



CONTACT:

Dan Andriacco
Director, Office of Communications
513/421-3131 x6618 At Home: 513/471-5977
FAX: 513/421-6225

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE April 6, 2017

ARCHDIOCESE DECRIES ICE REMOVAL OF MOTHER OF FOUR

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati today issued the following statement in response to actions taken Wednesday by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE):

The Trump Administration has repeatedly announced that its approach towards immigration enforcement would focus on public safety and removing criminal elements from our communities. Today, we plea to our political leaders and law enforcement to live up to that in the case of Maribel Trujillo Diaz, a devoted wife and mother and outstanding member of her church and community.

Maribel, a wife, a mother of four and an active member of St. Julie Billiart Parish in Hamilton, fled Mexico in 2002. She currently has a pending asylum case, based on the situation that her family has been targeted by Mexican cartels because they have refused to work for them.

Last year, when Maribel was close to deportation, thousands of Catholic faithful and other supporters throughout Butler County and Cincinnati sent letters, pleading for her to stay. Immigration officials then responded by granting her prosecutorial discretion, considering her too low of a priority and no threat to public safety. Maribel has been reporting regularly since then to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), as instructed. At her check-in appointment on Monday, she was told that she could remain at home as her asylum case was further reviewed.

Suddenly yesterday (April 5), ICE arrived at her brother's house as she prepared to go to work, taking her into custody for imminent deportation without having the chance to say goodbye to all her children. This is cruel and unacceptable.

Maribel has made a life in Ohio based on positive contributions to her church and her community. She has no criminal history. She is a lay leader at her parish, whose members are surrounding her with prayers that she be permitted to remain with them and her family. Maribel's children, ages 14, 12, 10 and 3, are all U.S. citizens. Her 3-year-old daughter has recurring seizures and requires the attention and care of her mother.

We urge that prosecutorial discretion for Maribel be extended. We fully respect the Department of Homeland Security's duty to enforce our immigration laws, and we recognize that this is not an easy task. At the same time, it is clear that the common good cannot be served at this stage by separating this wife and mother from her family. Our community gains nothing by being left with a single-parent household when such a responsible and well respected family can be kept together. We urge that our elected and administrative officials exercise mercy for Maribel.

*

*

*

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati is the 38th largest Catholic diocese in the country, with almost 500,000 Catholics, and has the sixth largest network of Catholic schools in terms of enrollment. The 19-county territory includes 211 parishes and 111 Catholic primary and secondary schools.