



April 16, 2020

Migrant Ministries Call for End to Deportations during Pandemic

~ by David Agren, Catholic News Service

Catholic migrant ministries of Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras have called for an end to deportations during the COVID-19 crisis, saying the practice exposes an already vulnerable group to health and security risks -- especially those sent summarily to countries of which they are not citizens.



A mother and her daughter wait at a shelter for migrants at the border in Mexico. Photo credit: Catholic News Service

In a statement issued over the April 11-12 Easter weekend, the ministries called for the release of migrants held in detention centers while their cases were being processed, citing health and humanitarian reasons. They also asked that governments "promote concrete actions to protect the rights of migrants and refugees" and "not politicize" the coronavirus crisis.

"We observe with worry that Mexico ... is allowing its neighbor to the north to

deport citizens of any country into its territory, including many without (having received) due process and without offering them the protections necessary," the statement said, adding that "entire families" were being sent to dangerous Mexican border towns "at all hours of the night, making them easy prey for organized crime."

Catholic organizations working on migration matters say movement has diminished during the coronavirus pandemic, but also say they have been unable to tend to migrants already on the road or who have been deported.

Migrant shelters have closed their doors due to health concerns but are allowing those already inside to self-isolate there, said Alberto Xicotencatl, director of the diocesan shelter in Saltillo, some 190 miles from the U.S. border with Texas.

"People arrive at the U.S. border and realize there is a lot security and that it's impossible to approach it, so they want to return," Xicotencatl said, explaining that many people who have tried to reach the United States return and knock on the shelter door. Those arriving at the shelter are provided food and advice, but are not allowed to enter, Xicotencatl said.

Scalabrinian Sister Nyzelle Juliana Donde, director of the Honduran bishops' migrant ministry, said that her team has attended to a dozen deportation flights since a countrywide quarantine was announced March 16. "More than 1,000 migrants have passed through the migrant attention center in San Pedro Sula and often don't have any way to get home to their families," said Sister Donde, one of six signatories to the migrant ministries' statement.

"It's putting the migrants at risk along with those working with them," she said

CABRINI UNIVERSITY FACULTY VISITS MSCs IN GUATEMALA

*~ A reflection by Todd Matthews, PhD., Cabrini University,
Chair, Department of Leadership and Organization Development*

In a visit that now seems like it occurred in a different world, seven Cabrini University faculty members spent three days visiting the MSCs at Dispensario Madre Cabrini in Villa Nueva, Guatemala in late February. The faculty were part of a larger group of faculty and students who were in Guatemala on a Spring Break Immersion Trip, overseen by Dr. Jerry Zurek, Professor of Communications, and Dr. Ray Ward, Director of the Wolfington Center at Cabrini University.

During their time at the Dispensario, the faculty toured the on-site health clinic, the children's center, and visited the nearby mountain community of El Tablon, where they participated in Sunday Mass and also attended an amazing 50th birthday celebration for one of the community members.



Dr. Todd Matthews (c. in Cabrini shirt) was one of seven Cabrini University faculty members who visited with the MSCs at the Dispensario Madre Cabrini in Guatemala.

The faculty also had the opportunity to share meals, engage in deep conversations and even play fun games with Sisters Maria Elena, Juanita, and Ana Gilma. It was an experience that no one will soon forget, with the expectation that the relationship will continue and deepen, as faculty in Business and Leadership were engaged in dialogue about supporting the efforts of the MSCs to build their organizational capacity. *~submitted by Todd Matthews, PhD*

JESUS CHRIST IS TRULY RISEN, ALLELUIA!



Sr. Romualda Molon, MSC assisting Fr. Thomas with the new Easter candle.

The Coronavirus has certainly changed our lives. The constant news of the number of people infected with COVID-19 and the number of deaths throughout the world, has been hard to hear.

At a time like this, we are called to count our blessings. One of the many blessings at St. Cabrini Nursing Home in Dobbs Ferry, NY, is that we have been able to have daily Mass. Fr. Thomas Vadakemuriyil, our chaplain, has celebrated the liturgy for our residents. Thanks to technology, our residents are able to view the Mass on their televisions. Despite the fact that our chapel is empty, the love of Jesus comes through.

I think I can speak for everyone when I say that this year, the services during Holy Week had a deeper meaning. The prayers, readings and songs during this time brought comfort and solace to all. During the Triduum, Susan Herceg and Lorraine Campanelli added music and song to the different services.

Patricia Krasnausky, CEO/President, spoke at the end of the Easter Mass to the residents and staff. She wished everyone a blessed Easter. Pat thanked the residents, their family and friends for their understanding during these difficult days. She thanked the staff who faithfully have come to work every day to care for the residents.

After the Easter Mass, Fr. Thomas went throughout the nursing home blessing each room and the residents. Roehl Ranoco, one of our maintenance workers, carried the newly lit Easter candle. Sr. Alfonsina Gomes, MSC, carried the holy water container as Father sprinkled holy water and gave Easter blessings to everyone. The residents and staff were so appreciative of the special blessing. May the new light of Christ fill our hearts with peace and comfort. Jesus Christ is truly risen, Alleluia!

*~ submitted by Lorraine Campanelli, Director,
Cabrini Immigrant Services, Dobbs Ferry, NY*



From left: Fr. Thomas, Roehl Ranoco, and Sr. Alfonsina Gomes, MSC blessed the residents and the rooms at the nursing home.

Being *Pro-Social* in a Time of Social Distance

~ by Bethany Van Brown, Ph.D., Cabrini University

As a sociologist, I seek to understand how communities restore normalcy when there is a community-wide disruption like 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and today, our all-consuming COVID-19 pandemic.

From 2006 – 2009, I had the opportunity to study at the University of Delaware Disaster Research Center. As a research assistant, I got to interview tugboat captains—on their tugboats—about the waterborne evacuation after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and I went to New Orleans many, many times after Hurricane Katrina.

I learned right away that there are many myths about human behavior after disaster that some media outlets have exploited. The most prominent myth is that people are more likely to behave badly, or as the literature describes it, “anti-socially.” This myth indicates that people only care about themselves, and thus act *selfishly*— and ignore the collective needs. We know from research, however, that the vast majority of people behave very well, or, “pro-socially.” Generally, people are *selfless* and go out of their way to help others, always keeping the collective needs in mind.



While I’ve certainly seen or heard some examples of what we might call “anti-social” behavior amidst COVID-19, I am seeing an overwhelming amount of pro-social behavior. People are making food and leaving it on their porches for children who lack food security; putting non-perishable food items in free little libraries; and making hand sanitizer at home and giving it out to their mail delivery people. The list goes on and on.

Where I really see—and feel—such selfless behavior is right here in our Cabrini University community, and I’m so incredibly proud to be part of it. Someone very wise said to me, “A pandemic calls for grace.” Indeed, it does. A family gave a case of iced tea to Cabrini employees who were helping students move out when the University had to close because of Gov. Wolf’s precautions to lessen the spread of the coronavirus. The Alumni Association was offering gas cards to students who had a long drive. Cabrini people are taking in students who have nowhere to go. And I know that the members of our administration are doing everything they can to ensure our seniors have the [graduation] celebration they deserve, because they care so deeply.

Countless other “pro-social” acts have happened and are happening in our wonderful community because that’s who we are—we’re Cabrini. We’re kind and gracious during the best—and the worst—of times.



Love and Resilience: Stories from the MSCs

We have been asked by the MSC Generalate in Rome to invite you to submit stories of the Missionary Sisters who have touched your life, particularly, perhaps, in time of difficulty. These stories will be posted on the website of the Generalate: www.cabriniworld.org and we will also feature your stories of the MSCs and of your family experiences during the COVID crisis in The Update and on www.motherscabrini.org

Love & Resilience: Stories from Mother Cabrini Shrine

United in Prayer via Social Media and the Internet

We recently completed a nine-day novena to Mother Cabrini, sending it via email and social media. The novena gave us a chance to pray together and draw inspiration from each other. So many have shared that they were able to find solace in the routine of the novena knowing so many were united in prayer during those nine days. The urging of Pope Francis to pray the rosary, the Our Father and the “Urbi et Orbi” (To the City and the World) blessing, were all ways that united us in prayer during these challenging times.

What a gift social media can be to keep in touch, pray together and share heartwarming stories. We draw inspiration from you, Missionary Sisters and lay collaborators! We love to read your encouraging letters, stories of love and resilience and we are grateful for the life and faith of our foundress, St. Frances Cabrini. We send our love and prayers to you from Colorado! ~ submitted by JoAnn Seaman, Mother Cabrini Shrine



The chapel at the Mother Cabrini Shrine, Golden,

Earth Day 2020 is April 22nd



Earth Day is April 22 of every year. This year we will mark the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. The theme for Earth Day 2020 is climate action. The enormous challenge – but also the vast opportunities – of action on climate change have distinguished the issue as the most pressing topic for the 50th anniversary.

Climate change represents the biggest challenge to the future of humanity and the life-support systems that make our world habitable.

To learn what action you can take – even during the pandemic:
<https://www.earthday.org/take-action-now/>

Prayer Requests

Alex Avitabile

Please pray for Alex Avitabile, the cousin of Sr. Antonina Avitabile, MSC, who has been hospitalized with COVID-19. We ask your prayers for his healing and complete recovery. Alex just lost his 99-year-old father to COVID-19 this week. Pray for the entire Avitabile Family at this very stressful and sad time.

Coronavirus pandemic

We continue to offer our prayers through the pandemic. This week, we share the poignant words of Sr. Christine Schenk, CSJ, published in the Global Sisters Report, as we offer prayers for:

- those hospitalized and fighting for each breath.
- those grieving the loss of loved ones, spirited away to die alone.
- exhausted doctors, nurses and first responders wondering where they will ever find strength to see this pandemic through.
- government officials — governors, mayors, congressional representatives and public health experts — seeking to calm a terrified citizenry and diminish the havoc wreaked by a vicious virus that does not discriminate.
- scientists, inventors, and drug and equipment manufacturers working to find desperately needed curative medicines and machines.
- still others who shelter at home, educating their children, caring for their elders and wondering how to pay looming bills with no money coming in.



Let us unite our prayers with those of so many others for the well-being of all.

Chrissy Herren

Chrissy Herren asks for the prayers of the Missionary Sisters and the Cabrini community as she anticipates making an important decision in her life. Let us invite the Holy Spirit to inspire and guide Chrissy in her decision making.

Barbara Holmes

Please unite in prayer for Barbara Holmes, a nursing assistant at St. Cabrini Nursing Home, who is in the hospital and is now on a respirator. Barbara has taken care of many MSCs over the years, let us unite in prayer on her behalf that she will experience healing and recovery.

Vincent Russo

Vincent Russo is the cousin of a close friend of Michael Tambasco, who works in the MSC Guadalupe Province Office. Vincent was admitted to the hospital with COVID-19 and has multiple underlying health conditions and faces some big challenges ahead as he battles this virus. Please pray for his strength and stamina.

Richard Stancato

Kindly unite in prayer for Richard, the brother of Cabrini Lay Missionary Patricia Stancato Perky, who has been hospitalized. Please pray that he will soon be restored to full health.

Tornado Victims

Late on Easter Sunday, tornadoes ripped through several southern states in the U.S. To date, at least thirty-four people have lost their lives. This natural disaster is made even more difficult by the mitigating effects of the coronavirus pandemic. We pray for all those who have died and for those who have been injured. And, in a time when citizens are mandated to 'stay at home' we pray for all those whose homes have been destroyed. We also pray for the first responders who are coming to the aid of those who have been seriously impacted by the storm.

With Grateful Hearts



Deacon Uriel Durr

Over the past few weeks we have been praying for Deacon Uriel Durr of Cabrini High School in New Orleans. Deacon Uriel has been very ill with COVID-19. The good news is that he has been discharged from the hospital and is recovering at home. This is an answer to our prayers. May his recovery be swift and complete.

In Loving Memory

Alex Avitabile

Sr. Antonina Avitabile, MSC shares the news of the passing of her uncle Alex Avitabile who was 99 years of age. We have been praying for Mr. Avitabile in recent weeks during his hospitalization following a fall, a bout of pneumonia, and his diagnosis of COVID-19. May Mr. Avitabile rest in God's eternal peace.

Joanne Barycki

Cabrini University alumnus and trustee, Michael Kazanjian, requests prayers for his mother's mother-in-law, Joanne Barycki, who has passed away from the Coronavirus. Mrs. Barycki was 91 years of age. Your prayers would mean a great deal to Michael's family as they mourn the passing of their loved one.

Nancy Giles

Kindly pray for the repose of the soul of Nancy Giles, the wife of Bill Giles, a friend and colleague of Steve Highsmith, VP of Institutional Advancement at Cabrini University. Let us remember Mrs. Giles and the Giles Family in our prayers.

Lenny Grabert

Mr. Grabert had been in hospice care due to pancreatic cancer. Lenny was a devoted member of the Cabrini High School community for years. He served in many capacities. Whether as a member of the Board, Dads' Club, PAC or on numerous committees Lenny served joyfully and faithfully to advance the mission of Cabrini High School, New Orleans. Please keep Lenny, his family, and all who mourn his death in your prayers. May he rest in peace.



Margaret Groux

Cabrini University alumna and trustee Anne Marie Borneman invites prayers for the repose of the soul of her 95-year-old Aunt Marge who has passed away from COVID-19 this week. Please remember her and her family as they mourn her passing.

John Kuhar

Prayers are asked for the repose of the soul of John Kuhar, the father-in-law of Cabrini University staff member, Maureen Kuhar. Mr. Kuhar recently passed at the age of 95. In his family's own words, John lived a full life and witnessed the joys of many children and grandchildren. May he rest in peace.

Felix Rivera

Kindly pray for Felix Rivera, the uncle of Sergio Campos, the husband of Dee Campos, who works in the MSC Guadalupe Province Offices in New York. Mr. Rivera was a resident at Cold Springs Nursing Home in Long Island and contracted the COVID-19 virus. Felix passed away on April 13th. Please keep the Rivera and Campos families in your prayers during this very sad time.

Joe Rush

The Cabrini (College) University Community is saddened to learn of the passing of Joe Rush, the husband of Dr. Nancy Rush, Faculty Emerita. Mr. Rush died on Tuesday, April 14. He had been ill for several months. We are told his favorite holiday was Easter and he lived to see that holyday again this year. Sadly, due to the Coronavirus restrictions, Dr. Rush was not able to be with her husband of more than half a century of marriage when he passed. Please pray for him and for Nancy as she grieves this great loss.