

Statements by Members of The Clergy Letter Project in Opposition to the Policy of Separating of Immigrant Children from their Parents

Misuse of Bible by Government Officials

I've already written the Justice Department, expressing anger at this ill-treatment of innocent children and people looking for a better life. The use of scriptures to promote "obeying laws" is a distortion of the gospel message of loving the neighbor and the alien.

I find it abhorrent that the attorney general, Jeff Sessions, and Sarah Huckabee used biblical verses to justify this immoral act.

The policy and practice of separating children from their families at the U.S. border is beyond cruel--it is sadistic. AG Sessions's out of context use of the Bible--in a verse that was used in the 1800's to justify slavery--is reprehensible. It is not acceptable for the U.S. to use children as pawns. Let us exercise our integrity and ethical power to reclaim our values and go forward to continue to expand them. The U.S. must be a beacon of true inclusion, well-being, freedom, and constructive power.

Yes, The Clergy Letter should condemn & expose the evil of separating children from their parents. We should speak out against Huckabee's claim that this is a Scriptural action.

The appalling ignorance of the Bible displayed in the last couple of days by A.G. Sessions and Sarah Huckabee Sanders is so embarrassing and inappropriate. Every group and individual should be speaking about this.

Ordinarily I would vote no, but since A G Sessions has come out with the statement that "God approves" upholding the laws of the State, it is important for clergy to "call" him on that sort of statement.

Yes, the group NEEDS to take a position on this horrific behavior. Especially since Sessions is using selected Biblical language to justify the use of torment on these families. One cannot imagine any closer imitations of Germany, 1938. When they have come for everyone else and I did nothing, I know who to blame when they come for me.

The government is unjust in its action that splits families apart. The government may not invoke Romans 13:1-7 to justify this unjust action. We can tell when a law is God's law because it is just. A law that takes a child away from his family unit is not just.

Our Attorney General Jeff Sessions and our Press Sarah Huckabee Sanders defend this atrocity by proof-texting scriptures. This is the process where a segment of the scriptures are taken out of their larger context to erroneously support an action or doctrine. Theocracies do this all the time to enforce their oppressive regimes on their people by declaring it is God's will. The United States was not founded as a theocracy, instead it was founded on the assurance of the freedom of religion of all believers and non-believers alike. Therefore justification does not come from a particular religious bent but from a commonality of all moral stances that are expressed by a

people. This administration is dangerously treading breaching the boundary between church and state and dangerously crossing the line of what is considered moral and ethical behavior protecting the sanctity of the family. It is cruel. It is evil. This nation saw this behavior of separating children from their parents with the indigenous people of this country and with the slaves of this country. It was morally bankrupt then, and it is morally bankrupt now. The doctrines based on proof-texting in the past were erroneous then and they are erroneous today. This fits the mission of the Clergy Letter Project because the faiths that teach that scientific study is false use proof texting to defend their stance that the world was created in 7 literal days without looking at the larger context in which the creation story is told as metaphor.

We at the very least must take a stance condemning the inappropriate use of scripture by government to justify actions that cannot be condoned by our tradition as a breach of separation of church and state. Also, separating families is a grotesque violation of basic human rights, and certainly the Baptismal Covenant of the Episcopal Church.

Once the powers that be started misusing the Bible to justify this abomination, I think clergy groups of all kind should feel compelled to act.

What's most appalling is Sessions' quoting of a Pauline letter to justify the separating of children from their parents. It's a travesty of Scripture and abhorrent to Christian ethics.

The misuse of the Bible, and Christianity, has been appalling.

This Trump policy truly is heinous. The attempt by Sessions and the WH to use Scripture in support of such is a perversion of the Gospel.

The US Attorney General is now quoting scripture to justify his boss's warped policies. Next he will no doubt manufacture pseudo-science to prove the efficacy of the president's approach and the absolute necessity for a physical wall to insure the nation's security. Act now!

Our Christian witness is that wonton displays of cruelty by any people and government defy the God who came among us in love and justice. The voices currently justifying these actions with the Scriptures are wrong, not solely about their anti-science reading of the Bible, but also and more seriously in their anti-Christian representation of the values of Jesus.

When Colbert can read Romans 13 better than Sessions, this is not a time for silence from the clergy.

Jeff Sessions should have used Romans 13: 8-19 instead of Romans 13:1 as his guide. There is no justification...biblical or otherwise for this vicious and inhumane policy.

Yes. It should be condemned. And Jeff Sessions should be condemned for justifying the action by citing Romans 13:1 "Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God" out of context and ignoring the later verse in the same chapter that reads "...and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your

neighbor as yourself.” 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Both Science and Religion Demonstrate Policy is Wrong

This is much more than a political issue, with scientific and moral issues very much at stake. It is very appropriate for the Clergy Letter Project to take a stand. Scientifically, it has long been known that forcible separation of children from their parents against their wills can cause permanent psychological scars that last a lifetime. More importantly, regardless of what science tells us, the practice is ethically and morally abhorrent. That Jeff Sessions would attempt to justify the practice by an appeal to the Bible is an assault on the very moral fiber of religion and the antithesis of the tenets of modern Christianity. Most of the people who are bearing the suffering of this travesty are already in the woes of desperation as refugees who have fled persecution in their home countries only to have it multiplied by officials of the wealthiest and most powerful nation on Earth. The Clergy Letter Project should take a stand, as should all other organizations dedicated to science, truth, and decency. I hope these actions cease immediately, and that their memory remains as one of the most appalling moments of our nation's recent history.

I think it is appropriate for the CLP to take a stand on this--it's not an issue peculiar to Christianity, but relevant to all (other-centered) belief systems. To callously ignore the well-documented, and devastating, consequences for psychological and physical health of children when families are ripped apart, is immoral. Clearly, it is intended to deter would-be immigrants (who may be seeking to immigrate to save their lives,) but it flies in the face of moral imperatives clearly set forth in (at least) Hebrew and Christian scriptures.

We are doing a terrible and I fear long lasting harm in taking children from their parents. We are refusing to understand the plight of these families and why they are so desperate as to seek refuge. We are turning from the Biblical of those of us who adhere to that devotion by refusing to extend hospitality to strangers, those who are aliens like most of us have been within our heritage. We can and must do better than this.

This is clearly known through scientific research in child development and ethically reprehensible from a spiritual perspective.

Evolutionary theory, neurology, and the science of human development, as well as a wide variety of religious traditions, support the role of nurturing families in rearing children, so that they grow up to be physically and emotionally healthy and good people. Separating children from families is immoral from both scientific and religious points of view.

Science and religion speak with one voice on this subject. The Hebrew Scriptures repeatedly call us to care for the orphan and others who need protection. Jesus welcomes children and exhibits concern for them on several occasions. As you noted, science has shown the damage that is done when we harm them through separation from parents and loved ones. What the current administration is doing is abhorrent and the policy needs to be reversed.

Yes, this is a crucial issue at the heart of religion, ethics, and (social) science.

First, as a group that is oriented towards education, that which threatens children has to be of importance to us. Second, we are Christians first and as Christians we have made a commitment to speak for all people. Finally, as educators, even though our fields may be in science, the improper and incorrect use of the Bible to support an illegal and immoral policy illustrates the need to support and increase education in all areas.

This is not a religion/science issue, it is a human need. Science has proven that children's First and best teachers are their parents and that Adverse Childhood Experiences ACES impact physical and mental health throughout a lifetime. Religion teaches that we must love our neighbors. There is no question that we must stand against this abhorrent practice of separating parents and children in every way possible.

Yes. Both science and religious traditions support the unity of a family unit for the health, protection and safety of the child when the only reason to separate children from parents is for the conveniences of a third party.

Yes, it is a biblical, religious, and scientific matter of what it means to be human; politics without considering these matters will lead to inhumanity and a dead end except for the few.

Theologically, the position is indefensible. Scientifically, species benefit from reproductive diversity. Immigration is a good thing from both perspectives.

If the mission of CLP is to demonstrate the compatibility of science and faith, then I would suggest that science shows no benefit to separating children from their families and support systems or traumatizing them with fear of losing loved ones, and the Abrahamic faiths all instruct followers to extend hospitality to those who are foreigners and aliens in our land. I believe science and faith both stand on the side of compassion and hospitality toward immigrant families, and I appreciate CLP's solidarity with religious leaders in condemning the practices of ICE agents.

YES. This transcends topic and focus. It is about basic human decency and constitutional behavior. Science can tell us what these children will experience and its effects on them. Faith/religion speaks about the moral values that guide our life together. The present policies are abhorrent, inhumane, and destructive of life.

Evidence in social science research, and Judeo-Christian Scriptures align in their support of keeping children with their parents or guardians.

In addition to the obvious moral issue, neuroscience has affirmed the critical connection between early childhood emotional attachments to a partner/caregiver and emotional, mental and physical health.

My vote: Yes. Take the position —

1. Primarily based on the studies showing damage to children (yesterday the national academy of pediatrics issued a strong statement); then
2. Also based on moral grounds rooted in virtually all faiths—in re the special necessary dignity in all children, in the mother-child bond, and in whole nuclear family's remaining healthily together.

Policy Goes Against Religious Principles

Yes, the Clergy Letter Project should take a stand, in the name of love, against the practice of separating parents from children when the parents are taken into custody for illegal entry into this country. Jesus said his mother and sister and brother are those who do the will of his Father (Matthew 12:50). And God's will, as Jesus reminds us, is to love our neighbor as our self.

As clergy shall we be so bold as to speak of creative evolution and yet ignore the manipulation of the Bible for political decisions that act against the basic rights of all people?

I don't think of it as a partisan issue, but as a moral outrage.

Rarely, well, never, does the church speak with one voice in agreement - until now. Representatives of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, United Methodist, Lutheran, Islam, and Judaism, released a joint statement. Baptist and Catholics released their own. And Franklin Graham representing evangelicals agrees saying the practice of separating families is “disgraceful.” The forced separation of families is an unnecessary and unnatural response. This is a basic human right, a tenant of Christian faith. We pray for the children and families that will suffer due to this policy and urge the Administration to stop their policy of separating families. Please contact your legislator to add your voice. Just say no.

Such separation is morally reprehensible and inhumane regardless of one's religion, Nowhere in the bible is it allowed or even suggested. It is a cruelty that satisfies a need to demonstrate shamelessly corrupt power. It clearly separates the caring and compassionate sheep whom Jesus praises from the goats he condemns. For Christians, Jesus is always giving special regard to those who are helpless or needy and asks us to do the same. Mt: 18:10 See that you do not despise one of these little ones. Jesus has a special fondness for children. "Let the children come to me. Mt 25:40 Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.

This is an abhorrent practice and must be stopped. God must be appalled that people who claim him as Creator support this vile decision.

I very much affirm clergy using every venue available to us to speak in strong opposition to the inhumane practice of separating children from their parents at our borders. Such cruelty flies in the face of the teachings of compassion essential to our varying faith traditions, and we cannot keep silence.

The separation of children from their parents is horrendous. As a Christian minister, I see this as immoral and unjust. It goes against the values taught by Jesus, in spite of Sessions' taking a short excerpt from the Christian Scripture out of context.

As a person who respects science, I'm aware of the damage done to children when they are separated from their parents. The law has sometimes come to the conclusion it's necessary when the parent is a greater danger to the child than the potential damage of separation. That has a rational basis. But it's not the parents who are dangerous to these children; it's our government.

I minister to a congregation where the majority of our families have immigrated from Mexico and Central America. I have seen first hand the terrible ordeal of immigrant families being separated from their loved ones, most especially children being separated from their parents. It is inhumane to say least!

Policy Goes Against American Principles

This is immoral and flies in the face of everything our country stands for. I am sickened by the total disregard of everything our forefathers intended as this great nation was formed.

YES, the Clergy Letter Project should take a position on the issue. The position should condemn the practice of separating children from their families. We must speak out. Silence = death. Failure to condemn this practice spurs evolution of our nation toward fascism and a culture of brutality.

Using children as pawns in the political machinations of our country goes against all the values we are taught as Americans, let alone of God!

YES the Clergy Letter Project should take a position against the separation of children from their families. This is such an extraordinary and cruel treatment of innocent people that all of us should refuse to allow it to continue. Imagine the terror of young children left without their families in strange place. Imagine the anguish of parents unable to help their kids. Shame on us!!!!!!

Yes, we have to stand up now--this sort of thing has to stop!! The US has always been admired as a "refuge," a safe haven for those who are escaping violence of any kind. Don't let our image be destroyed!

God has created the family to be the foundation of our society. To separate children from their parents—children who have likely already suffered trauma as a result of the need of their family to seek asylum or a better life, is an inhumane practice. As pediatricians and mental health professionals have indicated, it further traumatizes them and has the potential to impact their development. This is just not how we are as people of the United States. It is not how we are as believers in a God who demands justice for the orphan, the widow, or the immigrant. This practice must be stopped.

I abhor this practice because it amounts to torture. It is an entirely unnecessary intentional infliction of pain, presumably in order to dissuade others from bring children to the US. It is a punishment for children akin to imprisonment. We do not send our own children to jail - we would view that as inhuman. We should view it the same way when we do it to others' children. Possibly worst of all, it dehumanized us and may tend to desensitize us to the suffering of others. And it is entirely against the values of our religions.

Yes, the Clergy Letter Project should condemn the practice of separating children from their families. It is a morally abhorrent practice that negates any sort of belief that the U.S.A. is a moral nation that is welcoming to all.

Luke 6:31, Mark 12:31, and the great sage Rabbi Hillel all say the same thing John 4:20 puts it in a nutshell. "If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar". Our political leaders cannot claim piety in their continued abuse and dehumanization of immigrants, of which putting children in concentration camps is but the latest and most egregious manifestation. In Hebrew school, I was taught about the holocaust and that it must never be allowed to happen again. The Germans are a great and distinguished culture that disgraced themselves by allowing Jews and others to be dehumanized. Nazi abuse of children in the camps was beyond shocking. The creation of camps for children in the US is inexcusable, and sends us a step further down the same road to pure evil that the Germans went down. The evil is only compounded by our compassionless President, who has stated that he is using the horror he has created as a bargaining chip with members of Congress who are not devoid of humanity.

Yes we should take a position of condemning the US for separating families. Current practices are as appalling as Indian Schools, Japanese internment camps, Nazi concentration camps, Gulags, Jewish ghettos, etc. Compounded with Sessions claiming scripture backs the US up and it's more than appropriate to FIGHT back against the heinous CRIMES against humanity that this administration is committing. May God damn the US and this administration for such actions.

There are many biblical passages that address the treatment of "strangers" and "visitors" and insist on compassion and welcoming; one does not need read the Bible, however, to realize that separating children from parents in the manner that is being done at our borders is shameful, unethical, mean-spirited, and scandalous.

All voices are needed condemning this state sponsored child abuse which destroys families and creates hatred and resentment for future generations. I'm in for speaking out.

If not now, when? If not us, all of whom are here because of immigration, then who?

This is awful that families are separated when they are coming together from oppressive situations to make their life and the lives of their children better. If you have two coats, give them one. I have one country, but it was built on giving refuge.

The Clergy Letter Project should protest the barbaric, inhumane treatment of children and asylum seekers by the US Justice Department, as instituted by Attorney General Sessions. It is a

violation of fundamental human rights and of traditional Judeo-Christian values and American traditions. It is unfair to asylum seekers and will cause irreparable damage to the children who are separated from their parents. Decent Americans must protest this evil policy. To remain silent at this time is betrayal of all we believe in.

Clergy Have an Obligation to Act

We as Clergy must condemn this Godless and inhumane practice before it is too late for some of these children.

Separating children from their parents brings back memories of Nazi Germany. There are several other parallels, including dictatorial attitude and narcissism. If we do not speak up, who will?

Everyone of faith and practice needs to condemn this atrocity.

I do think that this is one of a number of current issues that requires a broad and clear response from the Christian community. Our Christian witness is inseparable from our moral integrity in representing Christ to the world.

It is inhuman to separate children from their parents at our borders. As Christians, we cannot let this happen. Jesus wanted the little children to come to him. How dare we ruin children's lives, and these experiences are causing irreparable damage. We need to be aghast at this occurrence!

This is not a "Christian" issue, it is a human issue; of course we should speak out!

The policy is abhorrent enough, but to defend it on bogus biblical grounds that were used to defend slavery, Nazism, and apartheid requires people of faith to speak out.

This isn't a matter of left vs. right, liberal vs. conservative, or Democrat vs. Republican. It's a matter of right vs. wrong, compassion vs. cruelty, faithfulness vs. unfaithfulness. As people of faith, we have a scriptural and moral obligation to stand up for those who are oppressed and marginalized. Tearing families apart is simply abhorrent and contrary to the fundamental principles of all faith traditions with which I am familiar.

There is a moral imperative to keep children with their parent(s). These are people fleeing poverty and violence in their homeland. Many / most of these children are experiencing great trauma with their families and to be separated from parents can be detrimental to a child's well-being, especially mentally and emotionally.

In addition to this being a morally abhorrent practice, it also masks the fact that applying for asylum is NOT ILLEGAL. And since the administration has chosen to use Scripture to support its policy, it seems incumbent on clergy to speak out against such use of Scripture.

Speaking the truth to power has never been safe, but if we don't stand up for it now, in these times of moral and spiritual decay, then when shall we?

What does the Lord require if us but to do Justice?

I am reminded of the Letter from Birmingham Jail and the timid church response. That mistake must not be made again. It is not time to sit on the sidelines, and, say it's not time to take a YES position. The time is now not later. This is a moral crisis if there ever was one!

I believe there should be a strong statement opposing the government position. This is not a political issue it is a faith issue. As people of faith we are compelled to speak out.

We as clergy must speak out boldly in any way necessary to confront immoral actions in any form from any source.

Yes, it is extremely important that we, as leaders in Christian communities, stand up to tell the truth: that separating children from their parents who are seeking asylum is not only not Christian, it is not Biblical, but is **WRONG** and **EVIL**.

While this is beyond our purview, separating children is so incredibly immoral, that this may demand that all people of faith take a public stand.

My vote is YES," that The Clergy Letter Project should condemn, in the strongest way, separating children from their parents. The kind of trauma created by this forced separation could do lasting damage to the emotional and psychological well being of those children. While getting involved in political issues may not have been the purpose for creating The Clergy Letter Project, perhaps it is Spirit guiding us to a higher purpose. If we, as spiritual leaders, do speak up and do not provide a moral compass for the treatment of the defenseless, who will? Silence can be interpreted as agreement; is that the legacy we want leave for future generations? I think not!

Yes, we should take a moral stance on this vital issue. If we don't, to paraphrase another, we they come for us there may be no one left to speak up for us. Jesus said to let the little children to come unto Him, and forbid them not [do not separate children from parents], for of such is the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 19:13-15). Jesus also said that if a person causes a child to stumble it would be better for the person to have a millstone hung around one's neck and be drowned in the depth of the sea (Mt. 18:6). In addition, Jesus admonished His followers to care for the least of these [certainly would include children] or those who don't will be numbered among the "goats" at the final judgment of the King. He also said that in as much as we do or don't do it unto the least of these, we do or don't do it unto Him (Mt. 25:31-46).

Yes, let's bring whatever scientific, moral and Scriptural muscle we can muster, to end this tragic practice. We should be deeply ashamed of what our nation is doing!

Jesus stepped in to aid a woman being stoned, touched those considered "unclean", ate with people from beyond his social group, affirmed Samaritans, blessed a Caananite woman's

daughter, praised the poor widow, fed the hungry, confronted exploitation in the Temple, and welcomed children. Jesus' faith was an engaged faith. Silence would be complicity, and Jesus shows the activist nature of world changing faith.

Policy is Scientifically Unsound

Among other things, these cold-hearted thugs are ignoring the psychological trauma being inflicted on children. That is scientifically provable!

I think the science is definitely behind us. More to the point, this is not a partisan issue – it is a human dignity issue. Do we really need to go to the psychological, economic, sociological and historical ramifications to back up a simple moral objection to treating other human beings this way? Sessions opened the door to clergy critique with a staggering misuse of Romans 13 and it is incumbent upon all clergy groups to stand up to this non-starter.

Based on what psychologists (scientists) are telling us, this practice is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of children and parents. As a compassionate scientist and clergy person it would be immoral not to respond.

Per the APA's public statement about separating children from families, we have it on a consensus of scientific authority that any policy which commits this is a danger to public health. Perfect opportunity to commit ourselves to Christian social justice based on scientific evidence.

This is a medical issue as well as an ethical and religious one. I refer you to a recent book by the doctor who has cared for immigrants from Africa who pass through Lampedusa, Italy, on their diaspora. The book is: Tears of Salt, written by Dr. Pietro Bartolo. He describes the great lengths they go through to keep children with their families. I cried when I read it.

Parents are the most important people in the lives of children and vice versa. Coming to the USA is a major disruption in children's lives, exceeded only by separating the children from their parents. Studies have shown that death and divorce are the most significant disruptions in children's lives. ICE's actions are similar in negative impact.

Policy Endangers Children

Prior to being ordained an Episcopal priest, I worked as a mental health counselor working primarily with children in the foster care systems -- children whose families had been disrupted countless times. I found that the longer these children were separated from their biological parents (even when their safety depended on it), the more difficulty they had later in life forming adequate relational attachments. They remained disconnected and often turned to violence as a way to fill the void. Many religious leaders have cited that the family is the fundamental building block of community, and I agree. When that family unit is disrupted, vital connections are severed and the ability to form them is impaired.

I am greatly concerned about the conditions facing immigrant children in detention, including the separation of children from their families. I believe children should be treated in accordance with internationally accepted rights of the child. Immigrant and refugee children should be treated with dignity and respect and not exposed to conditions including separation of family that may harm or traumatize them. Dr Colleen Kraft, President of the American Academy of Pediatrics recently witnessed traumatic and unnecessary events that she described as cruel and abusive. As a pastor, it breaks my heart that we have adopted such a unnecessary policy that is not in keeping with either the view of the religion, which believes in the importance of protecting children, nor with established norms in psychiatry and psychology which understands the impact of toxic stress and trauma. I believe that we must change this course of action immediately and stop the separation of families.

Separating children from parents will have a deviating effect on them as well as their descendants.

Australia continues to be haunted by the legacy of the Stolen Generation, and here is America creating another one, though not even pretending to be doing it for the good of the children. What security does the government hope to achieve by crushing children's souls?

A threat to any part of humanity is a threat to all of us. Our Lord challenges all of us to care for those who are the most vulnerable in the society, particularly children. They are being damaged — psychologically, physically, and spiritually — by these actions of the current administration, as is the entire family of which the children are a part.

Someone has to stand for what is right and the medical health study, ACE, study on Childhood Trauma supports this position.

Children need their parents in order to develop into happy and productive adults. The practice of separating children from their parents may have negative results that won't be known for years to come. Humanitarians and scientists of course support keeping children with their parents!

As an ordained pastor and licensed mental health therapist I am concerned about the impact such separations have on children and families.

Separating children from parents and families is cruel and inhuman - it is child abuse and is traumatizing. Infants, toddlers, all children will suffer consequences for their lifetime.

Reasons for Voting Not to Have The Clergy Letter Project Take a Formal Stand

I'll vote No— only because almost all of us have other channels for voicing our judgment against this outrage, while maintaining a narrower focus for the CLP will strengthen its long-term effectiveness more than getting diffused and spread too broadly.

I AM personally appalled by this practice by our government. But I believe the issue strays from our core purpose of promoting the positive relationship between religion and science.

Although I think the separation of children from their parents is appalling, (Republican "family values" in full view!) I think the Clergy Letter Project should keep its focus on the creation/evolution issue. Nobody else is doing that as effectively, I think.

I vote no for 2 reasons. The project can only be hurt by starting to take a political position on other issues. There are plenty of other forums for that. 2nd, the position is based on emotion, not facts. These people have broken the law, and their children ARE safely housed with foster families.

No, please! What does immigration policy have to do with science? What special knowledge or authority do I as a clergy person have on the ins and outs of immigration policy? The whole point of the clergy letter project, I would have thought, is to bring a unique position of professional credibility on one issue (or a few very closely-related issues). We CAN speak to the compatibility of faith and religion with expertise. It IS valuable to say that we religious leaders believe the science of climate change. But, there are a hundred voices speaking about immigration and a host of other issues where science is not a key factor or even a relevant factor. I'm sure that most of our faith bodies have already spoken out about immigration. The entire legitimacy of the Project with some of the main people we want to reach will be lost if it becomes just one more liberal voice. All our opponents need is one example of how we're just "another liberal organization pretending to be a faith-based group" to discount us with their constituencies.

I think that the current practice of separating children from parents is horrible. But I don't think the Clergy Letter should dilute its impact on science-related issues by getting into other matters.

While I agree that the practice should be condemned, I do not believe it is within the scope of the organization to speak on it.

Are you aware that this is not a new issue? Are you aware that when this issue exploded on social media three weeks ago, it consisted of articles from 2014 with the publication dates edited to make them look like they were from 2018?

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/may/28/illegal-immigrants-cages-photo-2014-enrages-liberals/> I agree that U.S. immigration policy is terrible. Both parties have contributed to a deliberately dysfunctional and cruel system. By all means, people of conscience should have serious conversations about this subject. (I wasn't born in this country, BTW.) What angers me is the idea that something this serious has become a partisan cudgel to be used against the current administration, especially when the images actually date from the previous administration. Everyone has worked to create this system. As for whether the Clergy Letter Project should take a position on it, I vote "no."

If you enter into politics you will alienate part of your supporters, and you will also lose the focus of your purpose, because once you begin this path it will be necessary to respond to other

issues. This will then continue to alienate more people, while it will also attract other people, but the soul of your mission will be gone.

There are two primary reasons for my statement. First, as you suggested, this is outside the realm of what the Clergy Letter should be focused on, and two, this whole thing is an oversimplification of a complex issue which has been grossly misrepresented. I believe this group should be about accuracy and honesty, not propagating emotional reactions to hot button issues that do not serve us well.

This strays from the core objective of the project. If anything we should show support of other organizations for which this concern is their primary project.

I'm very conflicted here... I am outraged at the ongoing mistreatment of children and families, and would like to have an effective means of speaking out... That said, I don't believe that doing so would be within the charter of this group... Worse yet, it would fall on deaf ears.

Stick to your Core mission. The issue is not as clear cut as the high minded and pious believe it to be. While in this world, governments are good that regulate borders to preserve peace and tranquility. We dare not rush the eschaton as this is God's work, not our own. Compassion is to be directed to many, many nations, and this can be done in thoughtful, creative, generous, and loving ways. Crossing borders illegally creates chaos. This issue is not a question of who is or is not more compassionate. There is law and there is gospel...and they are both God's word.

I agreed to join this because it was supposed to be about engagement for teaching evolution in a non-confrontational and non-condescending manner. Apart from that making such a statement is fully outside this remit, the law was written this way many years ago and the practice of implementing that law was the same under all the presidents preceding Trump. Thus, to suddenly take a position on this is an acknowledgement that the Clergy Project has descended into being just another anti-Trump political organization and this would definitely interfere with the ability to engage the original remit.

I find the actions taken by the administration terrible. And while I have no problem speaking out on the issue and hope that many others do as well, I don't think this is something the Clergy Letter project should take a position on because it goes outside the realm of religion and science – the stated purpose and boundaries of the Project. I would encourage pastors to make statements about the actions, but not through the Project.

Lots of organizations are taking this on and we would be a tiny and ineffective voice while deviating from our specific mandate and goals. I agree with the sentiment, of course, but think we should pass.

It's a slippery slope. If the Clergy Latter Project moves away from its original mission, there will be confusion and a thousand concerns to consider. If we're involved with immigration, why not become involved with the minimum wage dispute, voter registration, and the organizing of

labor unions for farm workers? There are lots of important topics to consider. We can't do everything.

Separating families is of course morally repugnant. Many things are morally repugnant: organized crime, war, the death penalty. The Clergy Letter shouldn't take a position on every morally repugnant thing.

This group is about delineating the manifold of ways science and religion intersect and complement each other in our society, while they remain distinct. Whereas the taking of children at the border by our government, and especially that the policy is being justified under Romans 13, is an egregious social abuse that must be opposed. But this is not the group for this, we have plenty of our own issues to be remain vigilant. Righteous cause, wrong forum.

It's abhorrent but outside of our purview and churches are speaking up in many other ways.