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PRAYER VIGIL FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

St. Petersburg, FL: The Diocese of St. Petersburg invites the media to attend our Prayer Vigil for Migrants and Refugees led by Most Reverend Gregory L. Parkes, Bishop of St. Petersburg, with an estimated 1,000 people in attendance from around the community.

The Prayer Vigil will be held at **7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 1, 2017, at Nativity Catholic Church (705 E. Brandon Blvd., Brandon, FL 33511).**

Many in our community and throughout the country are experiencing fear and anxiety in response to President Trump's recent and proposed executive orders concerning the status of migrants and refugees in our country. "The Prayer Vigil is being held as an expression of our solidarity and support for our migrant and refugee brothers and sisters who live, work, and make their homes in our community," said Bishop Gregory Parkes.

The Catholic Church has repeatedly called for collaboration between the White House and Congress to work together for comprehensive immigration reform. While countries have the right to protect their borders and to regulate immigration in a way that is fair and promotes public safety, the Church has repeatedly underlined the importance of treating the undocumented members of our community with the dignity that is theirs as children of God.

Pope Francis has also repeatedly called for all people of the world to welcome the migrant and refugee, who are often fleeing violence and impossible living conditions. At the same time, he has articulated that migrants need to "cooperate ever more closely with the communities that welcome them, for the good of their own children (For the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Jan. 15, 2017)."

For questions about the Prayer Vigil for Migrants and Refugees, please contact Vivi Iglesias or Sabrina Schultz, Director of Life Ministry, at 727-344-1611.

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