

U.S. Bishops' Migration Chairman addresses termination of Title 42

WASHINGTON - On April 1, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued an order terminating the use of Title 42 of the U.S. Code to prohibit certain noncitizens from entering the United States, effective May 23, 2022.

Originally begun in a purported effort to reduce COVID-19 transmission, this policy has led to the expulsion of more than one million migrants by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) since 2020, including many asylum-seeking children and families. In implementing this policy, DHS has overridden normal immigration proceedings and skirted due process protections, forcibly returning vulnerable individuals to places where their lives are in danger.

Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville, auxiliary bishop of Washington and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Migration, issued the following statement:

“We welcome the end of this harmful policy. In its place, my brother bishops from along the U.S.-Mexico border and I have long urged policies that are supported by sound scientific rationales, respect migrants' intrinsic dignity, preserve human life, and provide for safe, orderly, and humane immigration, all while acknowledging the right of nations to maintain their borders.

“Let us be clear: any perceived or actual increase in vulnerable migrants seeking refuge at our border in the coming months will not be a direct result of this change. Many are already at our door, having been forced to languish in Mexico for an indefinite period of time, unable to avail themselves of the opportunity to seek protection in accordance with U.S. and international law. Persecution, violence, natural disasters, and other root causes of migration will continue to force people to seek protection until more robust efforts are undertaken to address them.

“We urge the Biden Administration to implement a comprehensive plan for the border that ensures the humane treatment of all persons and respects their God-given dignity, while safeguarding due process. This can only be achieved successfully through government-led preparations made in close coordination with border communities and civil society across the country, especially organizations providing humanitarian support.

“In less than two weeks, we will celebrate the Solemnity of Easter. In preparing our hearts to encounter Christ's ultimate sacrifice, let us ponder his unwavering love for us and allow it to move us toward that same outpouring of charity when faced with the challenges of our time.”

