



## WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

November 23, 2015

### **STATEMENT OF WISCONSIN BISHOPS ON TERRORIST ATTACKS AND RESETTLEMENT OF SYRIAN REFUGEES**

The Catholic bishops of Wisconsin join bishops across the United States in expressing our deepest condolences to the French people for the horrific loss of life at the hands of ISIS terrorists. There is no justification for such barbarism, especially when done in the name of God.

The unspeakable brutality in Paris last week has understandably raised concerns about public safety here in the United States. However, we reaffirm our support for the resettlement of refugees from Syria and all other places where persecution, terrorism, and war have inflicted terrible suffering and forced people to flee for their lives.

Nationally, the Catholic Church resettles about one third of the refugees who enter the U.S. annually, so we have extensive experience in the resettlement process. Here in Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) authorizes Catholic Charities in Milwaukee to resettle refugees. Catholic Charities staffers speak over 20 different languages and, in concert with hundreds of Catholic parishioners, help refugees adapt to American life by providing initial shelter, food, clothing, employment, and English literacy instruction. According to the DCF, of the 70,000 refugees who presently reside in our state, 95 percent (66,500) are self-sufficient and most are U.S. citizens.

As Catholics, we are called to protect the life and dignity of every human being and to welcome the stranger. As Americans, we witness to the fact that a nation of exiles, of “huddled masses yearning to breathe free,” can continue to offer hope and opportunity to the world. Americans have been immensely blessed. We must be generous in sharing these blessings with others.

Let us then recommit ourselves to our most cherished principles. Otherwise terrorism will have succeeded not only in creating thousands of victims and exiles but also in causing us to abandon our highest ideals.

Most Reverend Jerome E. ListECKi, Archbishop of Milwaukee  
Most Reverend Robert C. Morlino, Bishop of Madison  
Most Reverend David L. Ricken, Bishop of Green Bay  
Most Reverend William P. Callahan, Bishop of La Crosse  
Very Reverend James P. Powers, Administrator, Diocese of Superior