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Standing With the Undocumented and Refugees

Bishop McElroy

Catholics must work to heal the nation after the “deeply destructive political campaign,” Bishop Robert W. McElroy of San Diego said in a Nov. 28 speech at the Catholic Immigrant Integration Initiative Conference held at the University of San Diego’s Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice. The conference was sponsored by the university, the Center for Migration Studies and Catholic Charities of the Diocese of San Diego. Bishop McElroy said people should turn away from “selective outrage” to compassion for all who are suffering, including young black men who fear for their security when dealing with law enforcement and the white work-

“Let us always make clear that we stand with the undocumented and the refugee communities in this moment of suffering.”

ing class without college degrees. During the campaign, President-elect Donald Trump vowed to deport 11 million immigrants who have entered the country illegally by using a “deportation force.” Trump has since seemed to back off this proposal some, but Bishop McElroy warned against taking a wait-and-see approach to this issue, “for it can lead to the ever greater normalization of mass deportations, which will be harder to stop down the road.” He said if the Trump administration overturns President Barack Obama’s protections for people who were brought into the country illegally as children, “it will be an unmistakable sign that the new administration is embarking upon the pathway of massive deportation, and the Catholic community must move immediately to wide-scale opposition. And we must move with the same energy, commitment and immediacy that have characterized Catholic opposition on the issues of abortion and religious liberty in recent years.” Bishop McElroy’s speech follows.

We gather here today at an important juncture in the political life of our nation.

On one level, we are witnessing the peaceful transition of federal political power from one party to another, a tradition of governance which has been central to the American experiment in democracy for more than two centuries.

For the Catholic community, this shift in the political culture signals greater progress

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