

Archbishop Lori's Remarks: Mass for Dreamers

Saint Patrick, Fells Point

Baltimore, Maryland

September 13, 2017

My thanks to Father Bruce Lewandowski and the St. Patrick/Sacred Heart of Jesus community for organizing this Eucharist. Now more than ever we need to come together as one community of faith, to raise our voices and our prayers on behalf of those in need of our support and our fraternal love.

The cancelation of DACA is not only an immigration issue, but it is also a moral issue. As Catholics and people of faith, we are called to defend life at every stage, and the lives of these young people are being unnecessarily being put at risk by the threat of deportation and separation from the only country many of them have ever known, as well as separation from family, friends, jobs, schools, and their livelihood. This is cause for great and unnecessary worry and suffering.

Furthermore, this ruling by the administration denies young people a life of opportunity and it deprives our country of their talents. As Pope John Paul II expressed in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*: "Every threat to human dignity and life must necessarily be felt in the Church's very heart; it cannot but affect her at the core of her faith... Today this proclamation is especially pressing because of the extraordinary increase and gravity of threats to the life of individuals and peoples". Young people represent the present and the future of the Church; you are indispensable for the progress of this country and of the Church. You are a treasure we must care for.

I join my brother bishops in imploring the administration to show mercy and compassion for those seeking refuge, and to advance the American value of freedom through providing safe harbor to those fleeing tyranny and religious persecution. Doing the contrary goes against our American values, but most importantly, against our Christian values. As Americans and people of faith, we are better than that. We

must be better than that.

My dear young people and families, please know that you are not alone. As my brother bishops have declared, “regardless of your immigration status, you are children of God and welcome in the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church supports you and will advocate for you.” The United States is not only your country, it is also your home.

It is very fitting that today’s Gospel speaks to us about the poor, the lonely, the weeping and the persecuted. Brothers and sisters know that “your reward will be great in heaven”. Let us then, put our trust in God.

More on the Mass for Dreamers from The Baltimore Sun: “Baltimore archbishop calls for mercy for ‘Dreamers’ during Mass at Fells Point church”