

ACTION ALERT

**Office of Peace, Justice and Ecological Integrity
Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth**

June 6-16, 2019

ISSUE: Refugee Children in Detention

Last fall, many people of faith, including religious congregations, raised their voices to the call to close the detention center in Tornillo, Texas, a facility that indefinitely imprisoned refugee children. In January, that facility was shut down. Now, young people are being held in a similar center in Homestead, Florida. For an average of two months at a time, unaccompanied immigrant children are detained at the Homestead facility, run by a for-profit company, with little access to the outside world, at a cost of \$775 per day, per child. Other, more humane options are available to provide for these children.

June 9-16 is designated as a week of action to shut down the Homestead facility. Here are the ways that you can take action:

ACTION:

1. Sign the petition linked <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/sign-the-petition-close-the-homestead-child-detention-center?source=19HOMMSMAIN&referrer=group-american-friends-service-committee> Campaign organizers are hoping to bring 100,000 signatures to the US Department of Health and Human Services demanding the closure of Homestead.
2. Send a message to your members of Congress and/or organize a local letter writing gathering. Here are some tools to help, including engaging children in writing letters. <https://migrantjustice.afsc.org/3-ways-organize-event-our-week-action>
3. Gather to pray for immigrant children; you may consider using this prayer from *Education for Justice*.

Prayer for Migrants

For all those who see “home” and all it means
Disappear behind them;
For all those who cannot see a home
In the days ahead of them;
For all those who dwell in
Daily insecurity;

For all those who are weary and
Without a safe place to rest their heads;
For all families in migration we pray.
May the image of the Holy Family
Fleeing oppression stay with us this week,
And stay with us each night as wear blessed
With returning to a home.
May we also be blessed
With compassion for those
Still weary, still seeking,
Still with so far to go.

{ Source: Jane Deren, Education for Justice, 2007 }