



Contact:
Patrick Gareau
President/CEO
216-334-2903
pgareau@ccdoble.org

Tuesday January 31, 2017

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland Responds to Executive Order on Halting U.S. Refugee Admissions

Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland stands with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in their opposition to the Executive Order halting refugee admissions.

As an entity of the Catholic Church, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland understands the importance of a vetting process for security reasons. The United States has a right to control its borders. We also believe in the dignity of the human person and the right of all people to seek security in other countries when their home country is no longer safe. We have a moral obligation to treat those fleeing violence and suffering with mercy and compassion. (USCCB August 2013)

Regarding the Executive Order's halt and reduction of admissions, we support the statement of Bishop Joe S. Vasquez' of the Diocese of Austin and chairman of the USCCB Committee on Migration. He stated, "We strongly disagree with the Executive Order's halting refugee admissions. We believe that now more than ever, welcoming newcomers and refugees is an act of love and hope. We will continue to engage the new administration, as we have all administrations for the duration of the current refugee program, now almost forty years. We will work vigorously to ensure that refugees are humanely welcomed in collaboration with Catholic Charities without sacrificing our security or our core values as Americans, and to ensure that families may be reunified with their loved ones."

In the Diocese of Cleveland, the Office of Migration and Refugee Services has been assisting migrants and refugees since 1948 and resettles approximately 350 to 400 refugees annually from countries including Bhutan, Burma, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Eritrea, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Pakistan, and Ukraine. In our experience, we find refugees have suffered great loss, including loss of their homes, livelihoods, possessions and oftentimes families need assistance starting over in a new country. We respect the dignity of each person and strive to provide a supportive environment where each individual and culture is celebrated.

We add our voice to other Catholic organizations in opposing the Executive Order on the resettlement program and the undue impact it will have on refugees.

###