June 28, 2019

**Immigration: Our Humanitarian Crisis**

The number of people fleeing war, persecution and conflict exceeded 70 million globally last year with an average 37,000 new displacements daily, the highest number in the United Nation Refugee Agency's almost 70 years of operations. As Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet, St. Paul Province, our hearts break as we watch, read and feel the shock waves of global suffering by all who are touched by these crises. In this country, as we celebrate our own national Independence Day, we express our deep concern and sadness for the:

* Family of Oscar Alberto Martínez and his 23-month-old daughter, Angie Valeria, who drowned on June 23, 2019 while attempting to cross the Rio Grande. We offer our sympathy and condolences for their horrific loss and lament this tragedy and those like it around the world that place millions in situations so dire that they risk their lives to the point of death in the hopeful pursuit of lives with dignity.
* Children our country has placed in detention, separated from their families, and living in unsafe conditions. We believe this is a reflection of an abject system so broken that it incapacitates those within the system who wish to respond with compassion. We recognize the potential resulting long-term physical, psychological and spiritual harm and the seeds being sown through our own complicity.
* Growing sense of fear and resulting trauma within our immigrant communities, particularly families, as they deal with the looming threat of deportation raids.
* Border communities including immigrants and the personnel and communities dealing with their arrival. Our Sisters who have lived and worked along the southern border remind us that the U.S. crisis is not just about migrants. It touches entire communities stressing basic support services and challenging residents, especially those already struggling with poverty.
* Government personnel and humanitarian workers on the frontlines who are over-whelmed and poorly equipped to adequately and compassionately address the needs of this crisis.
* Widening political divide surrounding immigration that is hampering humanity’s ability to deal with these crises. We look to our leaders and elected officials to address their own divides, so our human family can pursue lives with dignity and justice.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, called to move “always toward the profound love of God and love of neighbor without distinction,” believe there is a better way. Standing in solidarity with all our “Dear Neighbors” we work toward unifying love, praying humanity finds its way to work together to heal a broken and divided world where each life is respected, and people are welcomed, protected, and able to flourish.