



Adrian Dominican Sisters
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**Statement of Adrian Dominican Sisters on
Executive Orders Impacting Immigrants and Refugees,
Joining Voices of Other Catholic Leaders**

January 31, 2017

The Adrian Dominican Sisters share the sense of alarm and concern that many Catholic leaders have expressed concerning the Executive Orders recently issued by President Trump to ban refugees and immigrants from Muslim nations, increase detention and deportation of undocumented immigrants, further wall off and militarize our southern border, and cut federal funding to sanctuary cities and counties.

These orders are inimical to our Catholic belief in the inherent dignity of every person; our Judeo-Christian tradition of caring for the stranger; our American values of welcoming people who yearn to “breathe free;” and our nation’s protection of religious freedom.

As members of the worldwide Order of Preachers, which has a long tradition of upholding human rights and includes sisters, brothers, and friars of all nationalities ministering in love and friendship with people around the Earth, we find these actions to be both heartbreaking and chilling. We call on President Trump to uphold our nation’s fundamental values and constitutional protections by rescinding these dangerous, unconscionable orders.

Among the many other Catholic leaders and organizations that have issued statements of concern are the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, bishops from various parts of the country, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, and Catholic immigration, relief and resettlement agencies. A sampling of excerpts from public statements follows:

[Leadership Conference of Women Religious](#)

We are deeply concerned about the administration’s executive orders on immigration and refugee resettlement which serve only to threaten border communities, force our immigrant community members further into the shadows, and endanger those fleeing violence. These misguided executive orders do nothing to make anyone more secure and may well have the opposite effect.

Statements of Bishops

[United States Conference of Catholic Bishops \(USCCB\)](#)

We believe in assisting all those who are vulnerable and fleeing persecution, regardless of their religion. This includes Christians, as well as Yazidis and Shia

Muslims from Syria, Rohingyas from Burma, and other religious minorities. However, we need to protect all our brothers and sisters of all faiths, including Muslims, who have lost family, home, and country. They are children of God and are entitled to be treated with human dignity.

[Cardinal Blase J. Cupich](#) (Chicago, Illinois)

The world is watching as we abandon our commitments to American values. These actions give aid and comfort to those who would destroy our way of life. They lower our estimation in the eyes of the many peoples who want to know America as a defender of human rights and religious liberty, not a nation that targets religious populations and then shuts its doors on them.

[Cardinal Daniel DiNardo](#) (Galveston-Houston, Texas)

As Archbishop of a Texas diocese, I believe that the order to construct a wall along our border with Mexico will only make migrants more susceptible to traffickers and smugglers – putting their lives in needless danger. It also destabilizes the many vibrant interconnected communities that live in peace along our border.

[Archbishop José H. Gomez](#) (Los Angeles, California)

Friends, walls and more aggressive enforcement will not make America great again. We need new pathways to understanding.

[Bishop Robert W. McElroy](#) (San Diego, California)

[T]his executive order is the introduction into law of campaign sloganeering rooted in xenophobia and religious prejudice. ... This week the Statue of Liberty lowered its torch in a presidential action which repudiates our national heritage and ignores the reality that Our Lord and the Holy Family were themselves Middle Eastern refugees fleeing government oppression. We cannot and will not stand silent.

[Bishop Michael F. Olson](#) (Fort Worth, Texas)

The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth respects the responsibility of the federal government to secure our borders and ensure the safety of our citizens for the common good. ... As Catholics we will not close the door to our neighbor in need out of our fear and selfishness.

[Cardinal Séan O'Malley](#) (Boston, Massachusetts)

Our country has the opportunity to respond to the reality of immigration with policies and practices which reflect our deepest religious and social principles. Together let us make the commitment to be a beacon of light and hope for those who look to us in their time of need.

[Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, CSsR](#) (Newark, New Jersey)

Wednesday's Executive Actions do not show the United States to be an open and welcoming nation. They are the opposite of what it means to be an American. Closing borders and building walls are not rational acts. Mass detentions and wholesale deportation benefit no one; such inhuman policies destroy families and communities.

[Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron](#) (Detroit, Michigan)

In a letter to the chair of the Imams Council of Michigan: “I wrote to you a little over a year ago to share with you my statement to the priests of our Archdiocese regarding a proposal made during the presidential campaign to restrict Muslim immigration to the United States. At that time, I reaffirmed my commitment to stand with you in opposing any and all unjust discrimination on the basis of religion. Today, I reaffirm that pledge.”

[Cardinal Donald Wuerl](#) (Washington, DC)

As I recently noted, we are called to care for one another, whether it be our longstanding neighbor down the street, or a newcomer to our nation seeking relief from brutal religious and political persecution.

Statements of Catholic Agencies

[Catholic Charities USA](#) (CCUSA)

“Pope Francis has urged people not to close the door on migrants and refugees. In concert with the Holy Father, we believe we must move from attitudes of defensiveness and fear to acceptance, compassion and encounter. ... Our commitment to care for those who are most vulnerable resides at the core of our faith,” said Sister Donna Markham, OP, PhD, president and CEO of CCUSA.

[Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.](#) (CLINIC)

“At a time when war and persecution have driven more people to flee in search of safety than any other time in modern history, we need to protect refugees rather than reject them out of misplaced fear,” said Jeanne Atkinson, executive director of CLINIC.

[Catholic Relief Services](#)

Our elected officials have an obligation to protect the security of the American people, and we should all take concerns about security seriously. But, denying entry to people desperate enough to leave their homes, cross oceans in tiny boats, and abandon all their worldly possessions just to find safety will not make our nation safer.

[Jesuit Relief Services](#)

By proposing to discriminate among individuals with valid claims for our protection on the basis of place of origin or religion rather than on the criteria firmly established by U.S. and international law, this announcement calls into question the worldwide standards of non-discrimination that are the bedrock of humanitarian response, just at the moment when we are experiencing the greatest displacement crisis since the end of the Second World War.