



AMERICA/UNITED STATES - Hope and caution on behalf of the Bishops after the Supreme Court ruling on immigration

Washington (Agenzia Fides) - A step towards a human reform of immigration, but to be considered with caution, because there is still a fair immigration system lacking: is the meaning of the note published by the Episcopal Conference of the United States of America, of which a copy was sent to Fides Agency, concerning the Supreme Court's decision on June 25 that rejected some of the provisions contained in the immigration law in Arizona. In particular the most controversial "show me your papers" provision, which authorizes state police to check the immigration status of anyone they detain if there is reasonable suspicion that the person is unlawfully in the United States, it also said that the state cannot make it a crime for undocumented persons to apply for a job and cannot arrest someone based solely on the suspicion that the person is in this country illegally, yet the ruling also said that the federal government has the ultimate authority to decide who will be held on immigration charges and deported.

The Bishops found reason for hope in the decision (Arizona versus United States) as they believe that it reflects their appeal to have fair and human laws on immigration, and their concern that such laws could divide families (see Fides 06/01/2012). The precaution is that a new provision may be added according to which immigrants should always carry documents with them.

The note signed by the Archbishop of Los Angeles, His Exc. Mgr. José H. Gomez, president of the Migration Commission of the Episcopal Conference, said that "the Supreme Court's decision not to accept all the provisions of Arizona, confirms the strong role of the federal government on immigration", at the same time asks Congress to take steps to implement an urgent reform of the law. The text also mentions that the Catholic Church in the United States will continue to fight for a "reform of the national migration system that is humane and just." "The Church will continue to stand side by side with migrant workers and their families, always looking for justice," concluded Archbishop Gomez. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 26/6/2012)