



The Leadership Team's ...

Response to addressing President Trump's declaration of a national emergency on our Southern Border

February 26, 2019

Sisters of Saint Joseph of Philadelphia, live and work so that all people may be united to God and one another. We are deeply saddened and shocked by President Trump's declaration of a national emergency at our Southern Border. We find President Trump's declaration of a national emergency to be another step toward the denigration of and animosity toward vulnerable populations—immigrants and refugees—in particular.

This declaration was made in order to circumvent Congress and the use of these funds for the construction of a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. We join the voices of others who not only believe that such a move is contrary to both Christian and American values, but who also are deeply concerned that it will serve to fan the flames of xenophobia.

We recognize the responsibility of every government to safeguard its people, and we reject the idea that Americans will somehow be made safer by extending the wall along the southern border. Rather, the proposed wall holds all potential to be both a humanitarian and an ecological disaster.

Most of the people coming to the U.S.-Mexico border are asylum-seekers, many of whom are women and children from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador who are fleeing persecution and violence in their home countries. They face many dangers even before they reach the border including drug cartels, smugglers, and human traffickers.

The United States has a long and proud history of welcoming immigrants and sheltering refugees, as have the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. We have been blessed to be able to accompany and serve within migrant and immigrant communities since our coming to Philadelphia in 1847. We stand with Pope Francis that we are called to “build bridges and not wall.”

We call on President Trump and Congress to acknowledge the suffering of our sisters and brothers who are legally seeking asylum, to address the root causes of migration and to work together to craft and pass Just Comprehensive Immigration Reform.