

July 18, 2014 - Cardinal Sean on Border Crisis - Press Conference with the Governor and faith leaders

Cardinal O'Malley Statement – July 18, 2014

Governor Patrick has recognized the authentic human tragedy, and indeed humanitarian crisis, presented by the children now at the border coming from Central America. This past week, Pope Francis in addressing the question of immigration globally, recognized both the complexity of the question in its broad dimensions, but then focused on the overwhelming immediacy of the needs of these children. The Holy Father addressed directly the human and moral crisis on our border through these words:

“I would also like to draw attention to the tens of thousands of children who migrate alone, unaccompanied, to escape poverty and violence: This is a category of migrants from Central America and Mexico itself who cross the border with the United States under extreme conditions and in pursuit of a hope that in most cases turns out to be vain. They are increasing day by day. This humanitarian emergency requires, as a first urgent measure, these children be welcomed and protected. These measures, however, will not be sufficient, unless they are accompanied by policies that inform people about the dangers of such a journey and, above all, that promote development in their countries of origin.”

The Catholic Church at every level, globally, nationally and locally has long experience in assisting immigrants and refugees often fleeing from danger suffering and deprivation, and we are willing to enter a collaborative relationship with the government to meet this urgent emergency.

We do not have Church facilities that are appropriate, but we do have social service agencies in the Archdiocese with skilled resources to provide programs of assistance and support within the framework of a larger federal and state program providing finances and collaboration. It is crucial for all of us I believe to begin any discussion with our eyes on these children. The Archdiocesan agencies are already stretched by demands here at home, but we still wish to offer our help in facing this humanitarian emergency. I ask my own faith community and the wider public to understand compassionately the extreme circumstances these children are facing. As a country and a Church we are capable of providing crucial assistance.