

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd
U.S. Conference of Provincials
Provinces of Central South USA, Mid-North America, New York/Toronto

**STATEMENT: In Defense of the Human Dignity of All People
at the Border, Especially Children
July 18, 2019**

We, the Province Leaders of the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces, speak on behalf of our membership. We abhor the needless deaths occurring at our southern border. People are fleeing from their home countries because of political instability, extreme poverty, and climate change that often leads to loss of farms and livelihood.

At a time of great need, unfortunately our country has become more fearful of immigrants and refugees. The results are deplorable: children separated for long periods of time from their families. They are held in overcrowded detention centers. Many like their parents are forced to live in cages. Needless to say, they have not been provided with sufficient care, lack adequate food, etc. Currently, more than 2,000 children are being held in custody of the U.S. Border Patrol without their parents.

The people at our southern border are not our adversaries. They are fleeing a desperate situation in their home countries, a situation of extreme poverty frequently caused in part by our national policies.

We must regain the values that made our country a beacon of hope for those fleeing oppressive governments and violence. The causes of the crisis are varied but as a nation we must provide adequate resources to address the needs. Equally important, we must be willing to help those in need and not just build walls to keep them out.

In Matthew 25, we understand that our nation will be judged by how we respond to the needs of our neighbors. These immigrant children and their families are our neighbors. More so, they are a part of the fabric of our very selves – a people made in the image and likeness of God. As a nation, we will be judged by how we treat and love our neighbors as ourselves.

Our Sisters and Partners in Mission work with immigrants, refugees and with new Americans. Additionally, we serve in over 70 countries including those affected by the current crises. While borders are made by humankind, a person's human dignity is God-given. We say "no" to walls at our borders and yes to human kindness. If we respect the human person, then ultimately our country and the whole world will become a safe haven for all.



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