

**PASTORAL LETTER:  
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
“Peace in a Time of Fear”  
~ December 7, 2025 ~**

On this Second Sunday of Advent, the Church invites us to contemplate **Peace**—not the fragile peace the world gives, but the deep, steady, healing peace that comes from the heart of Christ.

It is the peace Isaiah spoke of when he said: *“The wolf shall be the guest of the lamb... There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.”* — Isaiah 11:6,9

Advent Peace is not sentimental. It is courageous, honest, tender, and true. It asks us to see the world as it is—and yet hold onto the hope of what *God desires it to become*.

And so in this week of peace, I want to speak to you—*not politically*, but pastorally—about something that is deeply affecting our communities, our families, and many of our pews: the experience of immigrants in our nation.

**1. There is no Peace without the Truth: The Truth of Human Dignity**

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) released their latest

video on immigration on **November 12, 2025**, following their plenary assembly in Baltimore; they spoke with compassion and clarity about the fear growing among immigrant families in America. They spoke of parents afraid to drive their children to school... families separated with little warning... detention centers lacking pastoral care... and the deep anxiety felt in many communities.

As pastors, the Bishops said: **“We are disturbed when we see a climate of fear... We are saddened by the vilification of immigrants... We are grieved when families are separated.”**

But they also affirmed, clearly and calmly:

**Independent Nations have a right and responsibility to regulate borders for the sake of order, safety, and the common good.**

The Church holds both teachings:

- **Human dignity** must always be upheld.
- **Law, order, and security** are essential for a stable society.

These teachings are not enemies. And in the light of our Advent journey, they coexist. These two teachings of the Church guide us to a

more peaceful, just, and compassionate path forward.

## 2. Peace for Everyone in Our Pews

In our own parish family, we hold many perspectives.

Some of us fear disorder or insecurity. Some of us fear detention or deportation. Some of us carry painful personal stories. Some of us carry concerns for the good of the nation.

As your pastor, I want you to know:

**No one is the enemy here.** No family in this pew is “against” another. We are one Body, seeking the peace Christ offers.

The bishops did not speak to shame anyone, nor to dismiss honest concerns. They spoke because **fear is growing**, and fear is not from God.

Advent Peace does not ask us to agree on every policy. But it asks us to see Christ in every neighbor.

## 3. The Scriptural Heart of Our Teaching

The bishops reminded us of the foundation of our faith:

- Every human being is made in the **image of God** (Genesis 1:27).
- God’s heart turns toward the **stranger, widow, orphan, and poor** (Zechariah 7:10).
- Jesus became poor for our sake (2 Corinthians 8:9).
- He is found in “*the least of these*” (Matthew 25).
- He commands us to **love one another as He has loved us** (John 13:34).

This is not an ideology. This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To those who are immigrants in our parish, the bishops said with tenderness: “**You are not alone.**”

And as your pastor at Little Flower, I echo that to you: You belong here. We walk with you. Your suffering is our suffering. You are not alone.

## 4. Advent Peace As a Path Forward

Advent is not a season of arguments. It is a season of listening, preparing, and healing. This week, as we light the **Candle of Peace**, I ask you to join me in three simple commitments:

### (1) Peace in our Speech (Words)

Let us refuse dehumanizing language—toward immigrants or toward those who disagree with us.

## **(2) Peace in our Vision (Faith)**

Let us see every person first as a child of God, not as a statistic or political category.

## **(3) Peace in our Actions (Mission)**

Let us support families in crisis, accompany those who fear separation, and encourage fair, just, humane reforms that uphold both dignity and security.

These are not political acts.

These are corporal works of mercy.  
*(shelter the homeless, welcome the stranger)*

The bishops themselves wrote:

**“Human dignity and national security are not in conflict.**

**Both are possible if people of good will work together.”**

This is the kind of peace Advent asks of us.

## **5. A Prayer for Our Parish Family**

My dear Little Flower, Advent peace does not mean avoiding difficult truths. It means facing them with **gentleness, compassion, and trust in Christ**, who came as a stranger to many and a refugee Himself (John 1:11 cf).

I'd like to leave you with a timely and appropriate poem (while we journey through the 2nd Week of Advent) by Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan, Philippines. His words are a reminder of God's Advent peace and offer us quiet strength.

~

*Lord, I believe in peace  
because I believe in You.  
Help me to make peace  
and be ready to pay its price.*

*I will make peace through dialogue.  
I do not believe in peace without justice.  
I will make peace through love.  
I do not believe in peace without  
repentance.  
I will make peace through prayer;  
I do not believe in peace without You.*

*In my life,  
may the world receive  
the peace of Jesus;  
let my life be of peace.*

*When I die,  
or if they kill me,  
as they killed Jesus,  
may the world receive  
new peace in my sacrifice.*

~

Your parish priest,  
**Fr. JC Merino**