

## **Greetings from my road to Damascus . . . oops, I mean Tucson!**

*By Susie George*

Last fall, I was fortunate to enroll in the Minnesota/Wisconsin Conferences' Damascus Project course, *Listening for God's Call in Our Changing World*. What an amazing adventure it started! It opened my path to Tucson, working at the border with our immigrant sisters and brothers. I am thrilled and honored and humbled to be here.

In addition to being here, I am now in the midst of a second Damascus Project course: *Returning to Sacred Texts and Finding Stories You Can Live In*. This course is the perfect follow up to the previous one. It is also the perfect course for me and informs my work in the asylum shelters. Truly these siblings, our guests of the Monastery Shelter, are fleeing empire just as the Israelites fled Egypt in search of safety, justice, and peace. These are Holy Families seeking somewhere to be welcomed and loved.

I have also been thinking about the story of Paul's "conversion on the road to Damascus." One of our readings suggested that "we move beyond the labels 'conversion' or 'call' and instead think about Paul's having undergone a radical change in his understanding of what made his own life worthwhile." This seems right to me. To actually live into a call is to make it a "lived everyday" activity.

My call, for example, started long ago when I spent several weeks in Chiapas, Mexico with Rev. Dr. Delle McCormick. This was when my eyes were first opened to the issues, the people, and the causes of U.S. policies and the broken immigration system. As I stayed on this path, I grew and learned and changed a lot. My journey to the United States/Mexican border last August was yet another "aha moment" No longer could I just keep doing what I had been doing; I knew more was being expected of me and I wanted to do more. So, here I am for 3 months working with our siblings as they struggle from the margins. My faith requires this of me. I am doing what Jesus mandated me to do in so many ways. Jesus was always working with the oppressed, the outcast, and the marginalized.

I wonder what the next Damascus Project course will be and how I will be impacted; I am confident it will be powerful. For me, the Damascus Project has been life-changing. Check it out: the caliber of teaching, the materials, and the discussions are top notch. I was led to the border; see where you might be led.

Peace on the journey,

Susie George