



June 5, 2024

The Inherent Human Dignity of Immigrants and People Living In Poverty

As the 2024 election season becomes more intense, rhetoric against our brothers and sisters who have moved into the United States from elsewhere or who are living in poverty is growing increasingly dehumanizing. Thus, we feel compelled to accompany immigrants and the poor in our parishes, schools, neighborhoods, workplaces, and communities with the constant reminder that you are of equal value, equal dignity and equally loved by our God, regardless of nation of origin, legal or economic status.

We draw on the missionary vision Saint Paul boldly proclaims to the Ephesians (2:19–20): “You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone...” A seafaring town, Ephesus was a mixture of languages and cultures of the ancient Near East. Saint Paul draws them together into the nascent Christian movement by grounding their inherent human dignity through Jesus Christ.

As the Vatican reminds us in the recently released declaration on human dignity, [*Dignitas Inifinita*](#):

The dignity of the human person comes from the love of the Creator, who has imprinted the indelible features of his image on every person (cf. Gen. 1:26). The Creator calls each person to know him, to love him, and to live in a covenantal relationship with him, while calling the person also to live in fraternity, justice, and peace with all others. In this perspective, dignity refers not only to the soul but also to the person as an inseparable unity of body and soul (18).

Immigrants in Washington state bring culture and language that add to our daily experiences as residents. Our immigrant neighbors perform critical work, raise families to be productive and active participants in our communities, and join us in worship, recreation, schooling, and all of the other activities of daily living that are enhanced through our encounters with one another. We welcome the stranger because our God asks us to love one another, to treat each other as we want to be treated. We all want to be seen, to be understood, to have our value acknowledged.

Our neighbors struggling to make ends meet also bring gifts, talents and experiences that broaden our perspectives and enhance our communities, if we are willing to see the person and Christ within that person and ourselves.

We say to immigrants and people in poverty that we see your humanity, value your experiences and perspectives, and stand with you as our brothers and sisters in Christ. We encourage all Catholics to live in fraternity, justice and peace with one another throughout the election season, and beyond.

In the heart of Christ,



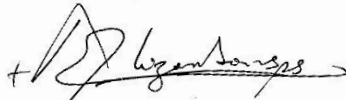
Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne
Archbishop of Seattle



Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima



Most Rev. Thomas A. Daly
Bishop of Spokane



Most Rev. Eusebio Elizondo, M.Sp.S.
Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle



Most Rev. Frank Schuster
Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle

Dignitas Infinita

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2024/04/08/240408c.html>