

Prayer service outside ICE headquarters

June 24, 2026

Welcome

Greetings everyone and welcome! As we gather this month, we recall in particular those who have suffered from torture – June is Torture Awareness Month, and this Friday, June 26, is the UN’s International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. We know that many of those who are being detained in jails and detention centers are enduring torture, and we hold them close in our hearts, and pray for an end to their suffering and for their healing.

Today is the feast of St. John the Baptist, the contemporary of Jesus who first identified him as the messiah, who called out the hypocrisy of the regime in power, and who cried out for repentance. His public witness led to his martyrdom – we pray that his commitment to bravely speaking out for the truth continues to inspire and guide us.

We gather today in response to the Christian call to continue to speak, pray and act until every citizen, lawmaker, ICE agent and human being recognizes the dignity of every person, especially the dignity of every immigrant, and stops inhumane, oppressive, violent and unjust actions towards them. Christ continues to be with us and it is his presence within us that compels us to act.

Opening song

Opening prayer

Jesus, Our Tortured Brother Today
by Dianna Ortiz, OSU

Jesus, our Tortured Brother, in this world, so many are forced to walk your path today – the suffering and pain, the humiliation, the sense of betrayal and abandonment – for those with power, the Romans of today, continue to condemn others to modern crosses.

You said that what was done to the least of these was done to you, and so each day, You are tortured anew.

Jesus, our Guardian of the Wounded and Tortured, bid us to look into the secret prisons—the unmarked graves – the hearts and minds of the torture survivors.

Bid us to wipe the tears of the families of those whose decapitated bodies were cast into the open sea.

Bid us to embrace the open wounds of the tortured.

Jesus, Guiding Spirit, teach us to be in solidarity with those who hang from these crosses.

Call out to those who torture: "Know the evil you have done and repent." Call out to the rest of us: "What meaning does love have if you allow torture to continue unopposed?"

In the name of all the tortured of the world, give us the strength, give us the courage, give us the will to bring this horror to an end, in the name of love, justice, and the God of us all.

Amen.

Response – Read by all

God of love and mercy, we know you are with us always, even at times of tremendous pain and suffering. We remember that Jesus himself was tortured. Give us the strength and courage to continue to speak out, to deepen our commitment to nonviolence, to justice, to walking with our neighbors, sisters, and brothers, especially those who have suffered torture in any form.

A reading from the book of Matthew

At this time John the Baptizer appeared in the desert of Judea, proclaiming, "Change your hearts and minds, for the reign of heaven is about to break in upon you!" It was John that the prophet Isaiah described when he said, "A herald's voice cries in the desert: 'Prepare the way of our God, make straight the paths of God!'"

... At that time, Jerusalem, all Judea and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him. John baptized them in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins.

When he saw that many of the Pharisees and Sadducees were coming to be baptized, John said to them, "You pack of snakes! Who told you to flee from the coming wrath? Give some evidence that you mean to reform! And don't pride yourselves on the claim, 'Sarah and Abraham are our parents.' I tell you, God can raise children for Sarah and Abraham from these very stones!

"Even now the ax is laid to the root of the tree. Every tree that is not fruitful will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I will baptize you in water if you have a change of heart, but the one who will follow me is more powerful than I. I'm not fit even to untie the sandals of the coming one! That one will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire, whose winnowing-fan will clear the threshing floor. The grain will be gathered into the barn, but the chaff will be burned in unquenchable fire."

Statement

We stand outside ICE headquarters as people of faith to defend the dignity of our immigrant neighbors. ICE and Border Patrol operate with impunity, separating families, deporting people to unsafe countries or places they have never been to, utilizing disproportionate force, and detaining people, all without transparency or due process and all funded by taxpayer dollars. Many people victimized by these actions came to the United States legally, only to have their legal status revoked under the current administration.

We demand an immediate halt to DHS funding and operations until the following reforms are enacted:

- An investigation into use-of-force violations and immigrant deaths.
- Restraint that brings an end to racial profiling, warrantless arrests, and enforcement at sensitive locations including schools, hospitals, and places of worship.
- Oversight by Congress to ensure accountability and respect for state requests to remove federal agents from local streets.
- A halt to construction of new immigrant detention centers.
- No forced deportations.

We call on Congress and DHS to recognize the inherent worth of every individual. The violence must end, replaced by policies rooted in human rights and basic respect.

Individuals who died in ICE custody thus far in 2026

Let us now remember those who have died in ICE custody thus far in 2026. Please pause for a silent prayer after each name is read.

Geraldo Lunas Campos, January 3, 2026 – 55 years old
Luis Gustavo Nunez Caceres, January 5, 2026 – 42 years old
Luis Beltran Yanez-Cruz, January 6, 2026 – 68 years old
Parady La, January 9, 2026 – 46 years old
Heber Sanchaz Dominguez, January 14, 2026 – 34 years old
Victor Manuel Dias, January 14, 2026 – 36 years old
Lorth Sim, February 16, 2026 – 59 years old
Jairo Garcia-Hernandez, February 16, 2026 – 27 years old
Alberto Gutierrez-Reyes, February 27, 2026 – 48 years old
Pejman Karshenas Najafabadi, March 1, 2026 – 59 years old
Emmanuel Cleeford Damas, March 2, 2026 – 56 years old
Mohammad Nazeer Paktiawal, March 14, 2026 – 41 years old
Royer Perez-Jimenez, March 16, 2026 – 19 years old
Jose Guadalupe Ramos-Solano, March, 2026
Tuan Van Bui, April 1, 2026, 55 years old
Alejandro Cabrera Clemente, April 11, 2026 – 49 years old
Aled Damien Carbonell-Betancourt, April 12, 2026 – 27 years old
Denny Adan Gonzalez, April 28, 2026 – 33 years old
Mamuka Artmeladze, June 4, 2026 – 43 years old

Source: [Detention Watch Network](#)

Intercessions – Participants can rotate each taking a prayer to read

Together, we mourn the injustices and wounds inflicted on those who are suffering. Please respond, “Hear our prayer.”

For all immigrants who have been kidnapped and disappeared, many of whom have suffered torture during their ordeal

ALL: Hear our prayer

For first generation citizens, children of immigrants, and naturalized citizens, enduring the terror of being falsely detained or deported because of their accent or the color of their skin

ALL: Hear our prayer

For children fearing that their parents will be kidnapped from them each time they separate

ALL: Hear our prayer

For immigrants fearful of going into their own house of worship

ALL: Hear our prayer

For students who are terrorized and blocked from receiving the education they deserve

ALL: Hear our prayer

For mothers and fathers who have sacrificed everything in the name of hope for their families

ALL: Hear our prayer

For all our migrant sisters and brothers currently being held in ICE detention centers without due process, and without sufficient food, water, and bedding

ALL: Hear our prayer

For people of conscience around the country who have been brutalized violently for standing for their migrant sisters and brothers

ALL: Hear our prayer

For immigration lawyers of conscience and those within the legal system working tirelessly for due process and justice for all

ALL: Hear our prayer

For ICE agents and all border control and homeland security employees, that they may reject the narrative of fear and hatred and instead protect the lives and dignity of citizens and non-citizens alike

ALL: Hear our prayer

That we might transform the billions of dollars spent on weapons of war and maintenance of a security state into a budget that feeds those who are hungry, houses those who are homeless, caring for those who are sick, and other crucial human needs

ALL: Hear our prayer

For all people of faith and conscience, that each may hear the cry of those who suffer and respond with welcome, protection, promotion, and integration

ALL: Hear our prayer

For all those gathered here today, that we greet each other with love and kindness, and share the same with migrants and refugees, and with all those who are vulnerable

ALL: Hear our prayer

Jesus, may your light and love fill the broken places in our hearts, and give us the grace to move us into action. Grant us the patience, strength, and courage to be channels of your peacemaking.

ALL: Amen

Plea to political and immigration officials and agents:

Today we appeal to all political and immigration officials and agents who have devised, ordered and are carrying out ICE raids on immigrant communities across the United States. We remind you that we are all created in God's image and all life is sacred. God's love knows no borders. We implore you to respect the dignity of each person you encounter, especially the most vulnerable. We invite you to welcome our neighbors, not to arrest, detain and deport them. The cries of all those who live in fear and are detained rise to heaven more loudly each day. We implore all political leaders overseeing immigration policy and ICE agents: Stop the cruelty of the raids! Stop the repression! Release all those unjustly held captive, reunite families, and allow immigrants to get on a path to long-term status!

Closing prayer, read by all:

O holy God, heart of heaven and earth, praised be your holy name. Your children, from all peoples of the world, regardless of borders, praise you. We praise you and give you thanks because you have placed in our midst your beloveds, migrants, asylees and refugees.

We ask for your mercy in how we have failed to be doers of your love for our immigrant children, workers, students, parents, torture survivors and trafficked persons who are terrorized by ICE and inhumane migration policy.

We ask for your grace to be impelled by the Suffering Christ in our midst, and pray for your blessings on all faith leaders, activists, communities, NGOs, and elected officials who are acting in continued solidarity, which is your love in action. Love is never indifferent.

We praise you and give you thanks because you walk always with those who cross borders, in search of wellbeing and safety.

O Lady of Guadalupe, mother of the Americas, be always our protector and intercessor for love, nonviolence, and the building of just peace for all. Amen.