



Statement of the bishops of the border between Texas and Northern Mexico

March 4, 2019

I was a stranger and you welcomed me (Mt 25:35).

Driven by situations of extreme violence and poverty, many immigrants come to our border, in large caravans or small groups. We urge everyone to discover, in these brothers and sisters who are suffering, Christ in need, and to give them the support they require, without assuming they are criminals, as they are sometimes perceived. The reality is different: many of them are victims of criminal elements in their own countries as well as along the course of their journey to the border. As bishops of the border between Texas and Mexico, we reiterate our commitment to continue to provide all the help our migrant brothers and sisters need, each distinct diocese joining with various religious and civil organizations that work in support of the immigrant. We appeal to governments, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they not adopt policies that have the effect of increasing the suffering of the most vulnerable.

In particular, we express our total disagreement with the policy of the government of the United States to send to Mexico migrants who are waiting for their turn to appear before a U.S. judge who will decide whether or not they receive asylum. We oppose this proposal for several reasons, among others: 1) It will force Mexico to organize camps for tens of thousands of refugees, thus effectively undermining their right to seek asylum in the United States, and depriving them of the support of family members on U.S. soil. 2) It will effectively put out of their reach the exercise of their right to procure legal representation in their case before the court. 3) It will create a situation in which many immigrants and refugees will no longer seek the legal process through established ports of entry, but will try to enter the United States through high-risk locations in order to avoid the authorities.

As pastors, we encourage our faithful to join ourselves to the God of hope and life, so that he may help us to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate immigrants, as requested by Pope Francis.

Let us not grow tired of doing good (Galatians 6:9).

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Most Rev. Michael Boulette
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