

Dignity Mission Update

March 13, 2024

Last week's top stories from the border as reported in the March 6 edition of *Frontera Dispatch* published by the Hope Border Institute have a common theme: The growth of anti-migrant sentiment fanned by political grandstanding is leading to policies and laws that further restrict access to asylum, which we believe is a legal and human right.

Our trip to deliver your donations to El Paso this past weekend gave us the opportunity to visit two migrant shelters the Dignity Mission supports and witness firsthand the determination of the shelter directors and volunteers to persist in providing humanitarian aid to the homeless migrants who find their way to their shelters. Doing this despite the attempts of the Texas governor and his attorney general to criminalize humanitarian and faith workers like Rubin Garcia at Annunciation House reflects their belief in the rights and dignity of our fellow human beings. Father Peter at St. Francis Xavier Migrant Shelter insists we cannot simply ignore the plight of our brothers and sisters if we are to live our lives according to the Gospels: "I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was homeless and you gave me a room, I was shivering and you gave me clothes." The measure of our humanity will be the degree to which we respect, protect, and promote the dignity of our migrant brothers and sisters.

The Dignity Mission remains committed to doing what we can to bring that sense of dignity to our fellow human beings who are most vulnerable as they flee their homes in search of a more welcoming and secure place to build their lives. We have attached a picture of a banner found in the Punto de Partida exhibit at UTEP's Centennial Museum that perhaps best sums up the impact of what we can do even if it seems small—"Helping one person might not change the whole world, but it could change the world for one person." We took steps to try to do that once again when our friends at United Church of Los Alamos and a group of 32 volunteers at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church met recently and assembled a total of 2,434 Dignity Kits. Seven volunteers in Albuquerque and another group of 15 volunteers in Placitas

(pictures attached) loaded the truck with over 6,000 pounds of your donations on March 8th in preparation for our trip to the borderlands on the following day. The donations included the 2,400+ Dignity Kits, 100 Children's Kits, 125 Days for Girls Kits from the Louisville, Colorado chapter, over 600 blankets including 29 beautifully sewn receiving blankets, 90 coats and jackets most of which came from All Saints Lutheran Church in Albuquerque and Albuquerque Asylum Seeker Welcome, 114 hats most of which were knitted by the "Mad Hatters" from All Saints Lutheran Church, 47 gloves/mittens, 103 pairs of shoes, 2 bags of sandals and 10 bags of clothing from United Church of Los Alamos, 85 cases of food, 360 pounds of pinto beans and 350 pounds of rice. Other donations included sheets, towels, diapers, clothing, scarves, belts, socks, backpacks, toys, puzzles, play pens, face masks, and OTC medications.

A team of 19 volunteers (picture attached) met us in El Paso Saturday morning to unload the truck. After unloading we formed a circle which we look forward to as each member of Dr. Moya's team states who they are and why they are there. We are always moved by their expressions of dedication, hope and gratitude. They immediately loaded their private vehicles with many of the donations we had delivered and headed out to deliver them to shelters on both sides of the border. Attached are a few pictures of some of the recipients and of the distribution of your donated items to those in need. Without your support what you see here would not happen. On behalf of the people who directly receive your donations we send you our deepest gratitude. Father Peter at St. Francis Xavier told us the payback we miss out on are the smiles he sees when the asylum seekers in his shelter receive their Dignity Kits and other gifts you provide.

Many of the asylum seekers sheltered in Ciudad Juárez and El Paso are women with small children whose fathers are often held in detention facilities in Texas and New Mexico, so there is an urgent need for baby and young children supplies such as baby food, formula, dry milk (NIDO Fortificado and NIDO Kinder 1+), diapers, baby wipes, underwear, and socks. These and other items you may want to purchase can be found on the Dignity Mission Wish List

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3A8N584B37L61?ref_=wl_share

and shipped directly to:

Dignity Mission
c/o Dr. Eva Moya
6520 La Cadena Drive
El Paso, TX 79912

Monetary donations are always welcome, and you can be assured we will use those donations to purchase what is most needed at locations and in quantities necessary to get the most “bang for the buck.” Monetary donations can be made in one of two ways:

1. A check written to Las Placitas Presbyterian Church with Dignity Mission noted in the memo line and mailed to **Las Placitas Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 768, Placitas, NM 87043.**
2. On-line giving by going to www.lasplacitaschurch.org. Click on "More" in the top right-hand corner of the Home Page, click on "GIVE" on the drop-down menu, click on "CLICK HERE TO GIVE", click on the box next to Dignity Mission on the Donation page, enter an amount, frequency, and start date, and click on “Continue.” Complete the form and submit.

Blessings,

Jack and Cheryl