

# *Pope Francis criticizes Donald Trump administration policy on migrant family separation*

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Vatican City, June 21 (RHC)-- Pope Francis has criticized the Donald Trump administration's policy of separating migrant families at the Mexican border, saying populism is not the answer to the world's immigration problems. Speaking to Reuters, the Pope said he supported recent statements by the United States based Catholic bishops who called the separation of children from their parents "contrary to our Catholic values" and "immoral."

One of his most pointed messages concerned President Donald Trump's zero-tolerance immigration policy, in which U.S. authorities plan to criminally prosecute all immigrants caught crossing the Mexican border illegally, holding adults in jail while their children are sent to government shelters.

The policy caused an outcry in the United States and was condemned abroad as videos emerged of youngsters held in concrete-floored enclosures and audio of wailing children went viral. U.S. Catholic bishops have joined other religious leaders in the United States in condemning the policy. "I am on the side of the bishops' conference," the pope said, referring to two statements from U.S. bishops this month.

Pope Francis' comments add to the pressure on Trump over immigration policy. The pope heads a

church which has 1.3 billion members worldwide and is the largest Christian denomination in the United States.

According to the Families Belong Together website, approximately 100 cities across the nation are planning to demonstrate against the president's policy that has forcefully separated 2,000 families at the border between April 19th through May 31st.

Social media is alit with the hashtag, #keepfamieliestogether discussing the administration's uptick of separating families and holding children in cages allowing little to no communication between parents and their kids. Recently released information of children crying for their parents has incited celebrities, politicians and average people from around the world to call the president's practice as "cruel," "atrocious," "inhumane," "immoral," "shameful" and "heartbreaking."

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