



The Right Reverend Jennifer A. Reddall
BISHOP OF ARIZONA

June 25, 2019

To Elected Officials:

“Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.” –Luke 18:16

I write to express my strongest possible opposition to the holding of migrant children in filthy conditions.

I am your constituent in the State of Arizona and also the Bishop of The Episcopal Diocese of Arizona, a community of over 20,000 Episcopalians from all parts of our state. As a bishop, I have taken vows to boldly proclaim the Gospel; to stir up the conscience of my people; and to defend those who have no helper.

The reports of the conditions in which migrant children are being held, some of whom are legally claiming asylum, require my public response because of those vows. As reported, the lack of sanitation, supervision, and humane treatment is appalling, and far from what any citizen should expect of its government. All children, regardless of their country of origin, warrant the most basic elements of care: a toothbrush, a bed, a blanket, and an adult to see to their medical, psychological, and social needs.

I ask that we set up a meeting to speak to you more generally about our nation’s immigration policies and treatment of both legal and undocumented peoples; but the crisis of these children requires your immediate action.

This past Sunday, Christians all over the world heard the Gospel story of a man possessed by evil (Luke 8:26-39). Jesus cast out the evil spirit and then the man was healed. As a Christian, I am confident that evil can be overcome and that people who commit evil acts can and will be redeemed and restored to loving fellowship with their neighbors. We will be a more perfect union when we no longer require our Customs and Border Patrol agents to enforce policies so clearly at odds with common decency.

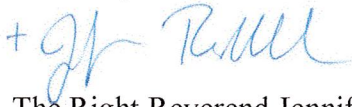
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As I seek to live out the vows I have taken, I remind you that you have also taken an oath to defend the Constitution; while this practice continues, you are not serving to “establish justice” or “promote the general Welfare.” I stand by to support you and all other public servants who take action to end this evil.

Faithfully,



The Right Reverend Jennifer A. Reddall
Sixth Episcopal Bishop of Arizona