

Homily — Prayer Service for Hope and Unity^[1]

*Most Reverend José H. Gomez
Archbishop of Los Angeles*

*Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels
November 10, 2016*



My dear brothers and sisters,

We are here tonight because our people are hurting and they feel afraid. We are here to listen to their voices, because they feel they are being forgotten.

In our country, we need to start building bridges and bringing people together. We need to reach out to those who are hurting. Now is the time to build unity and heal communities, through our love for our neighbor and our care for those in need.

Estamos aquí esta noche porque muchos entre nosotros están heridos y con miedo. Nos reunimos para ponernos en la presencia de Dios que es nuestro Padre y unirnos todos como hijos e hijas de Dios.

That's what tonight is about. Not politics. It's about people.

We stand in the presence of God who is our Father in heaven and we are his children. And that means we are all brothers and sisters.

Those are the words of Jesus that we just heard: *"I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father"*

This is our true identity — every one of us. We are not liberals or conservatives. Before everything else, we are children of God.

In the past couple days since the election — we have children in our schools who are scared. They think the government is going to come and deport their parents, any day now.

Right now — all across this city, and in cities all across this country — there are children who are going to bed scared.

There are men and women who can't sleep because they are trying to figure out what to do next. Trying to figure what to do when the government comes to take them away from their kids and their loved ones.

En los últimos días, como todos sabemos, muchos de nuestros hermanos y hermanas, adultos y niños están temerosos pensando que los van a deportar y por tanto separarlos de sus familias.

This should not be happening in America. We are not this kind of people. We are better than this.

My brothers and sisters, we have allowed this issue of immigration to consume us, as a nation. Our immigration system has been broken for a long time. Our leaders could have come together and solved this problem — *at any time* in the last 15 or 20 years.

More than 2 million people have been deported in the last eight years. Nobody seems to care. Except that little girl who comes home at night — and she knows her father isn't there anymore.

We are better people than this. We should not accept that this is the best we can hope for — in our politics or in ourselves.

Como todos sabemos el tema de la inmigración nos preocupa mucho.

El sistema de inmigración no funciona desde hace muchos años y nuestros líderes lo podrían haber arreglado desde hace mucho. Más de 2 millones de personas han sido deportadas en los últimos 8 años. No puede ser. Somos mejor gente que eso en este país. Tenemos que seguir insistiendo que tiene que haber una solución justa y digna de nuestro país.

And so this is where we are at. Tonight in America — children are afraid; men and women are worried and anxious, thinking about where they can run and hide. This is happening tonight, *in America*.

The answer is not angry words or violence in the streets. It never solves anything; it only inflames things more.

We need to be people of peace, people of compassion. Love not hate. Mercy not revenge. These are the tools to rebuild our nation and renew the American dream.

Tonight we promise our brothers and sisters who are undocumented — we will never leave you alone. *!En las buenas y en las malas!* In good times and in bad, we are with you. You are family. We are brothers and sisters.

Nuestra reacción a esta realidad no es de violencia o disgusto descontrolado. Somos un pueblo de paz, de compasión y todos juntos, con la ayuda de Dios, encontraremos esa solución y la Iglesia esta con todos los inmigrantes que no tienen documentos, como decimos, '*en las buenas y en las malas*'. ¡Somos familia!

¡Siempre con la seguridad de que con Dios y la intercesión de nuestra Madre Santísima de Guadalupe, lo conseguiremos!

Also tonight — as we come gather to pray for unity and to “bind the wounds of division” — tonight we pray for our leaders, including our President-elect. May God grant them wisdom and mercy, and the heart to feel the pain of those who are suffering.

Let’s pray tonight, in a special way — that our leaders will find it in their hearts to make a beautiful, humanitarian gesture. Let’s pray that they can come together, in a spirit of national unity, and agree to stop the threat of deportations — until we can fix our broken immigration system.

También nos reunimos para pedir por la unidad en nuestro país y para que se curen las heridas de la división después de las elecciones del martes pasado.

Pedimos por nuestros líderes, incluyendo al presidente electo y su familia, para que Dios les conceda sabiduría y misericordia y un corazón abierto a las necesidades de todos los que sufren.

And may Our Lady of Guadalupe — the Mother of Jesus and the Mother of all the peoples of the Americas — may she watch over us and help us to truly become one nation under God.

¡Santa Maria de Guadalupe, ruega por nosotros, por nuestros líderes y por nuestro país!
Amen

^[1] Matt. 5:43–48.