

## New Mexico Conference of Catholic Bishops



**Archdiocese of Santa Fe**, Most Reverend John C. Wester  
**Diocese of Las Cruces**, Most Reverend Oscar Cantú  
**Diocese of Gallup**, Most Reverend James S. Wall  
**NMCCB Executive Director**, Allen Sánchez

### **STATEMENT**

#### **New Mexico Conference of Catholic Bishops Express Urgency in Reversal of Policy Separating Families**

ALBUQUERQUE – Friday, June 15, 2018--IMMEDIATE RELEASE-- As bishops of a border state, we respond with dismay to President Donald Trump’s overturning of asylum protections for victims of domestic violence and carrying out the practice of separating families to stem migration.

The Bishops of New Mexico strongly support Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, President of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, whose statement calls for an immediate end to the policy which removes domestic violence as a reason for asylum. We join the cardinal in condemning the separation of children from their parents. The devastation this inflicts upon the children has life-long consequences for their well-being and is a serious violation to the rights of children.

We are greatly appalled at those who would promote such terrible border policies. Seeking asylum is not a crime, and those who are seeking it should not be compared to those committing strong-arm robbery, a felony.

We pray the United States Department of Justice will reverse these practices, as they constitute human rights violations and an offense against the most important unit in society, the family.—END

*Attachment - Statement from Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, June 13, 2018.*



## UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

### A STATEMENT FROM DANIEL CARDINAL DINARDO

June 13, 2018

Fort Lauderdale, FL—"At its core, asylum is an instrument to preserve the right to life. The Attorney General's recent decision elicits deep concern because it potentially strips asylum from many women who lack adequate protection. These vulnerable women will now face return to the extreme dangers of domestic violence in their home country. This decision negates decades of precedents that have provided protection to women fleeing domestic violence. Unless overturned, the decision will erode the capacity of asylum to save lives, particularly in cases that involve asylum seekers who are persecuted by private actors. We urge courts and policy makers to respect and enhance, not erode, the potential of our asylum system to preserve and protect the right to life.

Additionally, I join Bishop Joe Vásquez, Chairman of USCCB's Committee on Migration, in condemning the continued use of family separation at the U.S./Mexico border as an implementation of the Administration's zero tolerance policy. Our government has the discretion in our laws to ensure that young children are not separated from their parents and exposed to irreparable harm and trauma. Families are the foundational element of our society and they must be able to stay together. While protecting our borders is important, we can and must do better as a government, and as a society, to find other ways to ensure that safety. Separating babies from their mothers is not the answer and is immoral."

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