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Bishop Frank J. Dewane Diocese of Venice 1000 Pinebrook Rd Venice, FL 34285 March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Holy Thursday

Dear Most Reverend Dewane,

We pray you are having a blessed Holy Week. It has come our attention the plight of a priest of your Diocese, Fr Krzysztof "Chris" Frost at St. Martha's Catholic Church in Sarasota. The State Department is denying this priest the renewal of his R-1 visa and green card. Rather than renewing it they are deporting him at the end of May. Fr Krzysztof is just one among many nationwide who are being sent back to their native countries where they must remain for one year before registering to re-enter the USA.

The irony of the situation is that while our southern border is wide open and illegal immigration at an all-time high, we as a Country are deporting as a priority the R-1 Visa holders (religious workers) because we have "reached our quota". At a time where the very moral fiber of this Country is being destroyed, we are sending away the very people that bring us the Lord Jesus Christ and sustain this moral foundation.

While it may seem that these problems belong to the secular realm, we wholeheartedly disagree. The late Pope Benedict XVI was clear that while "the Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible she at the same time cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice." DCE 28 We are respectfully asking you not to remain on the sidelines in this fight for justice.

Aside from being the Shepherd of the Diocese you serve on the Subcommittee for the Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees and Travelers for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, thus magnifying your responsibility to act. We ask that you stand up in private and public addressing secular authorities who have the power to change this. On this Holy Thursday, the day dedicated to the Priesthood we make our plea that you will speak up for this priest and those in similar situations, using the episcopal platform you have been given by God and the Church.

Respectfully,

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John Yep Catholics for Catholics CEO

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General Michael Flynn (Ret) US National Security Advisor to 45<sup>th</sup> President

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**Tom Homan** Former Director of Immigration & Customs