A Honduran man and his son, who had migrated to the U.S. without authorization and were recently released from detention, pass the time before beginning a bus journey to Louisiana at the Catholic Charities relief center in McAllen, Texas, April 6, 2018. Gov. Jeff Landry, R-La., recently cut $1 million in state funding from Catholic Charities of Acadiana, accusing the Catholic Church's charitable arm of having a mission "to support the influx of illegal aliens into our country," a charge the Catholic ministry denied. (OSV News/Loren Elliott, Reuters)
Gov. Jeff Landry, R-La., vetoed $1 million in state funds for an emergency homeless shelter run by Catholic Charities of Acadiana over the organization's work with migrants, he acknowledged in press statements.

Landry said that he vetoed the funds for the largest homeless shelter in Lafayette, Louisiana, because its operator, Catholic Charities of Acadiana, works with migrants. The governor, a Catholic, alleged Catholic Charities facilitates illegal immigration, a charge the Catholic Church's charitable arm denied.

In a statement provided to local media outlet KATC, Landry said, "As you can see from their website, part of Catholic Charities' mission is to support the influx of illegal aliens into our country. Taxpayers should never foot the bill for nonprofits who are contributing to the illegal immigration crisis our nation is facing."

But when accessed July 3, the Catholic Charities of Acadiana website stated, "Our Immigration Services provides low-cost legal aid services to immigrants, and newcomers to this country, all within the confines of the law."

"These services allow clients an opportunity to contribute and participate more fully in our communities," the website states, and lists legal forms they provide migrants assistance with, including Temporary Protected Status and work authorization forms.

"We affirm the inherent dignity bestowed by God on every human person, including immigrants and refugees, no matter the circumstances that compel a person to begin a new life in our community," the website states.
A spokesperson for Catholic Charities of Acadiana did not immediately respond to a request for comment from OSV News. Their CEO, Kim Boudreaux, told KATC, "The vetoed shelter appropriations are a significant setback to our pro-life efforts to care for our vulnerable neighbors experiencing homelessness."

According to KATC, Catholic Charities of Acadiana's homeless shelters serve nightly around 90 people who are homeless and are in need of food, shelter and other resources.

Landry's move comes as some elected officials have grown increasingly hostile toward nongovernmental organizations, particularly Catholic ones, that provide resources such as food and shelter to migrants, including those at the U.S.-Mexico border.

In July, a state judge denied Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton's effort to shut down Annunciation House in El Paso, Texas, a Catholic nonprofit serving migrants in obedience to the Gospel, finding his office "failed to establish probable grounds for the proceedings" and violated the Texas Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

In February, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee for Religious Liberty, issued a statement expressing solidarity with faith-driven ministries to migrants.

"It is hard to imagine what our country would look like without the good works that people of faith carry out in the public square," Rhoades said. "For this, we can thank our strong tradition of religious liberty, which allows us to live out our faith in full."