ on the move. Human mobility cannot be reduced to a merely political or economic issue; it is a profoundly human reality that challenges our Christian conscience and the ethical responsibility of nations.

The migrant's journey crosses countries, systems, and borders. Therefore, our pastoral action cannot be fragmented. We want to strengthen our continental coordination so that, from the place of origin to transit and final destination, the Church may be a concrete sign of hope, a place welcome, and protection.



We invite civil authorities to promote policies that safeguard the lives, rights, and dignity of migrants. We recognize the responsibility of States to regulate migration and ensure the common good; however, we reiterate that all legislation must place at its center the inalienable dignity of the human person and the respect that person deserves.

We urge all the People of God in the Americas to live our unity in a concrete and daily way: in the generous welcome of migrants, in the defense of the most vulnerable, in respectful dialogue even amidst differences, in the patient building of bridges. May our parishes, communities, and families be visible signs that fraternity is possible and that the Gospel continues to be a transformative force in our societies.

We are one Church in the Americas. From this unity, we wish to serve with greater dedication, to accompany with greater closeness, and to proclaim with renewed courage the hope that springs from the Heart of the Savior.

We entrust this commitment to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Mother, who accompanies all the peoples of our continent under many titles. May she sustain us in communion and inspire us to respond together, with charity and evangelical courage, to the challenges of our time.

With fraternal affection and renewed hope,

The Leadership of the Episcopal Conferences of Canada, the United States, and Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAM).