

Michael B. Hancock
Mayor



City and County of Denver

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December 30, 2022

The Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila
Archbishop of Denver
Archdiocese of Denver
1300 Steele Street
Denver, CO 80210

Your Excellency:

I'm writing you regarding a matter of urgent humanitarian need in our community.

In the last few weeks and over Christmas, our city has undertaken the task of sheltering nearly 3000 migrants and asylum seekers from Central and South America, primarily those fleeing oppression in Venezuela. We turned three city recreation center facilities into temporary shelters to house, feed and care for people in desperate need, and have worked to provide hotel and motel rooms for families with children. We're grateful that Catholic Charities (Samaritan House) has taken in nine families.

No matter one's opinion about immigration policy or politics, I trust you will agree that the immediate need for keeping people sheltered from frigid cold temperatures and adequately fed and clothed is beyond dispute. Unfortunately, we've not yet seen an outpouring of support from other local governments to meet this temporary crisis. The Governor and State of Colorado are helping address this challenge and we continue to communicate with our federal partners on what is, essentially, a federal problem in the long run.

The lack of an adequate government response is what leads me to renew a call I made to communities of faith and other non-governmental charities to help address dire human needs and a steady migration of people to our city. Thankfully, we've been fortunate to find such partners and I have been gratified by the dedication of so many volunteers and city employees who have given time and effort to support our response to this emergency.

One way we believe the Archdiocese might help is by entering into conversations with city staff to utilize the facilities at Little Sisters of the Poor at 3629 W. 29th Ave. As we understand it the facility, which is currently vacant, could accommodate 100 people comfortably. Without exploring all the details, I am asking if we can secure your approval to explore the possibility of utilizing this facility for the short-term goal of assisting migrant families in need during the winter months.

If there are additional ways the Archdiocese and Holy Catholic community may want to engage with the city in addressing this challenge, we would be ever grateful. It's my hope that you, and may we all, enjoy the blessings of peace, love and charity in the New Year ahead.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Hancock", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael B. Hancock
Mayor