



Bishops of Western Washington Condemn Family Separation at the U.S-Mexico Border

Archbishop J. Peter Sartain and Auxiliary Bishops Eusebio Elizondo and Daniel Mueggenborg of the Archdiocese of Seattle join in supporting and affirming the statement by Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, archbishop of Galveston-Houston and president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, condemning the separation of families at the U.S.-Mexico border.

On June 20, President Donald Trump issued an executive order that changes the policy at the border and discontinues the separation of families. Together with the other U.S. bishops, Archbishop Sartain, Bishop Elizondo and Bishop Mueggenborg will continue to work toward comprehensive immigration reform that honors the dignity of those seeking a better life in the United States as well as the legitimate need for safe and secure borders.

The following is the text of Bishop DiNardo's June 13, 2018 statement:

"At its core, asylum is an instrument to preserve the right to life. The Attorney General's recent decision elicits deep concern because it potentially strips asylum from many women who lack adequate protection. These vulnerable women will now face return to the extreme dangers of domestic violence in their home country. This decision negates decades of precedents that have provided protection to women fleeing domestic violence. Unless overturned, the decision will erode the capacity of asylum to save lives, particularly in cases that involve asylum seekers who are persecuted by private actors. We urge courts and policy makers to respect and enhance, not erode, the potential of our asylum system to preserve and protect the right to life."

"Additionally, I join Bishop Joe Vásquez, Chairman of USCCB's Committee on Migration, in condemning the continued use of family separation at the U.S./Mexico border as an implementation of the Administration's zero tolerance policy. Our government has the discretion in our laws to ensure that young children are not separated from their parents and exposed to irreparable harm and trauma. Families are the foundational element of our society and they must be able to stay together. While protecting our borders is important, we can and must do better as a government, and as a society, to find other ways to ensure that safety. Separating babies from their mothers is not the answer and is immoral."

<http://www.usccb.org/news/2018/18-098.cfm>