



*To the Participants in the 115th Annual Meeting
of the Catholic Charities USA Network*

I was pleased to learn of the 115th Annual Meeting of the Catholic Charities USA Network taking place in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and I offer cordial greetings and good wishes to all those participating.

You are gathered together as the Church celebrates the Jubilee Year focused on the virtue of hope, which my venerable predecessor defined as “the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring” (*Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025*, 1).

Through your 168 diocesan Catholic Charities agencies, you become “agents of hope” for the millions of people who approach the Church in the United States of America seeking compassion and care. Many of those whom you serve are among the most vulnerable, including migrants and refugees.

As they are not able to rely on their own resources and have to depend on God and the goodness of others, in many ways your ministry makes the Lord’s providence concrete for them. Through providing food, shelter, medical care, legal assistance, and many other gestures of kindness, Catholic Charities affiliates across the United States show what Pope Francis often referred to as God’s “style” of closeness, compassion, and tenderness.

While those affected by poverty and forced migration face difficult challenges, let us not forget that they can also be witnesses to hope not only through their trust in divine assistance, but also by their resilience in often

having to overcome many obstacles on their journeys. In a special way, Catholic migrants and refugees have become missionaries of hope in many nations, including your own, by bringing with them a vibrant faith and the popular devotions that often re-energize the parishes who welcome them (cf. *Message for the 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees*).

It might be said that through assisting displaced persons to find their new homes in your country, you also act as bridge builders between nations, cultures and peoples. I encourage you, then, to continue helping the communities who receive these newly arrived brothers and sisters to be living witnesses of hope, recognizing that they have an intrinsic human dignity and are invited to participate fully in community life (cf. *ibid.*).

Dear friends, I express my heartfelt gratitude for all that you and those who work with your networks do each day to put into practice the Lord's admonition to see and serve him in the poor, hungry, homeless, and people in any kind of need (cf. *Mt 25:31-46*). May Christ continue to accompany you and give you his joy and peace.

With these sentiments, I entrust the Annual Meeting to the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, and I willingly impart my Apostolic Blessing to all in the Catholic Charities USA Network as a pledge of abundant heavenly graces.

From the Vatican, 4 October 2025

Leo PP. XIV