

Advocate for immigrants shares tales of the border

written by Aprille Hanson Spivey |



Mercy sister shares stories from the U.S./Mexico border with students

Refugees, immigrants waiting to call Arkansas home

written by Aprille Hanson Spivey |



Refugees waiting to call Arkansas home as executive order debated

Bishops call for solidarity with victims of Mideast violence

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |

S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the head of the Catholic Relief Services board.

“A concern for our Christian brethren is inclusive and does not exclude a concern for all the peoples of the region who suffer violence and persecution, both minorities and majorities, both Muslims and Christians,” said a Feb. 10 statement from four bishops.

“To focus attention on the plight of Christians and other minorities is not to ignore the suffering of others,” the statement said. “Rather, by focusing on the most vulnerable members of society, we strengthen the entire fabric of society to protect the rights of all. ”

The group included Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty; Bishop Oscar Cantu of Las Cruces, N. M. , chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace; Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin, Texas, chairman of the Committee on Migration; and Bishop Gregory J. Mansour of the Eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn, N. Y. , chairman of the board of Catholic Relief Services.

The group pointed to the findings of a recent USCCB delegation to Iraq, which confirmed that Christians, Yezidis, Shiite Muslims and other minorities had experienced genocide at the hands of the Islamic State group.

“It is important for Syrians and Iraqis of all faiths to recognize this as genocide, for that recognition is a way to help everyone come to grips with what is happening and to form future generations that will reject any ideology that leads to genocidal acts and other atrocities,” the bishops said in their statement.

The bishops called on Americans to accept “our nation’s fair share” of vulnerable families, regardless of religion and ethnicity, for resettlement as refugees. They called for special consideration of the victims of genocide and other violence.

They urged the U. S. to encourage the Iraqi government and the regional government in Irbil, Iraq, to “strengthen the rule of law based on equal citizenship and ensure the protection of all.”

U. S. aid should assist local and national efforts to improve policing and the court system and encourage local self-governance, the bishops said. Similar efforts are needed in Syria as well, they said.

.