



Joint Statement of Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth

Catholic Charities of Fort Worth's International Foster Care program works within parameters of the Catholic Church's teachings and is also in compliance with all federal regulations associated with funding from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through its Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) is carrying out the federal government's Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM) and the Unaccompanied Alien Child (UC) programs.

"Catholic Charities of Fort Worth's International Foster Care program is an outreach that is faithful to the Church's mission to care for the poor and vulnerable," said Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Bishop Michael Olson. "This mission is entrusted to the Church by Christ."

"Finding foster parents – and other resources – for refugee children is difficult work," explains Bishop Olson. "Catholic Charities are often the lead agent in this work. It would be tragic if Catholic Charities were not able to provide this help, in accordance with the Gospel values and family, assistance that is so essential to these children who are vulnerable to being mistreated as meaningless in society."

Jennifer Allmon, executive director of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, says, "While this case relates to federal programs, due to the passage of House Bill 3859 by the Texas Legislature, the Texas Department of Family Protective Services (DFPS) has updated its referral processes to ensure that all couples seeking to foster in Texas can easily find a regional agency to serve them. By contacting Wendy Bagwell at 512-438-2133, or visiting https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/adoption_and_foster_care/adoption_partners/private.asp, all couples in Texas have the opportunity to serve and through the protections of HB 3859, faith based providers are welcome to serve as well."

The International Foster Care Program at Catholic Charities Fort Worth works on the goal of equipping children to grow into self-sufficient and empowered individuals who break the cycle of poverty.