

"LET US DECIDE TODAY WHOM TO SERVE, WHETHER HOSPITALITY OR HOSTILITY"

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On September 24th, the Migrant Resource Center (Centro de Recursos para Migrantes, or CRM) commemorated the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, offering a space to reflect and raise awareness about the migratory phenomenon on the northern border of Mexico. Participants included the volunteers of the CRM, Frontera de Cristo, persons in transit staying at the Centro de Atención al Migrante "Exodus" (the migrant shelter known as CAME), and guests.

Some volunteers shared their experiences at the CRM. Since 2006, the CRM has provided a welcoming space to more than 170,000 men, women and children. They mentioned that the migrants who have passed through this place felt they were in a safe space, that by being provided with water and food, clothing and footwear, they could feel the hospitality and warmth in a time of difficulty.

The [message of Pope Francis](#) for the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees was read. In his message, the Pope pointed out that "Joint efforts are needed by individual countries and the international community to ensure that all enjoy the right not to be forced to emigrate, in other words, the chance to live in peace and with dignity in one's own country." It was also recalled that people should be free to choose to migrate or to stay in their home communities.



Pastor Mark Adams shared a biblical reflection from the book of Hebrews: "Let brotherly love continue. Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for in doing so, some have entertained angels without knowing it." (Hebrews 13:1-2)

In our journey, we have been hosts of our relatives, friends, and loved ones, but how often have we given ourselves the opportunity to host strangers? But that is the challenge for our faith—to have a hospitable attitude, especially to those people we do not know.

Pastor Mark mentioned that "in this border area of the United States and Mexico, two attitudes can be observed: one is hospitality and the other is hostility. What kind of attitude are we demonstrating? Are we reflecting and living out hospitality or hostility?"

On this World Day of Migrants and Refugees, we are called to be defenders of the rights of foreigners, those who are passing through, or those who decide to stay, because Jesus himself was a migrant and refugee, who had the need to be welcomed and feel secure in a safe space. The Gospel of John says:

"From that day on they plotted to kill him. Therefore, Jesus was no longer active in public ministry among the Jewish leaders. Instead, he left Jerusalem and went to a place near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples. ... The chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where he was should report it, so they could arrest him." (John 11:53-54, 57)

In the same way, many Mexicans and other nationalities can identify with Jesus, and feel safe by being welcomed and well received. Therefore, wherever we find ourselves, let us choose today whom to serve, hospitality or hostility. □