

# Human Remains Along the Immigrant Trail

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An Artist's Response to Immigration along the Border  
Sponsored by Catholic Round Table and the USCCB at the  
Social Action Summer Institute (SASI)

[www.catholicroundtable.org](http://www.catholicroundtable.org)

<http://justiceforimmigrants.org/>

## Remains of a Sacred presence

Along the border are  
remains of human  
presence.







Remains that  
speak of the  
heart

Bibles, photos and  
other relics that  
remind the observer  
that humanity with  
heart and soul had  
passed through.



## Servilletas for the Tortillas

Embroidered cloths that are traditionally used to wrap tortillas and food for travel. A wife, a mother prepares the journey for her husband, son or daughter. Food – the symbol of life and communion.





## Creature comforts

Backpacks with images of the Pink Panther, soft blankets, and water bottles, left behind, likely because there was cause for them to run, to escape, to leave behind the little comfort they had with them.





## Hygienic remains

Upon seeing toothpaste and tooth brushes collected, someone stated: "I never even thought about them brushing their teeth"!





## **Women too!**

Mascara, perfume bottles, jewelry, cell phones, cd's, the remains from women, perhaps with children, in flight with hope.



## Humanitarian Aid

Catholic and non-Catholic parishioners organize to walk along the immigrant trail with water and food to offer to the travelers. Many will even be given “posada” to shower and rest for the night.





When they saw a group of 7 Mexican young men approaching, one of the parishioners shouted to them, asking if they had any food and water. The young men consulted one another. Then one of the young men stepped forward and shouted to the parishioners in Spanish, “We don’t have any more food, but we have a little water you can have”.

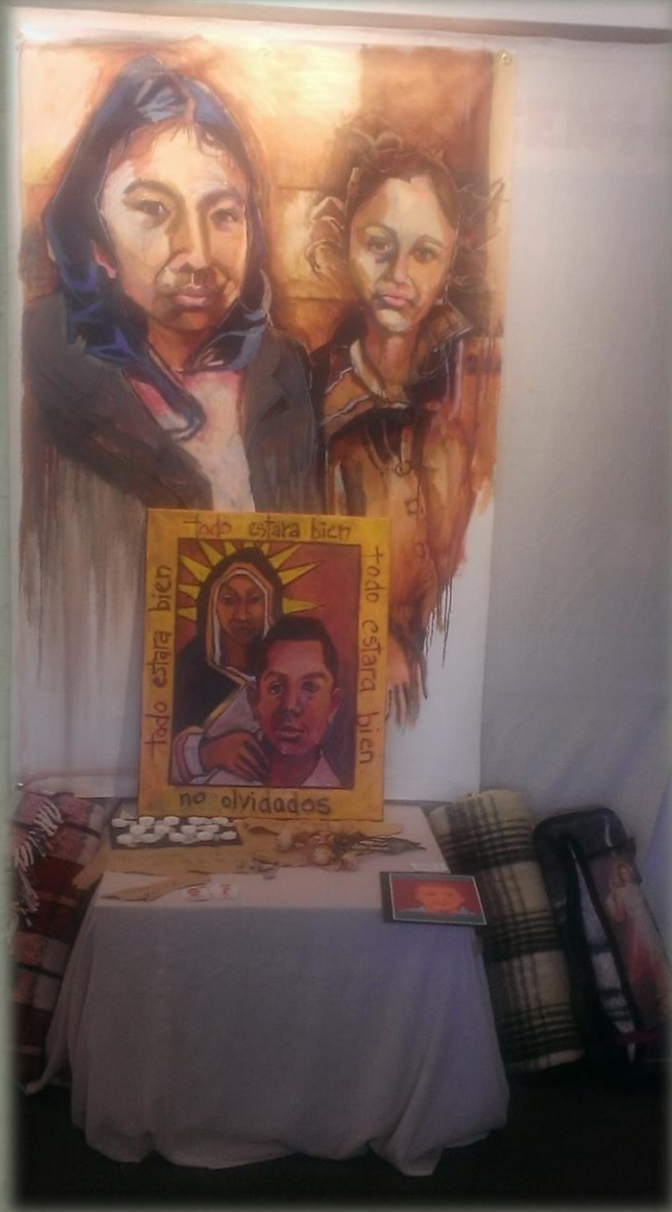


The Journey is  
long...





Each step is hope  
shrouded with  
fear!



## Hearts

The humanitarian aid provided has been called by ICE as “aiding and abetting criminals”, threatening to arrest the parishioners who go out to provide drink and food for the travelers; to help them stay alive!



## The commitment of the parishioners





It's about faith  
and trust in God.





It's about family,  
survival and the  
future



It's about  
humanity



Young men recently deported  
from the United States are still trying  
to re-enter the US to find work,  
because the same groups that persecuted  
them the first time, still exist.



It's about justice



Migration is a human phenomenon, and nature's instinct. It is not a political choice based on the lack of pride or desire for one's homeland.



# The Art and the Artists

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Deborah McCullough: [www.deborahmccullough.com](http://www.deborahmccullough.com)

Pamela C. Hoffmeister: [pamelahoffmeister.blogspot.com](http://pamelahoffmeister.blogspot.com)

# Resources:

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No More Deaths: <http://nomoredeaths.org/>

Border Links: <http://www.borderlinks.org/>

Borderlands: A Short Documentary: <http://vimeo.com/8243652>

Sierra Club: <http://www.sierraclub.org/borderlands/>





## The Wall

Creates a manmade dam that causes flooding...something that never had happened before the wall.

Creates impediments for wildlife migration.

Created separation of families of Native Americans whose nations were divided on both sides of the international border.



## Indigenous Peoples of the Southwest

We were invited to listen to the testimonies of the Tohono O'odham Nation of South Tucson, who shared about the great work that CCHD has done in bettering their lives. Also how the "wall" has divided their nation and separated families living on opposite sides of the international border. Even though their nations are considered sovereign by law, their governors were not consulted about the "wall"!





## **Rev. John Fife and the Sanctuary Movement**

Various speakers gave important input throughout the seminar. The most poignant remarks were by Rev. Fife, a Presbyterian pastor, who fought to win the right to sanctuary in the late 1980's. He came to the conclusion that the gospel cannot be real without embracing the reality of the immigrant on the journey. He reminded us that since the time of Abraham, God's people have always been on a journey, moving towards fullness of life at every level of humanity's existence.