

Pacifica Synod AMMPARO Network Report

February 2019

We are pleased to report that the Pacifica Synod AMMPARO network is continuing to respond to the needs of immigrants and asylum seekers in both southern California and Mexico.

We've had several trips to Tijuana to meet with the Mother Superior, Social Worker and now the teacher at Instituto Madre Asunta. The teacher was hired shortly after our September visit. We have also visited Casa de Migrantes (the shelter for men) and met with a social worker and resident there. While in Tijuana we were able to see some of the migrants still camped out near the city center and hear their stories.

During our visit to the women and children's shelter (at Instituto Madre Asunta) in September, we asked how we might be of assistance. We were told the shelter needed a teacher for the many kids who are staying there for much longer than previous years. We were told the cost of a teacher would be about \$4800 per year.

We made the appeal through the Synod office with Synod Council approval and the response has been fantastic! To date we have collected \$6,027.28. The funds will be used to cover the teacher's salary and some school supplies. Incoming monies will be distributed approximately monthly.

A quick breakdown of who is being served and from what country (based on the Institute's November 2018 statistics):

4 children from Haiti, 3 from El Salvador, 4 from the United States, 17 from Honduras, 24 from Michoacán, 14 from Guerrero, for a total of 62 students.

About 70% of the children at the shelter are preschool- high school aged and attend classes there.

We look forward to on-going friendship with both the women and children's and men's shelters. We will visit them again and keep the network updated on needs and opportunities.

The network met on Saturday, February 9 to decide our next steps. We want to find out how to be involved and how we can support Lutheran and other organizations that are already doing great work. We shared about our local opportunities and created a resource list.

The AMMPARO network is currently organizing a tour of Survivors of Torture and Safe Harbors at Christ Pacific Beach. We will also plan more trips to Tijuana. We will continue to receive updates from ELCA AMMPARO and keep the network informed of advocacy and other opportunities. If you would like to be included on our email list and receive the resource list, please contact Thomas Voelp tvcharles17@gmail.com

Upper photos: the Mother Superior and teacher at Instituto Madre Asunta (along with Pastor Nate and Damaris Fajardo de Allen) and the Casa de Migrantes shelter. Lower photos: Taco Bar fundraiser for the teacher in Tijuana at San Marcos Lutheran Church.

