



Update from the OSP-IHM Border Mission

The OSP-IHM Border Mission “Mary, Comfort of Migrants” would like to express its gratitude to the National Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) and its partner, the Asociación de Hermanas Latinas Misioneras en America (AHLMA) for their recent grant of \$3,350. The awarded money is part of the LCWR Solidarity Collection which was implemented to address the needs of LCWR Region 12 (Texas, Arkansas, New Mexico, and Arizona).

The grant addresses the mental health issues of migrant women living in the Casa de Migrantes in Reynosa, Mexico. The shelter, which is sponsored by the Daughters of Charity, provides lodging and food for about 200 migrants, many of whom are women and children. While volunteer healthcare workers attend to the medical needs of the migrants and Jesuit and Redemptorist brothers and priests nurture their spiritual lives, mental health is an area that has not been directly addressed.

Migrants usually spend 2-6 months in the shelter while they apply and wait for their interview with US Immigration. The extended period of waiting, unoccupied hours, and lack of daily purpose have exacerbated the mental health issues of women who suffer from PTSD, anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem.

The proposed project integrates body-centered activities with the creation of hand-made crafts and homemade baked goods. Lay and Sister volunteers give weekly arts & crafts, needlework, or baking classes to the women. At the beginning of each class, body-centered and movement activities are incorporated to help the women center and ground themselves and manage their anxiety and depression. During the class, women learn a skill that they will be able to adapt for future use. They are given materials to continue practicing the learned skill during the week. Each class ends with a self-care activity that soothes and calms the women.



The project's second phase involves using money from donors who already support our ministry at the border to buy handmade items created by migrant women. This potentially would give the women a sense of agency and purpose, increase their self-esteem, and provide them with money that they can use for their personal and family needs. We hope 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 sold in their gift shops to raise awareness of the plight and the potential of the migrant women and strengthen the prayerful support of our aging sisters.

Sisters Mary Elaine Anderson and Rose Patrice Kuhn join migrant women who are learning to crochet and knit.



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 still available to volunteer in Spring and Summer 2024 are:

May 4 – 18

July 7 – 20

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.