



Update from OSP-IHM Collaborative Border Ministry

by Sister Mary Elaine Anderson, IHM

“How much contempt is stirred up at times towards the vulnerable, the marginalized, and migrants! On this day, I would like all of us to hope anew and to revive our trust in others, including those who are different than ourselves, or who come from distant lands, bringing unfamiliar customs, ways of life, and ideas! For all of us are children of God!”

Pope Francis (Easter, April 20, 2025)

In his final Easter address, Pope Francis courageously points out the antagonistic and intimidating reality that the marginalized experience in our world today. He invites us to hope and trust in all God’s children. For we IHMs, it is a call to fully embody our charism and proclaim in our everyday life God’s unconditional love for all, especially the most vulnerable among us.



IHM, Franciscan, Mercy Sisters, a Daughter of Charity, and Jesuits meet at the border to cross into Mexico.

Since the executive order on January 20, 2025, which terminated the CBP One App and left migrants with no legal way to enter the US, the OSP-IHM Core Community has been discerning and exploring with other men and women religious the direction our ministry at the border will take. Daily, we hear about hostile actions being taken against our migrant brothers and sisters. We are witnesses to the acute suffering of those whose dream to enter the US was extinguished, the fear and the confusion of those who have been deported to countries where their life is in danger, and the uncertainty of those who live under the constant threat of being deported.

We recognize the urgency to stand in solidarity with and accompany our migrant brothers and sisters at this time. The OSP-IHM Border Ministry is one of collaboration. Many of our

OSP and IHM sisters, associates, and friends have volunteered for a brief time. Our most recent volunteers were Sister Ann Berendes (Scranton IHM) and Sister Patricia Godoy (Immaculata IHM). What follows is Sister Patricia’s reflection on her time at the border.



Sister Patricia Godoy (I-IHM) and Teresita with a migrant child at Senda de Vida 2 in Reynosa, Mexico.

My two-week experience at the border has been a time of wanting to bless and of also being deeply blessed in a setting where our migrant brothers and sisters are suffering. It has been a cry for us to come together to alleviate the unbearable anguish of many families who seek the safety and security each human being deserves, along with the opportunity to grow and live with dignity. They have wanted to do things “the right way,” but now the doors are tightly closed, and they experience the anguish of probable deportation, and living in a state of “limbo” with nowhere to go.

Our Sisters participating in the OSP-IHM Border Ministry, truly pilgrims of hope, creatively give their “all” to alleviate, console, accompany, and encourage God’s good people. To relieve this suffering, they have joined together with religious and priests of other congregations. In these two weeks, they have worked together with Sisters of Mercy, a Franciscan sister, Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate, a Daughter of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, Jesuit priests, and seminarians. Each person, with joy and hope, uses their unique gifts to lift God’s People.

“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

Ephesians 4:16

I am also certain that our sisters everywhere, with their prayers, concern, and support, are a vital part of nourishing this ministry with God’s blessing and grace. For this very brief time, being a witness and participant in this endeavor, I have been profoundly blessed with an even deeper longing to build up the Kingdom of God, and so I return to my sisters and ministry with this holy yearning. As I leave, I don’t LEAVE. God’s people in need are permanently “tattooed” in my heart.

(Right) Sister Ann Berendes (S-IHM) makes sandwiches for the homeless at the Humanitarian Respite Center.

