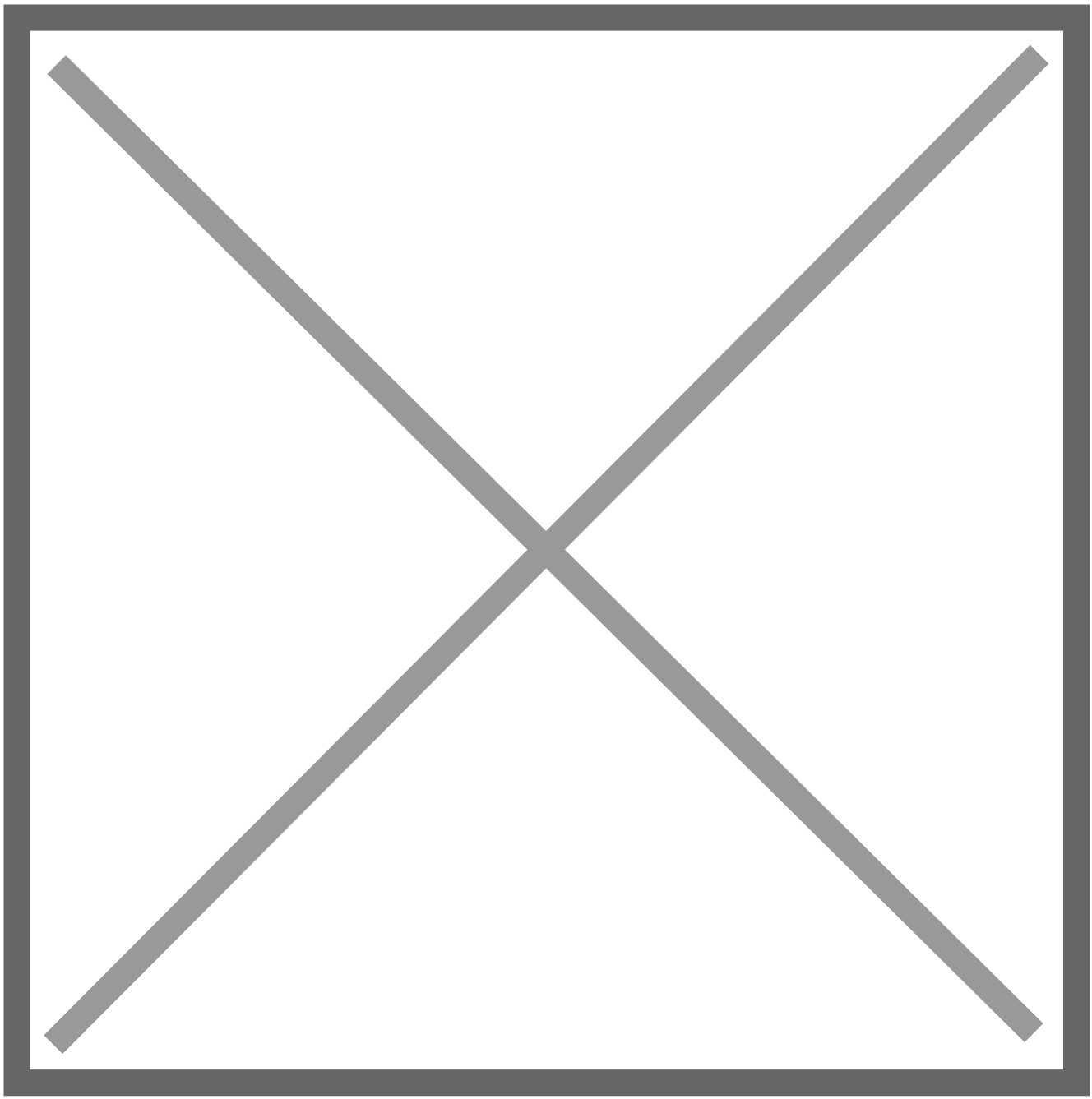
News



Bishop Daniel Garcia of Austin, Texas, is pictured in a file photo. Garcia spoke out Sept. 20, 2026, against the shooting of a Venezuelan man by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent that day in Austin, saying "people are living in terror and fear." (OSV News/Bob Roller)

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Austin, Texas — September 22, 2026
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After a man was shot and wounded by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer in Austin, Texas, on Sept. 20, Bishop Daniel Garcia denounced the shooting and called for "a viable immigration policy that respects the rule of law while recognizing the dignity of every person."

The individual who was shot was delivering for DoorDash at the time of the encounter with ICE, his lawyer said. A video obtained by CNN showed officers cutting off the man's shirt after the incident, revealing a bullet wound in his back.

In a Sept. 20 statement, Garcia, who leads the Diocese of Austin, said he was "deeply saddened and disturbed" by the shooting.

"We find ourselves in a time in this country and city, when people are living in terror and fear because of the increased activity of ICE agents on our streets. Many people are often being detained only due to the color of their skin or the language they speak," he said. "Today the credibility of a federal agency that is supposed to protect us has been weakened by incidences such as the one that took place today.

"I ask the faithful of the Diocese of Austin to pray for this man who was shot, his family, for all those who have been affected, all who have been involved and for our entire community," Garcia continued. "As an investigation begins, let us pray that the Federal, State and City authorities will be transparent and honest about what occurred this afternoon, so that confidence in our governmental entities may be

strengthened, not weakened."

Austin city officials have called for an independent investigation of the incident.

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In a statement posted on X, the Department of Homeland Security said, "Homeland Security Investigations, with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, is leading the investigation into the officer involved shooting of an illegal alien from Venezuela, who illegally entered our country under the Biden administration and had a final order of removal, during a law enforcement operation today in Austin, TX."

"The illegal alien’s condition is stable, and he is in federal custody pending removal," the statement said. "This is a developing situation, and we will update the public when more information becomes available."

But Austin immigration attorney Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch said in a series of posts on X that she is representing the man, whom she identified as Wilber Rafael Garces Perez, 28. Lincoln-Goldfinch contested the government's characterization, saying Perez was a "legal immigrant." She said he lawfully entered the United States through the CBP One program for asylum seekers — the program was discontinued in 2025 — and has a valid work permit.

"The issue regarding the deportation order is that he moved and changed addresses. There was a notice for a hearing sent to the wrong address that he missed, which is VERY common. We are working on that," she said. "He will be released from detention, his immigration matter will be resolved, and the agencies will be held accountable."

Garcia added in his statement, "We need not forget that regardless of a person’s immigration status, every person is created in the image and likeness of God and possesses an inherent dignity that must always be respected and protected. May God assist us in finding resolve and peace during these troubling times."

"We are reminded, during this National Migrant Week, of an essential truth of our faith: we are all brothers and sisters," he continued. "When one person is harmed, all of us are affected. We cannot allow differences of citizenship to diminish our recognition of the dignity that belongs to every human being."

This story appears in the **Immigration and the Church** feature series. View the full series.