



## STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, February 23, 2025

### *Knock and the Door Will Be Opened For You (Mt 7:7)*

“Pope Francis has sent a strongly worded letter to the Catholic bishops of the United States in which he **denounced the mass deportation of migrants** initiated by the current administration. The letter also stated that Francis disagrees with identifying the illegal status of migrants with criminality and called on the bishops ‘to walk together’ and defend the human dignity of the migrants in their country.... ‘At the same time,’ Francis said, ‘one must recognize the right of a nation to defend itself and keep communities safe from those who have committed violent or serious crimes while in the country or prior to arrival.’ Nevertheless, he said, **‘The act of deporting people, who in many cases have left their own land for reasons of extreme poverty, insecurity, exploitation, persecution, or serious deterioration of the environment, damages the dignity of many men and women, and of entire families, and places them in a state of particular vulnerability and defenselessness.’**” (Gerard O’Connell, *America*, 2/11/25)

Pope Francis concluded his letter by appealing to all U.S. Catholics. “I exhort all the faithful of the Catholic Church, and all men and women of goodwill, not to give in to narratives that discriminate against and cause unnecessary suffering to our migrant and refugee brothers and sisters. **With charity and clarity, we are all called to live in solidarity and fraternity**, to build bridges that bring us ever closer together, to avoid walls of ignominy and to learn to give our lives as Jesus Christ gave his for the salvation of all.” (Pope Francis, *From the Vatican*, 10 February 2025)

**Sr. Lisa Buscher, RSCJ, who has been doing border ministry for the last two years, tells of her encounter with a young boy from Honduras.** As the boy and other children sat at a table coloring together, “a basket of candy was passed, and I was struck at how each child took only one sweet. A bit later the basket came by again, each child taking a second sweet. My new friend, Jose, reached into his pocket, looked at his two pieces of candy and offered me one. I was amazed that this child having two pieces of candy would give one away to a stranger.... This was one of many encounters God has blessed me with through the families I have come to know and love at the border.” (*Heart, A Journal of the Society of the Sacred Heart, United States – Canada, 2024, vol 21, issue 2*)

“It is not primarily a question of how many migrants we should let in or how many visas we should give out. Rather **it is a question of the borders we have internalized, the spiritual borders that prevent us from recognizing our shared humanity with people who migrate....** This spiritual vision starts simply by asking this question: *If we were migrants, if we were hungry, if we were abused and exploited women, if we were politically persecuted, if we were trying to reunite with family on the other side of the border – would not our opinions be very different indeed?*” (Rev. Mark J. Seitz, bishop of El Paso, *America*, May 2024)

**As we reflect on this question, let us offer a prayer adapted from the HIAS Haggadah:** “We extend our hands in welcome to those who are seeking freedom, and we remember the danger of what happens when ordinary people do not stand up to those in seats of power. The work of welcome is the work of each of us: we are strongest together.”

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at [socialjustice@holycrossphl.org](mailto:socialjustice@holycrossphl.org).  
[Click here for column archive.](#)