

# St. Ignatius Justice and Peace Committee: Immigration Subcommittee Documentary Screening Report

## September 22, 2019



From left to right in the group photo: Ouranitsa Abbas (former Esperanza Center Pro Bono Coordinator), Helany Sinkler (former Esperanza Center Family Reunification Program Manager), Daniel Zawodny (Esperanza Center Client Services Representative and member of St. Ignatius ISC), Katherine Phillips (Esperanza Center Health Services Manager), Mikhael Borgonos (Esperanza Center Immigration Legal Services Managing Attorney).

### by Daniel Zawodny

Nearly forty people packed the seats of Ignatian Hall on Sunday, September 22nd for a documentary screening and panel discussion event hosted by the Immigration Subcommittee of the St. Ignatius Justice and Peace Committee.



The Immigration Subcommittee partnered with the Esperanza Center, a local comprehensive immigrant resource center located in Fells Point, as part of their “Life Across Borders” immigration film series to present the screening of the PBS Frontline documentary “Separated: Children at the Border.”

After the crowd settled into their seats with some pizza and soda, Brendan Cassidy, member of the St. Ignatius Immigration Subcommittee, together with a member of the Esperanza Center staff, welcomed everyone to the event and introduced the film.

“Separated: Children at the Border” is a heart-wrenching, 60-minute exploration of the practice of family separation at the U.S. - Mexico border. PBS Frontline correspondents travel to the southern border and to El Salvador to speak with migrants who were separated from family members upon arrival in the United States. They also sit down with Thomas Homan, acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement between 2017 and 2018.

Upon the film’s completion, Fr. Jim Casciotti S.J led the group in a prayer for peace, understanding, and a stop to the injustices that migrants face at our southern border and around the world.

Following the film was a panel discussion, where attendees were able to engage with Katherine Phillips, manager of Health Services at the Esperanza Center, Helany Sinkler, former manager of Esperanza's Family Reunification program, and Mikhael Borgonos, Esperanza's manager with Immigration Legal Services.

The panelists fielded questions and offered their perspectives on some of the realities that were presented in the film, tying them to the greater historical context of U.S. intervention in Central America and push factors that send people fleeing their countries.

The St. Ignatius Immigration Subcommittee hopes to continue the collaboration with Esperanza Center in the future and offer more opportunities for parishioners to learn more about the realities that immigrants face here in our city.

**[Click here to see Event Photos](#)**

