Connecticut religious leaders step up to the plate on immigration

by Pat Perriello

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I want to call your attention to a terrific article by Mark Silk from Religion News Service. He provides a welcome addition to the discussion of the children at the border, from a religious perspective.

Silk looks at Connecticut and its response to a request to house up to 2,000 of the children at a facility in the state. Connecticut Governor Daniel Malloy, a Democrat, almost immediately refused to do so, citing technical issues. Then, he received a protest from the Connecticut Immigrant Rights Alliance and changed his mind. The alliance is made up of religious leaders from the archdiocese of Hartford as well as representatives from a variety of religious organizations left to right along the spectrum.

Silk is encouraged by the response of the faith community to the crisis of the children at the border. The response in support of the children has been almost unanimous from evangelicals, Jews, mainline Protestants and Catholics. He rightly notes that the issue strikes at the core of Judeo-Christian values.

Silk’s powerful recourse to Leviticus is well worth pondering. The religious right he suggests has moved from a focus on the abomination of Leviticus 20, to the demands of Leviticus 19: ?When a stranger resides with you in your land you shall not do him wrong. The stranger ... shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him ... for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.?