

# #Faith4Asylum

**A PRAYER VIGIL UPLIFTING MIGRANTS HARMED BY MPP POLICIES AT  
7 U.S. BORDER PATROL SECTORS**

**On the Occasion of the 1 Year Anniversary of MPP**

**January 29, 2020**



## **VIGIL ORDER**

### **WELCOME & GATHERING**

### **OPENING PRAYER**

### **LITANY FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS DENIED RIGHTS AND TRAUMATIZED BY MPP POLICIES**

**LEADER--San Diego/Tijuana:** Violence, poverty, and root conditions in which our own nation has been complicit drive adults, families, and children to leave their homelands. Remembering MPP started one year ago in Tijuana, let us not wait to seek to end merciless policies--for we know there are many like Diana and her daughter from Ecuador. They waited weeks in Tijuana, risked safety to show up at a required 3:30 a.m. CBP appointment at the border, and then were returned to Mexico to wait again despite fears for their safety.

**PEOPLE:** *Bring justice to migrants held captive, now denied the right of protection at our border.*

**LEADER--Calexico/Mexicali:** Many held at the border have valid asylum claims and little access to legal counsel to address these claims. Javier and his son are among the 98% of asylum seekers under MPP who lack legal representation. While lawyers on the U.S. are seeking to respond, unsafe conditions below the border and lack of facilities mean most must cross back to the U.S. after only brief stays, and often before dark daily.

**PEOPLE:** *Bring justice to migrants held captive, and denied the right of protection at our border.*

**LEADER--Nogales, AZ./Nogales, Mx.:** Studies continue to show that psychological trauma multiplies as children are kept in unsafe and insecure conditions. Yet while over 31 shelters on the U.S. side of the border have said there is clearly "room in their inns," nonetheless shelter supplies are left full, and welcoming arms of

volunteers in communities and congregations are left empty, until senseless “Remain in Mexico” policies can be ended.

**PEOPLE:** *Bring justice to migrants held captive, and denied the right of protection at our border.*

**LEADER—El Paso/Juarez:** Many migrants are subject to additional forms of violence, such as sexual assault and capture, on their journeys to the U.S. and upon return to Mexico. Too many are like Kimberlyn and her 5-year-old daughter, who were kidnapped just outside the Instituto Nacional de Migracion office shortly after being returned to Ciudad Juarez. Though her family was forced to pay a ransom for her release, police officers refused to allow her to make a police report, telling her “nothing had happened.”

**PEOPLE:** *Bring justice to migrants held captive, and denied the right of protection at our border.*

**LEADER—Eagle Pass/Piedras Negras:** Unspeakable murders and suffering lie in the hearts of many whose feet have chosen to flee their homelands. Compounding common death threats are also other misfortunes, like the cancers and illness we all would hope to avoid. We remember migrant guests to our nation like Giselda, who made her journey with tears and sadness from Central America and all through Mexico with her mother and young sister. Yet still, they were all returned to Mexico this year, too.

**PEOPLE:** *Bring justice to migrants held captive, and denied the right of protection at our border.*

**LEADER—Laredo/Nuevo Laredo:** We dare to pray for justice, and want to trust in our U.S. court system to offer due process. And yet so called “tent courts” have no judges in person, but require migrants like 28 year old Alejandra to go at 4:30 a.m. with her children and 50 others to a tent appointment in Laredo. There, she had no chance to meet a lawyer, and saw a judge only briefly on video before she was again sent back into Mexico to wait months until a decision.

**PEOPLE:** *Bring justice to migrants held captive, and denied the right of protection at our border.*

**LEADER—Brownsville/Matamoros:** We give thanks for the blessings in our own lives of family and friends. Yet, we grieve how a growing number of migrants at our borders are feeling so desperate for protection for their families that some are allowing their children to cross alone in order to seek a chance of protection. This includes loving Moms like Emma, who accompanied her 16-year old son to the edge of the Rio Grande near Matamoros, and sent him recently as an “unaccompanied minor” to the United States. “It broke my heart” she said, “but his fear was growing every day, because he didn’t want to go back to the threats he’d escaped in Honduras.”

**PEOPLE:** *Power of All Love, and God of All Names who always offers refuge and calls us to be Beloved Community, hear our prayer--and empower our compassion and love to do all things possible to help bring*

***justice to migrants held captive, and denied the right of protection at our border! AMEN.***

**SONG “O God, You Give Us Neighbors” (to the tune of “The Church’s One Foundation”)**

**LEADER TESTIMONIES—Harmful Impacts of Migrant Protection Protocols**

**MUSIC AND CLOSING PRAYER**

**CHARGE**

**O God, You Give Us Neighbors, AURELIA 7.6.7.6 D (“The Church’s One Foundation”)**

O God, you give us neighbors for whom your love abounds.  
They’ve come here seeking refuge; they work here in our towns.  
Their children go to school here; they come to church and pray.  
O Lord, we grieve when neighbors are being sent away.

O God, you give us neighbors in this world that divides.  
We see them at the border; they’re struggling for their lives.  
They’re hurting by the roadside, and by the river, too.  
You call us to show mercy to neighbors loved by you.

O God, you give us neighbors and call us all to see  
our common fears and longings, our shared humanity.  
You call us all to listen to burdens they have known,  
to hear the truth they tell us, to see the love they’ve shown.

O God, you give us neighbors; and now, what must we do?  
This question asked of Jesus is one we ask anew.  
May we not make excuses and choose to walk on by  
these neighbors fleeing violence — some sent back now to die.

God, may we work for justice for those who live in fear;  
may we show Christ’s compassion, and pray and persevere —  
and by your Holy Spirit, in all we do and say,  
may we stand up for neighbors now being sent away.



*Biblical References: Luke 10:25-46; Leviticus 19:33-34; Leviticus 24:22; Matthew 25:31-46  
Tune: Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1864 (“The Church’s One Foundation”) [\(MIDI\)](#)  
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