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STATEMENT

ON

DETENTION OF MINORS AND SEPARATION OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN FROM THEIR PARENTS

MOST REVEREND ARMANDO X. OCHOA, D.D.

BISHOP OF FRESNO

“The Lord hears the cry of the poor” (Psalm 34)

In recent days, the “cry” of the children caught in the vise between government policy and fundamental human decency has been deafening and heartbreaking for the vast majority of Americans and for people all over the world. The forcible separation of children from their parents is reprehensible and immoral from its very foundation and deserves the strongest condemnation by every means possible and from every segment of our society. The Catholic Church joins in this condemnation based on our consistent and long-standing teaching and practice on the value of all human life and the protection of the most vulnerable among us.

We hear the cry of the “little ones” in our midst and we plant our stand firmly in their defense and to speak on their behalf to protect their human rights as children of God and precious gifts of the greatest value. The children and their immigrant parents must never be used by any agency, organization, or government as “pawns” in a hideous game of partisan bickering and immoral political manipulation that betrays the very soul of our Democracy. These are **HUMAN BEINGS**, not trash that can be discarded when no longer needed for the fulfillment of selfish political designs - a sad and brutal reminder of a “throw-away” mentality.

We hear the cry of the children and we see their suffering and feel their loneliness. As a loving mother, the Church longs to embrace these hurting little ones; to comfort their fears; to dry their tears, and to accompany them through the uncertain paths ahead. You and I must be the hands, and feet, and voice of Holy Mother Church in protecting and comforting all her children.

I urge every Catholic in the Diocese of Fresno and all people of good will to set aside partisan divisions and divisive rhetoric that so often cloud our vision and drown out the calling we have received as benefactors of freedom and guardian - citizens of a great country and as baptized disciples of the Lord, so we can truly listen to the clear and pain-filled cry of our most precious little ones. Their cries are their message to us all! May we hear these cries and act to answer them with love, justice, and family unity.

June 20, 2018

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