

Strangers No Longer Newsletter

November 2019



HOLY HOUR FOR FAMILIES IN FLIGHT

JANUARY 11, 2020 AT NOON:

Many of us are pained to see and learn about immigrants fleeing danger and suffering in their countries and then finding closed doors in our own country; but what can we do? Catholics can always PRAY for conversion and solidarity with each other so that we can stay committed to families in detention and on the road. And we can FAST so that we can focus on the families and children who are certainly hungry all the time as they flee, travel, and wait.



Remembering the Holy Family's Flight into Egypt, our SNL Strategy Team invites you to come to a "Holy Hour for Families in Flight" on Saturday, Jan. 11 at Noon at Most Holy Trinity in Detroit. (1050 Porter, Detroit 49226.) At that time, we will kick off a 3-month campaign of Prayer, Fasting and Action. During February and March, Circles will be encouraged to invite and host people from all the parishes in their vicariate to a local Holy Hour at their own parish. Then on Sat., April 4, at 10:00 AM, a week before the Passion Week, we will have a final Holy Hour at the Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, completing our prayer and fasting by focusing on Christ being crucified today in the lives of migrants. As appropriate, suggested actions on behalf of immigrants will be available at the conclusion of Holy Hours.

YOUTH LEADERS ACROSS BORDERS

Some Catholic High School Campus Ministers are working with Strangers No Longer to bring in youth leaders to Michigan in February. Two leaders from Mexico and two from El Salvador will be visiting the region to talk about their work building hope in their neighborhoods and cities: hope for people who are deported back to their country; hope for young people and neighborhoods in the face of gang violence and poverty. Here in SE Michigan, we hope the YOUTH LEADERS will spend a day with high school students, a second day with young adult leaders and a third day with our Circles of Support. Stay tuned for more details. Call 313-549-0421 to be part of the planning.

ASSEMBLY CIRCLE OF LEADERS

Saturday, Nov. 16, 10:00 AM - Noon

Anyone interested in forming a Circle of Support at your parish should consider attending this meeting. Circle Leaders plan to meet quarterly in order to build a community among ourselves, learn best practices, help each other start and grow our parish Circles of Support, inspire and challenge each other be true to the Gospel and the exhortations of Pope Francis, and make decisions about projects and direction. WHERE? St. James (Ferndale) campus of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, 241 Pearson in Ferndale on Woodward between 8 Mile and 9 Mile Roads. For more info: 313-549-0421 or billobrien2018@gmail.com

**NEW STRUCTURE FOR
SNL PROPOSED:**

At the Circle Leaders Assembly on Saturday November 16th, Circle Leaders will discuss a new structure for the organization that can help us to respond to higher expectations for Strangers No Longer.

In addition, the Strategy Team approved our completion of a Pre-Application for funding from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. We are required to project our structure and future plans for the next 18 months.

If you are thinking of starting a Circle of Support at your parish, we would love to have you join us: call 313-549-0421 (Bill O'Brien).

Two SNL Circles of Support are researching the bill and gathering information so that our Circles can visit their state representatives to express support for this legislation. Leaders of Circles at St. Mary Student (Jesuit) Parish of Ann Arbor and Mother of Perpetual Help (St. Janes/OL Fatima of Ferndale/Oak Park) have invited Senator Chang to address our Circles Leadership Assembly on Saturday, November 16th. If you are thinking of starting a Circle of Support at your parish, we would love to have you join us on November 16th. Please call Bill O'Brien at 313-549-0421.

For more information on the proposed legislation:

<https://www.wgvunews.org/post/mi-legislators-introduce-bill-give-drivers-licenses-immigrants>



Get Involved!



**News from the
Circles**

**MI SENATOR STEPHANIE CHANG
INTRODUCES DRIVERS' LICENSE BILL --
TWO CIRCLES KICK INTO GEAR**

Senator Chang and State Reps. Alex Garcia and Rachel Hood want to extend driver's licenses to all residents of Michigan—whether documented or undocumented. Driver's licenses used to be available to all Michigan residents, regardless of immigration status, prior to 2008. For the past nine years, immigrants who have lived without a form of identification haven't been able to do simple things like buy prescription medicine, enroll their children in programs that require parents' ID, or even get a library card. More importantly, hundreds of families have been separated by deportation because of routine traffic stops.

**CIRCLE OF SUPPORT -- FOR A SHELTER RUN
BY NUNS IN MEXICO:**

Mother of Perpetual Help's (MOPH) Circle of Support is building a partnership with Casa Samaritano in Hidalgo, Mexico. Sisters of the Sacred Heart run the shelter which sits on the side of the railroad and is a resting point for people fleeing their homes in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. They often arrive by riding on the top of the train cars. The train has come to be called "The Beast" because so many lose limbs when they fall (or are pushed by gangs) from the train on their exhausting and dangerous journey north. MOPH Circle leaders have communicated with the Sisters about their work, and will conduct a monthly collection or fundraising event so they can help the

Sisters provide food, clean clothing, showers, and cots to the hundreds who are migrating. To help, call contact Rosemary Insley at 248-885-2406 or email her at rinsley@aol.com.

CIRCLES CONSIDER SPONSORING FAMILIES.

Several parish-based Circles of Support are considering moving from ACCOMPANIMENT of families to SPONSORSHIP. "Accompaniment" can mean a lot of things, from driving to court or doctor's appointments, to arranging for English-learning, to taking the kids to a special event, to helping with next month's rent. And some Circles are considering taking responsibility for a family, inviting them to be part of the parish (as Gesu's Circle of Support has done with Carmen and Cesar.) The Gesu experience is common to many parishes across the country: "We thought we were doing the giving, but we found that the family was giving us so much." St. Regis Immigrant Circle of Support is producing an article explaining how they are moving to consider sponsorship, but in a way that involves not just a few people but the entire parish. If you want a copy of their article, contact billobrien2018@gmail.com.

BISHOPS SAY THANK YOU TO OUR CIRCLE MEMBERS:

Most Rev. Daniel Flores, Bishop of Brownsville, and Most Rev. Mark Seitz, Bishop of El Paso thanked SNL donors for the combined \$11,500+ that came in the collection at the July 30 Mass for Families of the Detained. Quoting from Bishop Seitz' letter:

"Because of policies like Remain in Mexico, our sister cities in Mexico face the unprecedented challenge of meeting the basic humanitarian needs of refugees forced to remain in that country as they make their asylum claims. Churches and local communities are doing everything possible to feed, clothe and offer shelter to thousands of migrant families fleeing desperate conditions and looking for

safety and refuge. Your donation will help provide direct assistance to migrant shelters working on the Ciudad Juarez – El Paso border.

"People like you, motivated by a sense of justice, are showing the rest of the world that we can receive refugees and asylum seekers with generosity, compassion and dignity. Putting ourselves at the service of others and not holding back in how we live our faith challenges us to share our gifts and talents especially with those most vulnerable. You are leading examples of that devotion."

GESU CIRCLE OF SUPPORT MEMBER CESAR CUELLAR HONORED:

Last weekend, Alianza Americas launched its 2019-2020 **Leadership Institute**, a leadership development program for organizations that work with migrant populations. Designed to strengthen the collective capacity of grassroots organizations in the United States, the Leadership Institute has the goal of continuing to build bridges that help us strengthen communities in the Americas. The objective of the Leadership Institute is to train participants coming from Latin American and Caribbean countries to have a global perspective on politics, as well as a clear understanding of the realities and contexts that influence migration. The institute plans to create a generation of local leaders with a transnational perspective. Cesar was chosen for the 2019-2020 cohort group, joining 10 others from 5 countries living in 9 states. They will follow a popular education plan drawing on the experiences, perspectives and unique knowledge of each participant.



Continuing Projects from Oct. Newsletter

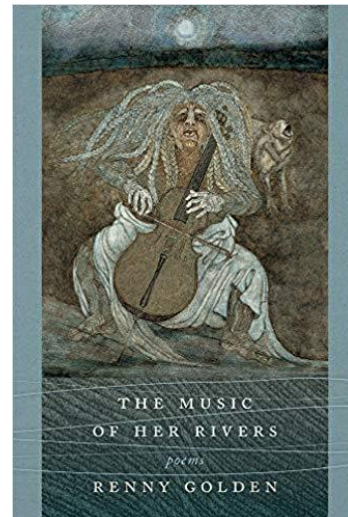
"The Bodega" Diaper Project :

For years Lourdes Fonseca Nearon has been collecting clothing, food, furniture items for immigrant families. Now she would like to include diapers as part of the items available for distribution to our immigrant community. She has found that there are two diaper banks in the City of Detroit. Cabrini Clinic only provides diapers for infants up to a year old. The other diaper bank is English speaking only and difficult for immigrants to navigate. She would like to compliment the Cabrini Diaper Bank and extend to beyond one year of age. Storage would be in the Meta Peace Team office located at St. Peter's Episcopal Church on Michigan and Trumbull. The distribution would take place out of the Hispanic Development Center on Trumbull. We would designate days to distribute and the mothers could pick them up. For details, or to volunteer, contact Lourdes Fonseca Nearon at 3123-282-1340 or luliss27@gmail.com.

Aid to Spiritual Growth

The Music of Her Rivers:

Renny Golden's book of poetry, published by the University of New Mexico Press, is available for purchase. Renny Golden was co-founder of the Sanctuary Movement in the mid-1980's and is still faithfully organizing. "Her rivers are urgent witnesses, her rivers sing truths, shimmer in the darkness. Here are songs pure as water to nourish



and cleanse us in the season of lies. I love this book!" (Sandra Cisneros, author of *The House on Mango Street*). Send \$20 check ("Jesuit Community UDM") to Strangers No Longer, 19972 Shrewsbury, Detroit MI 48221. Benefit for Strangers No Longer, thanks to the author.