News



by Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Seattle — July 3, 2019
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Washington's bishops have issued a call for "comprehensive immigration reform that honors the dignity of those seeking a better life in the United States, while also addressing the legitimate need for safe and secure borders."

In a June 28 statement, the bishops called the current stalemate on immigration reform a "disappointing reality [that] continues to complicate efforts of law enforcement, sow discord in our communities and harm vulnerable people."

As Catholics, the bishops said, "we are called to practice Christian charity and to protect and defend the dignity of every human person, especially the poor and most vulnerable based on the moral natural law."

They also encouraged local Catholics to join in "ongoing efforts to create a just and safe immigration system."

They pointed out that "for many years there has been a growing national consensus that the U.S. immigration system is severely flawed and in need of a comprehensive overhaul" and that the "continued stalemate on enacting comprehensive immigration reform has created a void filled by stopgap initiatives and a patchwork of state laws."

The U.S. government's response to the current situation — with mass deportation efforts and plans to reinforce the borders — "are neither effective nor sustainable means of addressing this international humanitarian crisis," they added.

The bishops said the United States "has both a right and a duty to protect our borders and our citizens" but it also has a "responsibility to come to the aid of people who are fleeing danger and come here to build a better life for their families."

They also noted that "worsening conditions that fuel the Latin American refugee crisis, combined with domestic policies that disrespect the dignity of human beings, risk causing even greater suffering for those fleeing peril and threaten the domestic tranquility promised to Americans."

Advertisement

The statement said Catholics believe everyone, "regardless of legal status, is a sister or brother in Jesus Christ."

They urged Catholics to find out more and learn what they can do to help support immigrant families at the border or to donate to existing Catholic charitable efforts at this link on the Washington Catholic Conference's website.

The statement was issued by the Washington Catholic Conference and signed by the state's six bishops: Seattle Archbishop J. Peter Sartain and Coadjutor Archbishop Paul Etienne; Bishops Thomas Daly of Spokane and Joseph Tyson of Yakima; and Seattle Auxiliary Bishops Eusebio Elizondo and Daniel Mueggenborg.