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Archbishop Robert J. Carlson Responds to DACA Announcement

ST. LOUIS – Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson, Archbishop of St. Louis, today released a statement in response to the Trump administration’s plans to phase out Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

Welcoming the stranger, the immigrant, and the refugee have been long-standing hallmarks of our American way of life and religious convictions. The responsibility to welcome and care for the migrant and refugee are not only public and social virtues, but also find common ground and resolve in faith: “Come you that are blessed by my Father...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25: 34-35). This Gospel mandate to actively reach out and welcome the stranger has guided our Catholic social values and practices for centuries. Throughout our Catholic tradition, we have learned to be attentive to the needs of the poor, the marginalized, and the vulnerable. In faith, we have come to recognize and know the face of Christ in the migrant and refugee.

In this spirit of compassion and solidarity, today, I join my brother Catholic bishops, religious and civic leaders, the larger Catholic community, and people of good will in supporting the estimated 800,000 young people who have benefitted from the DACA program. The Archdiocese of St. Louis will continue to be a place of welcome, service, and mutual hospitality, especially to the suffering and most vulnerable among us.

Let us hear the words of Pope Francis anew: “No one can remain insensitive to the inequalities that persist in the world! Everybody, according to his or her particular opportunities and responsibilities, should be able to make a personal contribution to putting an end to so many social injustices. The culture of selfishness and individualism that often prevails in our society is not, I repeat, not what builds up and leads to a more habitable world: rather, it is the culture of solidarity that does so; the culture of solidarity means seeing others not as rivals or statistics, but brothers and sisters. And we are all brothers and sisters!”

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