



Office of Communications

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARCHBISHOP SAMPLE CALLS FOR MERCY, CHARITY AND ACCESS TO PASTORAL CARE AFTER RECENT IMMIGRATION ACTIVITY

My dear Brothers and Sisters in the Archdiocese of Portland,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Please know that I stand in solidarity with my brother bishops in the United States in condemning the separation of family members at the U.S./Mexico border as part of the implementation of the Administration's "zero tolerance" policy. Such separation of family members is unnecessary. In its implementation of federal immigration law, the government has the discretion to do so in ways that do not separate young children from their parents. Whatever one thinks about the most prudent way to resolve our mounting immigration problems, mercy and charity dictate that we do not potentially cause irreparable harm and trauma when there is another way. We need to see the real human faces of those affected. These are families not unlike our own. In the ongoing debate over immigration issues, the U.S. bishops have always maintained, as a fundamental principle, that families must be kept together.

Some of those detained at the border and now separated from their families are being held here in Oregon. They are in need of pastoral care. No matter how they arrived here, they are children of God and the Church seeks to reach out to them to provide that pastoral care. Realizing that this is a burden for which local corrections officials were probably not fully prepared, I humbly ask that all barriers be removed that might prevent those detained from receiving much needed pastoral and spiritual care from the Church's ministers.

I pray for all those affected by this distressing situation, and I urge all government officials to work for a just and lasting solution as quickly as possible. May God grant them the wisdom and courage to do so.

Archbishop Alexander K. Sample
Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon