



## Update from the OSP-IHM Border Mission

by Sister Mary Elaine Anderson, IHM

In May, the OSP-IHM Collaborative Border Mission received a grant from the National Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) and its partner, the Asociación de Hermanas Latinas Misioneras en America (AHLMA). The funded project addresses the mental health issues of migrant women and their families who are living in the Casa de Migrantes in Reynosa, Mexico, and waiting to receive their interview with Immigration.



Sister Carmen (far right) with her arts and crafts students at Casa de Migrantes in Reynosa, Mexico.

In June, the first phase of the project was initiated. Volunteers began to provide weekly arts & crafts, needlework, and baking classes for women and their children. The classes have been received with great enthusiasm, and there are already a few success stories. This year instead of buying cakes to celebrate Father's Day, the baking class made about two hundred cupcakes, put them together to form two rectangular cakes, and decorated them. Sister Carmen Armenta Lara (Monroe IHM) also has been quite successful in gathering a group of women and teens to teach them how to make articles (*ornaments, mug rugs, etc.*) from plastic canvas. When we arrive each Thursday, it is exciting to see small groups of Carmen's students sitting together, talking, laughing, helping one another, and creating their own designs with the plastic canvas.



By the first week of July, the second phase of the project was implemented. Using money from donors, who already support our ministry at the border, we began to buy the hand-made items created by the migrant women and teens. Each person took great pride in his or her work. We believe that the stipend they received for their time and labor is one small step in restoring their sense of dignity and agency.

When we wrote the grant, we hoped to send the hand-made crafts, with an explanation of the project, to the retirement/nursing homes of the OSP and IHM congregations to be displayed in their gift shops. That hope has become a reality! Sisters Carmen Armenta Lara, Rose Patrice Kuhn, and I have delivered the items in person to the three IHM Congregations. May each hand-crafted article be a reminder of the plight and the potential of migrant women and teens and an invitation to strengthen your prayerful support of them!



Sister Marie Renee Murphy and Sister Maryanne Graham admire the work of the migrants that will be sold in Camilla Hall's Gift Shop.



The OSP-IHM Border Mission invites IHM and OSP sisters and associates to consider volunteering for two weeks at the US-Mexico Border.

The SOAR! Foundation awarded the Volunteer Program \$25,000 to pay for the airfare and food stipend of sisters age 65+ who wish to volunteer side by side with the core community in McAllen, Texas.

Sisters of any age who would like to volunteer are encouraged to speak to their congregational leader about financing their trip and time of service.

The dates that are available to volunteer in Fall 2024 are:

September 7 - 21  
October 5 - 19  
November 11 - 24  
December 7 - 21

Please contact Sister Rose Patrice Kuhn (215-313-7753) or Sister Mary Elaine Anderson (570-575-2325) to make sure that your preferred dates have not been filled.