



Weekly Report from Oblate Youth Ministry in Tijuana.

The migrant crisis continues at the border. On Tuesday a group of 14 migrants from Honduras (8 adults and 6 children) arrived at our parish with nothing.



The children were ill, the adults were financially broke, disheartened, and desperate. Each of them spent over \$10,000 U.S. dollars trying to get to the border in Texas to seek asylum (Paid guide (Coyote) fees). Asylum was denied, and they were taken to Mexico to a horrible shelter in Tijuana with dirt floors and filled with insects and rodents. They arrived at our parish and have stayed with us since. Our parish community have been extremely generous with our new friends by

cooking and helping in other ways. Our Migrant program helps over 180 migrant families, but this situation is different because this group is living at our parish. Two returned to their country yesterday with no money and a huge debt. I was grateful that at least they received love and support before they returned home. Please pray for the rest of the group as they discern what to do next. They don't want to return to the poverty and violence of Honduras; in addition, they are worried because they now have a huge debt to pay. Also, pray for our parish community as we seek the best way to help our new friends.

Fr. Jesse Esqueda, OMI



Maribel is a 24-year-old woman who found her way to the migrant program at our parish. She came with her daughter and husband. They are from Honduras and are hoping to go to the US. In Honduras, her husband worked buying and selling food items. Maribel's mother, worked in the US as a maid, and returned to Honduras a few years ago and got a job as a maid. The owners of the establishment saw her potential and made her the boss of a staff of ten. Eventually, when she had an opening she asked her daughter, Maribel, to work for her. Maribel took the job, but after eight months, the other workers accused the mother of favoritism. Maribel quit to save her mother the associated hardships. The owners, also seeing potential in Maribel, offered her a position working in a 911 call center.

Maribel worked there for a year and half and really liked the job and did it well. Besides taking emergency calls, she also monitored cameras that were distributed around the city. One day on her way home from work, a group of motorcycles surrounded her. She figured that they found out she had a good job and wanted money. But it turned out that what they wanted was information about what streets did not have cameras. While she knew this very well, she pretended not to know. They threatened her but she insisted she didn't know. Eventually they let her go telling her to get the

information and threatened to kill her family if she didn't provide it. She quit her job and left Honduras within the week with her family.

Maribel has family in the US and desires to go there. In the meantime, the migrant program is providing her family with a place to stay, medical attention, and food.

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Leticia is 29-year-old mother of three. She is from Honduras. She and her younger sister were given away at a very young age. Her father ended up in New York and would send money to the family caring for the children. At age 10, a young man living at the house where she and her sister were living, tried to rape her. She was able fend him off, but he burned her with an iron leaving a large scar on her arm. The man said that if she told anyone, he would hurt the younger sister, so she never said anything. From then on, Leticia would hide all day from this man and when the quasi-foster parents would return home and find that none of her work was done, she would get beaten. But then she could do the work safely. Then at age 14, the man tried again to rape her. This time her younger sister helped by hitting the man with rocks.

The father not only sent money for their care, which the children never knew about, but he also sent little gifts. The children never had a bed and slept in flour sacks on the floor. After the second rape attempt, the children conspired and sold a pair of gold earrings the father had sent to get enough money for a bus ticket. They took the bus to the town where their biological mother lived. There they sold their other pair of gold earrings for money for a taxi and eventually found their mother. The mother was sad to hear their tale and explained that she thought they were doing well with the money the father was sending.

Never really feeling loved, Leticia became pregnant at age 15 and half. She had the baby and a year later, another baby. But the father began cheating on her, so they split up. The father remarried and took the children. However, Leticia says that he is a good father to the children. Leticia got a job providing food service to a factory, but the pandemic came along, and she was laid off. By then she had her third child.

She met a man from the US on social media. She fell in love with him, and he seemed to really want to marry her. He sent her money to make her way the US. She got caught in southern Mexico and was jailed for 18 days. While in jail, she contracted Covid and then another illness. Her US contact arranged for a lawyer, and he got her out of jail. However, then the man had a change of heart and offered her two options. He would give her the money to return to Honduras, or she could leave her daughter and come to the US. Leticia did not want to do either. The 2020 hurricane in Honduras wiped her out and so she decided to journey on with her 2-year-old daughter to Tijuana. The man blocked her on social media. That is how she ended up getting helped by the migrant program at the parish. Leticia hopes to cross into the US.