



SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER
Rise Up AND Act for Justice

Press Release: February 24, 2017

Catholic Organizations Deeply Troubled by Actions Against Immigrants
Let's not return to the shameful days of internment camps

“We do not want to return to the shameful days when Japanese Americans were herded into concentration camps during the Second World War,” wrote a coalition of Catholic advocacy organizations and religious orders in a joint letter to Secretary John Kelly of the Department of Homeland Security.

“We are deeply troubled by the pattern of arrests, detentions and deportations of undocumented immigrants across the nation – including violating the previous policy of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) not to conduct enforcement actions at or near ‘sensitive locations,’ including churches and their ministries to the poor and vulnerable,” the coalition wrote.

The U.S. Provincials of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd and their National Advocacy Center signed on to the joint letter: Sister Francisca Aguillón, RGS, Provincial of the Central South Province; Sister Maureen McGowan, RGS, Provincial of the New York Province; Sister Madeleine Munday, RGS, Provincial of the Mid-North America Province; and Lawrence Couch, Director of the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

Speaking to the flurry of pronouncements from the new Administration that resulted in this letter, Couch said, “Your words and actions, Mr. President, are causing fear among a population already vulnerable and living on the margin. With all qualifications removed from your memoranda, all undocumented immigrants are subject to expedited removal. With all prosecutorial discretion removed, all undocumented immigrants are subject to fast-track deportation. Please reconsider your words and actions and respect those who have chosen the United States above all other countries to love and honor.”

The joint letter asked Secretary Kelly “to affirm your commitment to instruct ICE and CBP agents to avoid ‘sensitive locations,’ such as churches and church property, and to respect our religious freedom to respond with mercy and compassion to immigrants and refugees, regardless of their legal status. We ask, as well, that you affirm your commitment to the importance of refugee resettlement, so that faith communities and others can continue to minister to these vulnerable populations.”

The Good Shepherd Sisters’ mission is to serve girls, women and families, especially those experiencing poverty, exploitation, vulnerability and marginalization.

[The National Advocacy Center](http://www.gsadvocacy.org) offers education through processes and strategies that address social justice issues and advocates for the transformation of society to the benefit of all people. The center reflects the spirituality, history and mission of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, working in solidarity with the disenfranchised - particularly families, women, and children.

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