



An area deforested by illegal gold mining is seen in a zone known as Mega 14, in the southern Amazon region of Madre de Dios, Peru. (CNS/Reuters/Janine Costa)



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At the cathedral, several speakers gave testimony on how recent events have affected them. Two adult sisters, side-by-side, spoke in English and Spanish, telling the fears of their families. One was near tears.

At a half-hour rally and prayer vigil overseen by several dozen San Diego police officers, others gave fiery speeches in Spanish.

Before the event, participants were urged on social media not to bring other nations' flags â?? a common motif of immigrant rights marches â?? and instead encouraged to bring religious symbols.

But many small U.S. flags were handed out and waved wildly at several moments, especially amid remarks of Texas-born Bishop Bejarano.

Near the end of the vigil, Bejarano called on parishioners from all over the county to raise their hands in prayer â?? aimed at empty federal buildings across the street on Super Bowl Sunday.

Cardinal McElroy told NCR: "We're helping with speaking out; we're helping with prayer, and I think we'll have to be advocates â?? all of us â?? for the rights of these families and children, men and women."

In concluding his 5-minute cathedral talk, he said, "So as we go forth ... let us remember that ... we ask God's blessing upon us all but at every moment of the unfolding weeks. We cannot stay silent but speak up for the rights of those who are undocumented and for the wrong of unleashing the campaign of fear, which is unfolding in our midst."

This story appears in the **Catholic Social Ministry Gathering 2018** feature series. [View the full series.](#)