



Saint Tarcisius Parish



Statement of the Saint Tarcisius Parish, and the Brazilian American Center BRACE in Framingham, Ma on Family Separations by the U.S. government

Framingham, Massachusetts, July 19, 2018 – The Saint Tarcisius Parish and Brazilian American Center (BRACE) express our overarching concern regarding the avowed “zero tolerance policy” currently adopted by the US government towards those migrants in dire need of our compassionate protection.

We raise our voices together with those of other faith-based, civil society organizations at the local and regional level along with international agencies in support and defense of the thousands of separated families, victims of this immoral, cruel, inhumane policy. This is an assault on their human rights and dignity.

Every day at Saint Tarcisius Parish and BRACE we witness the suffering of migrants and displaced people, forced to flee their countries of origin, devastated by war, drug trafficking, poverty, corruption, tyranny, inequality and despotism. Families, especially women and children, are targets of these oppressive regimes and are forced to abandon their lives in their community of origin. If they remain they are susceptible to murder, rape and other acts of violent abuse.

We strongly oppose the criminalization of migration. These families are not criminals and should not be treated and prosecuted as such. The deliberate separation of children from their parents not only causes immediate psychological trauma but will also affect their mental health for the rest of their lives. These practices violate the fundamental rights of family units, subjecting persecuted families to additional abuse and persecution, here in the US. This must stop immediately.

Detained families come in search of protection and asylum. They are people in conditions of extreme vulnerability and represent no threat to American society and its citizens. Under no circumstances should children be deprived of their liberty, detained and removed from their parents

These measures affect not only migrants and their defenders but also the social, moral and ethical values that characterize the United States of America. Solidarity is not a matter of compassion, but of justice and ethics.

The current social and political context is generating an atmosphere of fear and persecution that makes migrants, even those in regular migratory status, want to go unnoticed, while creating a wave of intolerance, xenophobia, and discrimination across the United States.

Instead of maintaining the argument of the high cost of irregular migration, the United States should commit to working with the countries of origin of these oppressed people and focus efforts to work on the causes of migration flow calling upon these countries to share the responsibility.

As members of the Scalabrini International Migration Network, we continue to work on the local, regional and international levels to defend and protect the rights of migrants and their families. We urge the United States Congress to end these practices and promote the immediate reunification of families that have been separated and cruelly violated and to address immigration policy in accordance with legal standards of international protection.

We encourage the United States to look for humane and appropriate alternatives to address this crisis. We at BRACE together with the Scalabrini Centers in the United States and other civil society organizations stand ready to help and support government initiatives that benefit the immigrants and their families here and now.

"When an immigrant resides with you in your land, do not molest him. You shall treat the aliens who resides with you no differently than natives born among you; have the same love for him as for yourselves; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt.

I, the Lord am your God". Leviticus 19,33-34

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