



Vatican, December 24, 2022

To: Co-director
Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)
Mr. Joe Rubio

Dear Joe:

With these lines, I would like to express my unity with you on the fifth anniversary celebration of the program "Recognizing the Stranger."

Above all, I want to thank all of you for the dedication, the commitment, and the witness of IAF and its member organizations in the quest for the justice that is so due to migrant people.

I know that, during this time, you have worked hard, in close collaboration with parishes in nineteen dioceses in the United States, and with the support of that country's Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In particular, I would like to take this occasion to give thanks for the valuable contribution that you have made to the synodal process, through the formation of parish leaders, patient listening to concerns that affect families, and the conscious discernment of the sense of the People of God present in the world.

I encourage you to keep working together with pastors and community leaders to build a society that is increasingly more just and fraternal, to continue seeing, hearing, and touching the reality of those who suffer, and to continue developing the capacity of the people to participate fully in public life.

As I once said: "the future of humanity lies not only in the hands of great leaders, great powers, and elites. It lies fundamentally with the people, in their organizing capacity, and also in their hands, which sow this process of change with humility and conviction."

*I pray for and with all of you. Do so as well for me.
May Jesus bless you and the Holy Virgin take you under her care.*

Fraternally,

Francis