Letter to the Regis Community:

The rampant violence in Central America forcing families to flee their homes to save their lives is now being cruelly compounded by the "zero tolerance" policy that seeks to turn back those who seek asylum in the U.S. by taking children from their parents. The use of these children as leverage to achieve domestic political objectives is appalling.

The separation of children from their parents at our southern U.S. border must end now. They do not represent a threat to our borders or our national sovereignty. This abuse of distressed children is simply immoral.

As Denver's Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila and Bishop Jorge Rodriguez said this week, "These children and their parents are often fleeing violence and our country should not add to the inhumanity of their situation. While we understand a desire to protect our borders, we call on all lawmakers to urgently seek an end to this immoral policy and pursue solutions that support family cohesiveness."

Regis University also calls for an immediate end to this policy and more humane treatment of our immigrant community. We must not forget or dismiss the root causes that are leading families to make dangerous journeys across a continent to seek refuge at the U.S. border. And we must not ignore the value of family and the vulnerability of young children. Families need to stay together; they are the foundations of a healthy society. The family is not a pawn for political brinkmanship.

Pope Francis made this point in calling for protection of immigrant families' fundamental human rights:

"The issue of migration is not simply one of numbers, but of persons, each with his or her own history, culture, feelings and aspirations. These persons, our brothers and sisters, need 'ongoing protection,' independently of whatever migrant status they may have."

Father James Martin, S.J., also called on Christians in this country to remember that immigrants are our brothers and sisters, and Jesus calls us to love them unconditionally.
As Americans we have our differences, but we must agree on this: Taking children away from their families rips apart the core of all we stand for as a nation. It cannot be tolerated.

John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.
President