

## **Dignity Mission Update**

### **September 17, 2024**

As news sources have been reporting since July, migrant encounters at our southern border have dropped dramatically. We have also seen a reduction in the number of asylum seekers being housed in the migrant shelters the Dignity Mission supports. For example, the Sacred Heart Catholic Church migrant shelter (Casa del Sagrado Corazon), which sits five blocks from the border, has been serving breakfast to only a couple dozen people for the past three weeks. Sixteen months ago, there were as many as 2,500 migrants camped out around Sacred Heart. The church had opened its gym as a refuge in December 2022 when hundreds of migrants were congregating on the streets outside. Since then, Sacred Heart has sheltered more than 30,000 migrants, at times housing well over their capacity of 120 each night and feeding hundreds more on the street. They will close on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Another shelter the Dignity Mission helps support in El Paso, the Rescue Mission, which has a capacity of 200, is considering closing its doors within the next month; however, two other shelters in El Paso the Dignity Mission assists (Opportunity Center and St. Francis Xavier) plan to remain open. The number of asylum seekers they shelter and support has dropped by 25%, but they continue to provide valuable assistance to those people transiting through El Paso on their way to their sponsors. They appreciate our ongoing assistance. Several other community organizations in El Paso and Ciudad Juárez, who reach out to asylum seekers scattered around the Borderland outside the larger and more widely known shelters, are also grateful for our continued assistance. As we see it, the need for the humanitarian supplies we gather and transport to the Borderland remains. We have attached an article from Sunday's edition of the *Albuquerque Journal*, written by Morgan Smith, which provides some additional information about the migrant situation at the border.

To welcome the stranger and offer hope to those fleeing danger, we delivered another three tons of supplies to Dr. Moya in El Paso on Saturday. That load

included 2,322 Dignity Kits, 229 Children's Kits, 900 blankets, 1,365 pounds of beans and rice, 47 boxes of granola bars, 500 pairs of new socks, and two dozen boxes of coats, jackets, hats and jeans as well as crates of toys and bags of shoes, boots and medical supplies. An impressive array of donors and volunteers were responsible for this month's delivery beginning with the donations of goods we received from All Saints Lutheran Church and Second Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque, United Church of Los Alamos, and the members and friends of Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church in Louisa, Virginia. A special thank you to Lynn Coburn and Michael Barrows who transported those donations for the Dignity Mission from Virginia to El Paso. We remain grateful to the Madison Christian Community in Madison, Wisconsin for their continued support. Thanks also go out to the Rev. Andrew Black from First Presbyterian Church of Santa Fe who transported donations from his church to St. Francis Xavier Migrant Center in El Paso last week. We attached a photograph of some of your donations that were delivered to a shelter in Juárez this month.

We were extremely grateful for the volunteers who assembled 2,022 Dignity Kits at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church 10 days ago, which once again included a group of young people from the Youth Volunteer Corps 505. We were also delighted that TwoTone Grant, the founder of the Albuquerque community outreach organization, A Light in the Night, joined us. Last Friday another outstanding group of volunteers helped load the 6,000 pounds of donations onto the truck that departed the next day for El Paso, where we were met by members of Dr. Moya's team of volunteers who unloaded the truck and immediately began the process of distributing your donations to shelters on both sides of the border. Some photos of these dedicated people are attached.

Las Placitas Presbyterian Church is continuing its coat drive in anticipation of colder days along the border and its stuffed animal drive in preparation for the creation of Christmas stockings/bags volunteers will deliver to migrant

children along the border in December. The next scheduled Dignity Mission delivery to El Paso will be on December 13<sup>th</sup>.

Diapers, NIDO milk powder, baby food, and new underwear (all ages) remain critically needed. These and other items you may want to purchase can be found on the Dignity Mission Wish List at

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3A8N584B37L61?ref\\_=wl\\_share](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](http://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.

