



## **Refugees Digest 19** **September 2017**

### **Refugees, Migrants and Displaced Persons**

A certain institutional harshness in some quarters continues to bedevil the suffering of the millions of people on the move, especially as governments seek to tighten possibilities for legal entry into their countries, prejudices grow and there is insufficient aid to provide for the immediate needs of these vulnerable people. One of the groups hardest hit are children and young people. This is true across the world and the Trump administration's decision to close the DACA program within six months, is another chilling example of this groups vulnerability. One positive aspect is that as the contestation around refugee issues mount, so is the development of a theology and praxis of solidarity by the Church with those who suffer in this context.

Pope Francis commented negatively on President Trump's decision to stop the DACA [Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals] program under which almost 800,000 young people brought to the USA illegally as children would be allowed to stay in the USA. The decision announced by Attorney General Sessions would put these young people at risk of detention or deportation. The original program was started by President Obama.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/world/pope-francis-questions-trumps-pro-life-values-over-decision-end-daca>

Further reaction to the Trump administration's intention to close the DACA program is pasted below.

<http://mailchi.mp/cliniclegal/cancellation-of-daca-is-cruel-and-unamerican?e=1e66f2454f>

<http://links.cfr.mkt5175.com/servlet/MailView?ms=NTQ4NjE3MDIS1&r=NTA0ODM0NDc1ODQS1&j=MTI0NDAwMTc3NQs2&mt=1&rt=0>

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/democracy-post/wp/2017/09/05/i-came-to-this-country-41-years-ago-now-trump-is-making-me-feel-like-i-dont-belong-here/?utm\\_term=.b17bc14c6ce2](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/democracy-post/wp/2017/09/05/i-came-to-this-country-41-years-ago-now-trump-is-making-me-feel-like-i-dont-belong-here/?utm_term=.b17bc14c6ce2)

<https://sojo.net/articles/undocumented-and-unashamed-daca-recipients-share-their-stories>

Below is a link to the very strong statement of Cardinal Dolan to the DACA issue and also a link in response to Steve Bannon's criticism of the bishop's stance on immigration. He makes several important points about picking on migrants as an act of bullying vulnerable people, about 'way under' 1% of immigrants ending up in anti-social behaviour. He debunks a number of the anti-immigration myths that are so prevalent and so divisive.

<https://soundcloud.com/siriusxm-news-issues/cardinal-dolan-bannons-statement-was-preposterous?in=siriusxm-news-issues/sets/catholic-channel-on-siriusxm>

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/us-bishops-double-down-after-steve-bannons-attack>

The US Bishops noted that the cap set by President Trump Executive Order, on the number of immigrants allowed into the US for the fiscal year 2017, had been reached. They appealed for a new approach to immigration. It called the capping a failure in the exercise of compassion.

<http://www.usccb.org/news/2017/17-048.cfm>

Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso, on the border between the USA and Mexico, issued a strongly worded pastoral statement condemning the demonization of migrants and indefensible hateful words about

Mexicans. He called the US immigration system ‘a wound and a scandal’ that elected officials have not had the moral courage to address. He went on to say that building walls, mass deportation and the militarisation of the border are not solutions.

[http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/07/20/el\\_paso\\_bishop\\_calls\\_for\\_comprehensive\\_immigration\\_reform/1326110](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/07/20/el_paso_bishop_calls_for_comprehensive_immigration_reform/1326110)

The Vatican continues to develop its insights into the complex issue of migrants and refugees. Two articles from Vatican officials are contained in the link below.

[http://www.osservatoreromano.va/vaticanresources/pdf/ING\\_2017\\_036\\_0809.pdf](http://www.osservatoreromano.va/vaticanresources/pdf/ING_2017_036_0809.pdf)  
<http://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=32423>

In South Africa there has also been negative reaction to the Mayor of Johannesburg’s claims that undocumented foreigners make up 80% of the inner city population. There has also been criticism of ‘clean up programs’ in this regard in the Mayors attempt to make good on his 2016 election promises.

<https://africacheck.org/reports/mayors-claim-80-joburg-inner-city-residents-undocumented-foreigners-absurd/>

Also on the African continent, the link below explores the overlap between trafficking in persons and migration and some of the dynamics at play on the Libyan coast. It reports that the past 20 days have been the first straight stretch when there have been no drownings of migrants in the Mediterranean.

[http://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2017/09/11/libya-s-migration-crisis-about-more-just-security?utm\\_source=IRIN+-+the+inside+story+on+emergencies&utm\\_campaign=ebc26a3d44-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_ENGLISH\\_ALL&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_d842d98289-ebc26a3d44-15708545](http://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2017/09/11/libya-s-migration-crisis-about-more-just-security?utm_source=IRIN+-+the+inside+story+on+emergencies&utm_campaign=ebc26a3d44-RSS_EMAIL_ENGLISH_ALL&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d842d98289-ebc26a3d44-15708545)

A leaked document from the UK Home Office suggests that the UK will stop low skill EU migrants from access to the country in March 2019 when once it has exited the EU. It is estimated that 250,000 EU nationals have entered the UK recently.

[http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-41168091?ocid=socialflow\\_twitter](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-41168091?ocid=socialflow_twitter)

Also from the UK there were reports of a ‘culture of abuse’ at Brook House, one of the immigration removal centres.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/33341>

Finally an analytical piece on the plight of refugees in Greece where around 350 refugees arrive weekly. The piece end with a plea for respectful hospitality or ‘philoxenia’ an ancient characteristic of Greek social life.

<http://europe-infos.eu/refugees-in-greece-hope-in-the-heart-of-a-morass?ts=1500145584>  
[http://www.irinnews.org/feature/2017/07/20/meet-gambian-migrants-under-pressure-leave-europe?utm\\_source=IRIN+-+the+inside+story+on+emergencies&utm\\_campaign=adb16ec85d-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_ENGLISH\\_ALL&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_d842d98289-adb16ec85d-15708545](http://www.irinnews.org/feature/2017/07/20/meet-gambian-migrants-under-pressure-leave-europe?utm_source=IRIN+-+the+inside+story+on+emergencies&utm_campaign=adb16ec85d-RSS_EMAIL_ENGLISH_ALL&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d842d98289-adb16ec85d-15708545)

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