



Compassion Has No Boundaries at US – Mexico Border

~ by Peter Tran and Lisa Elmaleh, Global Sisters Report

AGUA PRIETA, MEXICO – At 1 a.m. on a later October day, Sr. Judy Bourg's alarm goes off in the School Sisters of Notre Dame house in Douglas, Arizona. She marshals her three guests, who want to know about her ministry, to get ready for the 10-minute drive through the U.S. Border checkpoint and on to Agua Prieta, Mexico.

They arrive at the Centro de Recursos para Migrantes, or Migrant Resource Center, a two-story building just outside the gate of the border wall there, and set to work to ready sandwiches, hot coffee and warm clothes. She shows her guest volunteers the ropes.

Why do she and others perform this daily ritual in the dark of night? Because the center needs to be ready for the fresh group of deportees who will arrive in the acute hours of the day, classified as “returned or expelled.” In the middle of the night, the U.S. Border officials picked them up from holding centers, put them on a bus, transported them and subsequently left them off at the border gate outside Agua Prieta. All had been refused asylum and sent back. Back to the hunger, poverty, threats and violence they fled.



From left: Brian, Alejandro and Humberto were among the men expelled in the middle of the night at the U.S. – Douglas, Texas border crossing. (Photo: Lisa Elmaleh)

As Sr. Bourg walks out to the border gate at 2:30 a.m., a U.S. Border Patrol bus drops off some 30 returnees on the U.S. side. They step over into Mexico and Bourg moves in to welcome them.

She invites them to the center for food and a warm place to rest. The migrants, all men in their 20s and 30s, shiver in the declining temperatures. A volunteer doles out socks, a blanket or clothing to the men, who wait patiently in line for coffee and food. Later in the day, other groups of expelled migrants, some of whom are women, arrive. The center receives 100 – 200 expelled migrants each day.

Sr. Bourg says she is deeply moved as she greets the migrants at the gate and offers comfort. “It is dark and cold, and they have no idea where they are. To be able to look them in the eyes and tell them that they are welcome into a safe place where they can rest, fills my heart,” she says.

Several hours later, as the sun rises, the migrants shed their blankets. Two Missionary Sisters of the Eucharist walk in smiling. Sr. Maribel Lara Hernandez cleans and can offer first aid. Sr. Emma Rias Flores heads to the kitchen.



Many expelled migrants hobble into the migrant center with blisters on their feet, accumulated after days of walking through the desert. Sr. Hernandez washes the migrants' feet and tends to their blisters.

Sr. Hernandez sets up a makeshift clinic. One man hobbles over to take a seat, presenting his wounded foot to Hernandez. She washes the blisters, applies medication and wraps it with gauze pad. Another migrant takes his turn and then another.

As the day progresses, the center becomes busy with activities. Volunteers work in the vegetable garden on the center's grounds. Some deportees rush to help till the soil. As a migrant center is a short-term shelter, expelled migrants will leave it soon. A small number will return to their home country, while others will attempt to cross the border again.

Under the Trump and Biden administrations, more than 1.7 million expulsions have been carried out since the pandemic began, according to the [Migration Policy Institute](#).

The [Migration Protection Protocols](#), known as the "Remain in Mexico" program, were suspended in January 2019, but were reinstated in December 2021 by order of a federal judge in Texas. They remain in effect despite human rights activists' warnings about the high risk of violence to those forced to wait in dangerous border areas. To read the entire article please click [here](#)

GRATEFUL and BLESSED



At the conclusion of their eight-day retreat with Fr. Jack Baron, SJ (c.) the Missionary Sisters paused for a photo.

The sisters at the Sacred Heart Convent in New York just completed an Eight-Day retreat with Fr. Jack Baron, S.J. All were feeling very grateful and blessed. ~ submitted by Sr. Renee Kittelson, MSC



Cabrini Students Honor Distinguished Educators

NEW ORLEANS – Four elementary school teachers were honored on May 4, 2022, by Cabrini High School students. The Distinguished Educator Award is presented annually to teachers who have done an outstanding job preparing their students to succeed in high school. Cabrini High School’s Distinguished Educators include:

- **Teresa Anasagasti** – Morris Jeff Community School, nominated by Grace Cook ‘25
- **Julie Mallory** – Lake Harbor Middle School, nominated by Emma Graff ‘23
- **Stacie Seube** – Our Lady of Prompt Succor, nominated by Eaden Roberson ‘26
- **Emily Tornabene** – St. Dominic School, nominated by Emma Thomason ‘25



From left: CHS students stand proudly with the teachers they have nominated: Grace Cook, Teresa Anasagasti, Eaden Roberson, Stacie Seube, Emma Thomason and Emily Tornabene

Each year, Cabrini students who demonstrate outstanding character and hold a GPA of 3.5 or higher are given the opportunity to nominate an elementary school teacher who has had a positive impact on their lives. In the nomination, students are asked to share why they selected the teacher and the impact the nominee has had in their lives and in preparation for high school and beyond.

Cabrini High School President, Jack Truxillo, addressed the Distinguished Educators and guests. “You have made such an impression and had such an impact on your former students that they chose to go through the nominating process. That itself speaks volumes. The influence you have daily on students is immeasurable. The terms, parent, protector, counselor, nurse, referee, disciplinarian, coach, leader, expert, task master, time keeper, planner, janitor, decorator, supervisor and finally, instructor, all fit in your job description. But, as we all know those are just a sampling of the jobs you do. Be assured that the work you do is valued. It is recognized.”

To view additional photos from the event, please click [here](#) ~ submitted by Madeline LeBlanc, Cabrini High School

In production – a Cabrini Film

An important new movie is currently in production, with shoots in Buffalo and Rome. Not yet titled, the film is about the life of Francesca Xavier Cabrini. There are certain themes which are timeless and others that are timely. In the case of this production, it is both. The drive, initiative, power and success of Mother Cabrini is not only inspirational, but a lesson in accomplishment for the greater good.

In the 1890s, Mother Cabrini was a social activist who championed the empowerment of women and the rights of immigrants. It was a time when women were treated as second-class citizens, while the treatment of immigrants was even worse. Her philanthropic accomplishments equaled the likes of Vanderbilt and Rockefeller, yet remarkably, Mother Cabrini a woman, Italian immigrant and a nun accomplished all of it without a penny to her name.

To view a trailer of the movie, please click [here](#)



Cabrini Immigrant Services Hails Nutrition Grads



Lucy Diaz, a nutrition educator, shares important tips with the class.

Cabrini Immigrant Services (CIS), Dobbs Ferry, NY, completed its second Nutrition Program.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions and social distancing, we were not able to accommodate all the students this past Fall 2021. On May 11th, after an eight-week program, our participants received their Certificates of Completion from Lucy Diaz, a Nutrition Program Educator with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Westchester County. The course, 'Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program', taught the participants how to read and understand labels on different food and drink items, food safety, reducing salt and sugar intake, etc.

In addition to receiving a Certificate of Completion for the course, everyone received an insulated bag filled with many goodies such as a meat thermometer, refrigerator thermometer, hand sanitizer, etc. Congratulations to all our 'graduates' of the nutrition program.

We are so proud of you! ~ submitted by Lorraine Campanelli, Director, CIS-Dobbs Ferry, NY



A proud graduate holds her certificate and her goodie bag.

From the Guadalupe Province Vocation Promotion Team...

Leadership Makes the Difference

~ by Sr. Mary Rowell, CSJ for HORIZON the Journal of the National Religious Vocations Conference

General Chapters are Key Moments

I am not denying that some communities will come to a natural end, as is the right order of things, having served well the building up of God's work in their time. Nor am I denying that others outside the community, given their particular vocation and gifts, may also live the charism of a religious community and carry on some continuity. However, for religious to neglect explicit discussion and discernment of religious vocations at any of our major communal events, is arguable to choose, inadvertently, our own demise. This preempts the work of the Holy Spirit, closing ourselves off from outcomes best entrusted to the Spirit.

Anecdotally, it is clear, as international vocation leaders have attested, that even for communities experiencing considerable diminishment, when vocation is discussed at a General Chapter, it is taken seriously once again, even if it is ultimately for the benefit and growth of religious life in general. This observation suggests that the leadership work of the vocation minister involves positive and proactive communications with formal congregational leadership as they discern the future together with members and with Chapter preparation teams. This proactive communication allows possibilities for vocation animation to be integrally incorporated into discussions for wider well-being and mission.

Courage to Face the Hard Questions



To “stand on the balcony” observing the wider context may also be a dangerous task and one that may not be welcomed! For the view from the balcony today is revealing emerging patterns that are not necessarily in harmony with one another. Take, for example, the great desire of those presently attracted to religious congregations for community living and community prayer. Meanwhile many existing members have come to differing views of what it means to live in community and to pray.

The heart of the problem here may well be a question of interpretation. What existing members may think discerners are asking for is “institutional security.” Discerners and new members may actually be saying that for them, given their reality and today's societal ethos, community is the counter-cultural witness. Community, in different forms in the past, and for many of us now, was and is the attractor to religious life.

The existence of such challenges does invite vocation leaderships to create pathways of dialogue and to act sometimes as “translators” to bring all to threshold moments of discernment. This role of translating what newcomers are seeking may require the vocation leader to propose challenges to him or herself and to the community. Sister Constance FitzGerald, OCD says of the case in point, the crux is that this is “going to call for sacrifices. And sacrificing things...to provide a model for [new members] of how the life needs to be lived. And unless communities can offer this, they are not going to have and keep new [members].”

The leader must sometimes have the courage, integrity and commitment to suggest sacrifices for the sake of new life. **Next week: Communicate hope**



*The Cabrini Lay Missionaries-Guadalupe Province
invite you to join us for an
Afternoon of Reflection*

**Saturday, June 4, 2022
1:00-3:00 PM EST**

Join us in-person at the Cabrini Shrine, NYC or via Zoom
(Spanish/English available via Zoom)

Theme: Hope



Speaker: Lucille Larrivee Naughton

Please register for the program by emailing:

Cabrinilaymissionariesgp@gmail.com

Please indicate if you will be joining us **in-person or via Zoom**

If attending in-person, lunch will be served at 12:00 Noon.



PLAYBALL!

New York has a new professional baseball team the Staten Island Ferry Hawks of the Atlantic League. The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Cabrini Mission Foundation want you to join us for a day at the ballpark! Get your team together and meet us behind home plate in the stadium's big event suite. Hotdogs, burgers bottomless popcorn, and soft drinks are included.

Date: Thursday, July 21, 2022

Game Time: 11:00 AM

Where: Staten Island University Hospital,
Community Park, 75 Richmond Terrace, Staten
Island, NY 10301

(Easy to get to by car, ferry, train or bus)

Sponsorships Available!

- Tickets for the game \$100
- Sponsor a Sister \$100
- Beverage Sponsor: \$350
- Base Hit Sponsor: \$750
- Stolen base Sponsor: \$1,000
- RBI Sponsor: \$1,500
- Double Sponsor \$2,000
- Triple Sponsor \$3,000
- Homerun Sponsor \$4,500
- Grand Slam Sponsor: \$5,000
- Team Captain Event Sponsor: \$10,000



Please contact:

Ellen 212-228-8608 or ecunningham@cabrinifdn.org



Prayer Requests

Mercedes Duran

Prayers are requested for Mercedes Duran. She is the mother of Digna Merchan, one of the Cabrini Lay Missionaries. Mercedes lives in Ecuador and is ill. Digna would appreciate prayers that God's will be done.

Joe

Marianne McGowan asks for prayers for her son-in-law, Joe, who was injured when the all-terrain vehicle he was driving tipped over. Joe has sustained some fractures. Please pray for his swift recovery.

A New Book about Mother Cabrini

Anne Schwelm, the Director of the Holy Spirit Library at Cabrini University, recently shared a new novel written by Nicole Gregory on behalf of the Mentoris Project.

Our thanks to Sr. Christine Marie Baltas, MSC for passing this information on to The Update readers.

The Mentoris Project is a series of novels and biographies about the lives of great Italians and Italian-Americans: women and men who have changed history through their contributions as scientists, inventors, explorers, thinkers and creators.

The Barbera Foundation sponsors this series in the hope that, like a mentor, each book will inspire the reader to discover how she or he can make a positive contribution to society.

The book is available on Amazon, click [here](#)

