KINO BORDER INITIATIVE  APRIL 2019
St. Peter Catholic Church
Charlotte, NC
What is the Kino Border Initiative?

- A **binational** organization that works in the area of migration - located in Nogales, Arizona and Nogales, Sonora, Mexico
- Founded in 2009 by U.S. and Mexican Jesuit organizations, Missionary Sisters of the Eucharist, and Tucson (US) and Nogales (MEX) dioceses
- KBI’s vision is to help make **humane, just, workable migration between the U.S. and Mexico** a reality, through:
  - Direct **humanitarian assistance and accompaniment** with migrants;
  - Social and pastoral **education** with communities on both sides of the border;
  - Participation in collaborative networks that engage in **research and advocacy** to transform local, regional, and national immigration policies
What was the St. Peter Kino trip 2019?

- Participants: Bob MacPherson (lead), Lolo Pendergrast, Bonnie Schmidt, Sandra MacKinnon, Regina Hopkins, Rick Pfeiffer, Susan Long, Pete Long, Bill Aheron
- When: Monday April 8 through Friday April 12, 2019
- Where: Kino Border Initiative: Nogales, Arizona and Nogales, Sonora (Mexico)
- Key experiences: Meals at the comedor, women’s and children’s shelter, downtown Nogales/Sonora, Arizona desert hike, court proceedings in Tucson, education from Kino staff about their work and migration issues
Why is this important?

“I would also like to draw attention to the tens of thousands of children who migrate alone, unaccompanied, to escape poverty and violence: This is a category of migrants from Central America and Mexico itself who cross the border with the United States under extreme conditions and in pursuit of a hope that in most cases turns out to be vain. They are increasing day by day. This humanitarian emergency requires, as a first urgent measure, these children be welcomed and protected.”

Pope Francis

Who is my neighbor?

“On this continent, too, thousands of persons are led to travel north in search of a better life for themselves and for their loved ones, in search of greater opportunities. Is this not what we want for our own children? We must not be taken aback by their numbers, but rather view them as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their stories, trying to respond as best we can to their situation. To respond in a way which is always humane, just and fraternal.”

Pope Francis

Address to a joint meeting of the United States Congress, September 24, 2015
Objectives of our visit

- Humanize
- Accompany
- Complicate
THE BORDER: NOGALES, AZ & NOGALES, SONORA, MEXICO
PLACEHOLDER:
MIGRANT STORY #1

Manuel (Susie)
The Sonoran Desert – and Migrant Path
PLACEHOLDER: MIGRANT STORY #2

(Pete)
El Comedor - Nogales, Sonora
PLACEHOLDER: MIGRANT STORY #3

(Sandra)
Women’s & Children’s Shelter – Nogales, Sonora
COURT AND EDUCATION ON KINO AND MIGRATION
Where do they come from?

- Families from Central America – especially Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador
- Families from southern Mexico – especially Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas states
- Individuals from Mexico
- Individuals deported from the U.S.

Map: Perry-Castaneda Map Collection, University of Texas
Iglesia Nuestra Señora de Las Mercedes

El Progreso, Yoro, Honduras
“Nació entre los más pobres para enseñarnos a vivir”
What Can We Do To Help?

- **A Tu Lado** – Cynthia Aziz ([Cynthia@azizimmigrationlaw.com](mailto:Cynthia@azizimmigrationlaw.com))
- Migrant Assistance Program – Nikola Taylor ([nikolamtaylor@yahoo.com](mailto:nikolamtaylor@yahoo.com)) and Marsha Kelly ([marshakelly2003@yahoo.com](mailto:marshakelly2003@yahoo.com))
- Refugee Mentoring Team (within Catholic Charities) – Martha Schmitt ([schmitt.martha@gmail.com](mailto:schmitt.martha@gmail.com))
- Kino Border Initiative – Bill Aheron ([billaheron@gmail.com](mailto:billaheron@gmail.com))
- Amazon wish list for Kino – Marise Robertson ([marise.robertson@gmail.com](mailto:marise.robertson@gmail.com))
Welcoming the Stranger

It has never been easy
How do We Respond?

“The Catholic Church does not have an immigration policy so much as it has a person policy.” Donald Kerwin, Executive Direction, Center for Migration Studies
“Person Policy”

“The right of the family to a life worthy of human dignity is recognized. When this happens, migration attains its natural scope…” Pope Pius XII, *Exsul Familia*, 1952

“Among man’s personal rights we must include his right to enter a country in which he hopes to be able to provide more fittingly for himself and his dependents.” Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 1963
Three questions most asked

1. Why do they come?
2. Why don’t they come legally?
3. What is the impact on the US?
Poverty

- Minimum wage in Mexico: 88 pesos a day, about $4.60 at current exchange rates (15% of Mexican workers make minimum wage)

- The price of the minimum amount of food for basic well-being increased by 6.59% from Nov 2016 to Nov 2017 to 49 pesos a day in the city and 35 pesos a day in rural zones (CONEVAL)

- 50% of Guatemalans suffer from chronic undernutrition, so 46.5% of children under 5 are stunted (World Food Program)
People fleeing violence

Source: UNHCR, Women on the Run, 2015

Photo credit: Encarni Pindado for NPR

Source: Data from each government and La Prensa

Source: UNHCR, Women on the Run, 2015
Figure 3: Countries with violent death rates of at least 20 per 100,000 population, 2015 and 2016

- 2015 (or latest available data point in 2015)
- 2016 (or latest available data point in 2016)

Country
- Syria*
- El Salvador
- Venezuela
- Honduras
- Afghanistan*
- Jamaica
- Iraq*
- Libya*
- Somalia*
- South Sudan*
- Belize
- Trinidad and Tobago
- South Africa
- Bahamas
- Lesotho
- Brazil
- Guatemala
- Colombia*
- Central African Republic*
- Guyana
- Dominican Republic
- Namibia
- Yemen*
Central American countries have very high levels of perceived public corruption.

Transparency International country rankings, 2018 (# out of 180 countries):
- Denmark (1)
- United States (22)
- El Salvador (105)
- Honduras (132)
- Mexico (138)
- Russia (138)
- Nicaragua (152)

Corruption is a major driver of poverty and violence.
Why Don’t They Come Legally?
Two ways to permanently immigrate to the U.S.

1. Family Reunification  
2. Employment

**Must be sponsored by someone else**
Employment Based Priorities

1. **Priority workers**, such as scientists, athletes, researchers, multinational executives and managers, etc.
2. Second preference includes **people with advanced degrees**.
3. Third category includes **skilled workers**.
4. Fourth category includes **special immigrants**, including **religious workers** and others.
5. **Investors** willing to invest $1,000,000 (or $500,000 under certain circumstances).

Family Based Priorities

As of December 2017

1. Unmarried children of U.S. citizens
2. Unmarried (adult) children of legal permanent residents
3. Married children of U.S. citizens
4. Siblings of adult U.S. citizens
Temporary/Tourist Visas

- H2A: Temporary Agricultural Work
- H2B: Seasonal, Non-Agricultural
- H1B: Highly Skilled
- B1: Tourism and Visit
- F1: Students

- 36% of applications for tourist visas from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras were rejected in 2014
Asylum Seekers

- “unable or unwilling to return due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on his or her race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.” – 1951 Refugee Convention

- 2013 asylum grant rates: 4.7% of Guatemalan applicants, 3.9% of Hondurans, 4.2% of Salvadorans, 1.8% of Mexicans, 81% of Chinese (Source: Department of Justice)

- 2016: 13% of asylum-seekers (not detained) without a lawyer won their case, 63% of those who had a lawyer won

- 2014: Tucson asylum grant rates were 44%, Florence Detention grant rates were 5%
Research by National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS):

- “Between 2015 and 2016, the estimated GDP growth due to contributions of immigrant workers amounted to nearly $2 trillion.”

- “Immigration helps to slow the aging of American society, and labor force growth from 2020 and 2030 will “depend completely on immigrants and their U.S.-born descendants.”

- “little to no negative effects on the wages or overall employment levels of native-born workers.”

- “all ships rise when immigrants are introduced into the workforce and U.S. economy”
Do immigrants pay taxes?

YES!

- $11.84 billion in state and local taxes in 2012 (Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, 2015 report)
- At least half of undocumented immigrants pay income tax. In 2014, they paid an estimated $12 billion in federal taxes
- Undocumented immigrants contributed about $12 billion to the Social Security Trust Fund in 2010 (Social Security Administration data)