



MITROPOLIA ORTODOXĂ ROMÂNĂ A CELOR DOUĂ AMERICI
THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX METROPOLIA OF THE AMERICAS

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Mr. Donald J. Trump
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The issue of immigration policy has been a central discussion point in our nation for many years. The proper balance and compromises necessary have eluded us. Previous Presidential Administrations have found ways, some more satisfactory than others, to execute policies that have kept the difficult but necessary decisions at bay, at least for a time, but without resolving them. However, in these past months Attorney General Sessions announced that the immigration policy would change to zero tolerance. Without entering into a discussion about the nuances of this policy, suffice it to say many opinions have been advanced as to the soundness of his, and your, decision. On June 14, 2018 Mr. Sessions reinforced this position of your Administration by citing the Holy Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans. This misuse of the Holy Scriptures has compelled us to respond.

The Holy Scriptures constantly remind people of faith that they should greet, accept, and welcome: travelers, refugees, persons persecuted, widows, orphans, and those in need. We lack the space in order to cite the many places in the Holy Scriptures where God reminds us of our obligation to these unfortunate persons, but let us offer you just a few.

When even as a new-born infant, our Lord Jesus Christ was facing extermination by King Herod, God told Joseph that he should seek refuge in the land of Egypt (Matthew 2:19-22) until Herod had died and the danger had passed. In the Old Covenant the Lord tells the children of Israel that: "You shall not oppress a stranger, you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Exodus 23:9) God goes even so far as to tell them that: "When you reap your harvest in your field, and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow; that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean it afterward; it shall

be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.” (Deuteronomy 24:19-22)

Even in these few verses of the Holy Scriptures we see the very foundational principles of this wonderful place: the United States of America. John Winthrop, at the inauguration of the American project, from his ship in Massachusetts Bay, called the Pilgrims to be like: “A City on a Hill” (Matthew 5:14), reminding them of the Lord’s desire for all people of faith to be a beacon of hope for all. In good times and bad times our nation has tried to live up this high calling.

Mr. President,

The immigration issue is a complex one, as you well know. There are human rights, political, and economic forces driving it. No amount of border security will stem this. We must engage our neighbors to the South in solutions. No amount of detentions will stop the flow. They are coming out of desperation. And yes, separating children from their parents is not the solution. It is a nightmare that betrays who we are as a nation and a people.

The solution is not in charged rhetoric. Everyone should refrain from harmful speech. But rather, the way forward must be sought in a spirit of mutual trust and shared values. We have these resources in our legacy. In a spirit of practical solutions. We have examples of these in our past. With respect for our neighbors. This is surely worth the effort.

Mr. President,

You have so many resources available to you. You could stop separating children from their parents immediately. You could convene a meeting of the members of Congress, from all sides, to sit and talk honestly about proposals acceptable to the majority of Americans. You could work with the Congress to find ways to address the issues facing the nations south of our border that are causing this movement of populations, seeking their help, and perhaps even righting the wrongs that lay at our doorstep.

God will help you and us in this. He is a God of wonders. Trust him.

Sincerely,



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