



GOD HEARS THE CRY OF THE POOR

by Sister Mary Henrich, IHM (Immaculata)

In June 2025, Sisters Donna Shallo, Kate Ward, and I, Mary Henrich, traveled to our IHM Convent in McAllen, Texas, to be present and assist at the border. Sisters Mary Elaine, Rose, and Carmen were so welcoming and shared their sense of mission in accompanying people on both sides of the border. They were gracious in answering our many questions each day as we returned from our visits to the Sendas 1 and 2, Casa de Migrantes, and other places of ministry. They are selfless in their dedication to the people in several places.

Each time I walked over the bridge back and forth to Mexico, I prayed for all the people who had crossed the Rio Grande. Did they make it? Where are they today? Are they thriving? Are they in ICE detention? Have they been deported? So many dreams have been dashed, and so many people are living in fear and uncertainty. I am heartened to see the IHMs at the border along with other women and men religious accompanying people in McAllen and Reynosa, Mexico, who want only a safe and secure place to live. They had their reasons for leaving their homelands, and so many are unable to return. They are strangers in the land. They are stranded. It is beautiful to witness them experiencing the kindness, generosity, and caring support of our IHM sisters and others.



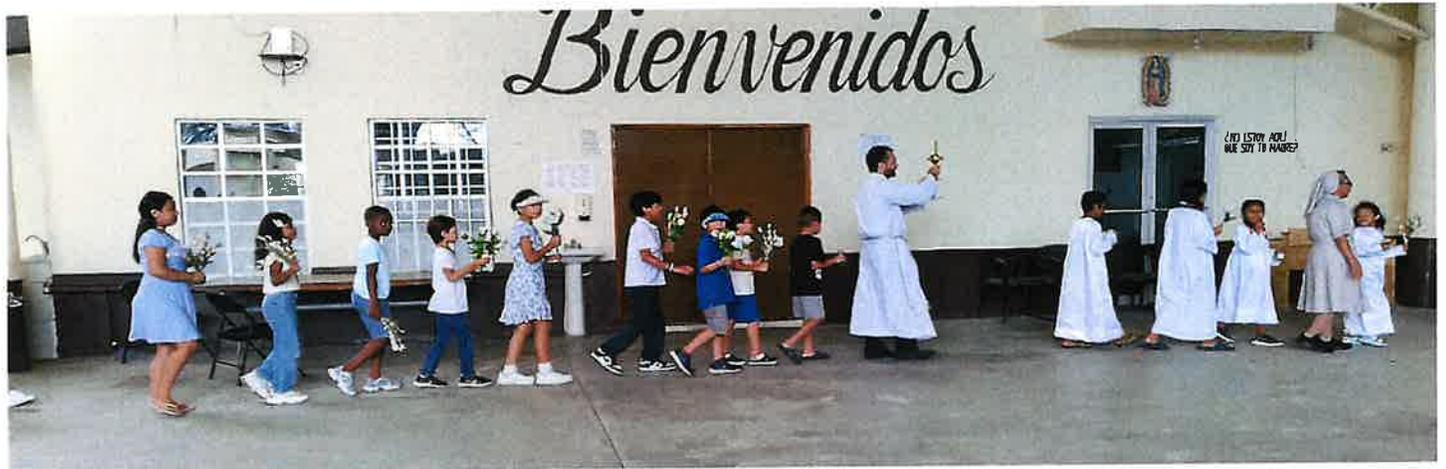
Sister Mary Henrich and Sister Donna Shallo are crossing the bridge back into Texas.

Immigration is no longer just a word for me. These people have faces, and they have names. I met migrants from Haiti, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. The Scriptures tell us, "The LORD hears the cry of the poor." God is hearing their cries from their hearts with unknown futures. It was a blessing to be among them for a short time and to encounter the women and children who participated and enjoyed the activities we planned for each day. We played games, painted wooden frames, made bracelets, and decorated visors. Joy and hope were visible when the sisters were there, and for a little while, uncertainty and insecurity could be forgotten.



Sister Kate Ward helps a migrant child make a colorful bracelet.

Some days, the American Jesuits would preside at Mass. It was very simple, but so meaningful. The children served around the altar, and everyone joined in reverent prayer. What touched me the most was the celebration of the Corpus Christi Mass. It was followed by the best procession ever. Children dressed in white robes carrying candles, followed by children carrying bunches of flowers, walked around the buildings of Casa de Migrantes. The priests provided everything for the Mass and Procession. The faith of the women and children was palpable; we joined in and sang our hearts out. I know God is hearing the cries of the poor and, like our ancestors, we wait in hope for the coming of God in our day.



Corpus Christi Procession in Casa de Migrantes