Prayer Service for Families Separated at the Border

WHAT: The Diocese of San Jose will hold a prayer vigil for immigration reform and the reunification of migrant families separated at the border.

WHO:
- Bishop Patrick J. McGrath, Diocese of San Jose (Presider)
- Catholic Parish Leaders and Community Partners and Advocates working with Immigrants and Refugees
- Spanish speakers will be on hand

WHY: The Trump Administration’s policy of removing children from their parents at the US/Mexico border has resulted in thousands of children being separated from their parents.

The vast majority of families came to the US to seek asylum from the widespread violence plaguing their countries. The children and their parents are showing signs of serious emotional and psychological damage due to the policy of separation. The slow response by the Trump Administration to reunify families under court order has exacerbated these wounds.

The Catholic community wishes to express solidarity with migrant families and to encourage the faith community and their allies to work together to advocate for real comprehensive and compassionate immigration reform.

WHEN: Tuesday, July 17, 7 pm

WHERE: Cathedral Basilica of St. Joseph, 80 So. Market Street, San Jose

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Prayer Service for Families Separated at the Border
July 17, 7 pm at Cathedral Basilica of Saint Joseph

SAN JOSE – The Diocese of San Jose will sponsor a prayer service on July 17 at 7 pm at the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Joseph for unifying families that have been separated by President Trump’s policy of separating refugee and migrant families. Bishop Patrick J. McGrath will preside over the service.

In his pastoral letter on the separation of children from their families on the border, Bishop McGrath said, “The separation of detained minor children from their parents is un-American, un-Christian and inhumane. This practice is mean-spirited and betrays our nation’s tradition of welcome to migrants and refugees.”

Leading civil rights organizations criticized Trump’s policy for being used as a “deterrent” for asylum seekers, most of who are fleeing from wide-spread violence and political repression in Central America. The ACLU and Southern Poverty Law Center have cited the deliberate understaffing points of entry along the border and the practice of enticing parents to sign volunteer removal agreements as a condition of reunifying with their families, but would also in effect forfeit the family’s appeal for asylum, as examples of the true intent behind the brutal policy of family separation.

The Trump administration has been ordered to reunify families separated by this policy by last Tuesday; however, only a few families have been reunited leaving thousands of families without any clear sense of when or if reunification would be possible.

“The lack of follow-through to unify families by the administration is itself morally unacceptable,” says Father Jon Pedigo, the Director for Advocacy and Community Engagement at Catholic Charities Santa Clara County, who is a sponsor of the vigil.

For more information about the prayer service, visit www.dsj.org/event/prayer-and-solidarity-for-migrant-families-vigil.

To learn more about Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, visit www.catholiccharitiesscc.org.

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