

# Urgent River Ministry Needs

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Ruth Ortiz, River Ministry Missionary in Laredo, takes mission teams to serve with volunteers from local churches in Nuevo Laredo to serve refugees and deportees at the Instituto Tamaulipeco and now at the local Greyhound bus station. This is a report from her work at the bus station.

*I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. - Matthew 25:35*

More than a month ago, pastor Lorenzo Ortiz received a call from an institution telling him there were many people in the bus station. When he arrived at greyhound, many children were barefoot, sleeping on the floor, parents did not have tickets, and none of them had eaten for hours. A bus from one of the detention centers, dropped a big group of immigrants seeking political asylum at the Greyhound Bus station. Pastor Lorenzo and my family began taking tacos and drinks. We would give extra food to the people that already had tickets and were traveling for days.

A few weeks ago, we realized there was a greater need. Many of those families were sleeping in the bus station until they had their tickets purchased. This sometimes took a few days. Pastor Lorenzo began taking a group of them to our church to spend the night, shower, and eat. Many of them had not showered in more than 12 days. My family and a few other volunteers helped them contact their relatives so they could get their bus tickets. During our service, the majority went up to the altar and prayed. Our challenge is not having many basic needs for people we are serving, but especially the children. Many of the children did not have undergarments. One 6 year old girl had been wearing diapers for days since she did not have underwear.

Today, more than 300 immigrants are already in their destination cities and some have called to not only thank us, but mention that they are already looking for a church or attending a church. Many of you have been a part of this ministry already. We need you to be part of it now!

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to send me a message at [ruthortiz150@gmail.com](mailto:ruthortiz150@gmail.com).

If you want to donate funds instead of items, please [click here to give to River Ministry border needs](#). These funds will all be used for current border needs in these areas.

## Other ways to Help

- **Pray:** Prayer is never the last resort. Prayer should be first in our tool belt. Please pray for the President, our leaders, and our state as this issue continues after the lights fade. Please pray for those serving in these areas daily: police, guards, clergy, counselors, teachers, churches, River Ministry Missionaries Ruth Ortiz and Vanessa Lerma, and the individuals and families involved. Thank the Lord that His word is being shared even in the midst of everything that is going on.
- **Give:** Funds are needed to buy food and supplies in both Laredo and the Rio Grande Valley. Monetary donations can provide beans, rice, oil, baby wipes, diapers, underclothes for men and women, and much more for needs on the border, without the need to ship items. [Click here to donate](#) online by card or to mail a check. All gifts are tax deductible.
- **Make Hygiene Kits:** [Click here](#) for instructions on what is needed in a hygiene kit. Email us to see where to deliver the kits or where to have them mailed. Here is a sample note, in Spanish, that your group could copy and include in each kit you put together - [click here](#).

- **Donate Bibles:** Spanish New Testaments are needed to give to new believers and for Christians who had to leave everything behind. [Click here](#) and choose "Bible Distribution" to give toward Bibles. We can send 4 bibles to the border for just \$5.
- **Hold a Food or Clothing Drive:** Have a food or clothing drive for the needs at either location. Contact Vanessa or Ruth to see what is needed at that time. Collect the items and get them to their location. We can set up a vision trip for members of your church and they can take the items to the location they will be used. See contact information below for Vanessa and Ruth.
- **Serve:** Put a volunteer team together to serve. Your team can volunteer at the Respite Center in the Valley with Vanessa or the center or bus station in Nuevo Laredo with Ruth to care for those with physical and spiritual needs. Dental/Medical teams are needed as well.
- **Contact Vanessa Lerma**, River Ministry Missionary in the Rio Grande Valley/Mexico City, to serve in Texas at [rgv.riverministry@gmail.com](mailto:rgv.riverministry@gmail.com). [Click here](#) for a printable flyer about serving in the Rio Grande Valley.
- **Contact Ruth Ortiz**, River Ministry Missionary in Laredo, to serve in Mexico at [ruthortiz150@gmail.com](mailto:ruthortiz150@gmail.com). [Click here](#) to learn more about serving in Laredo/Nuevo Laredo.
- **Contact your elected officials:** Gus Reyes, director of the Christian Life Commission, encouraged Texas Baptists to reach out to their federal elected officials to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform. [Click here](#) to view the CLC's legislative priorities on immigration or [here](#) to read about Immigration topics. [Click here](#) for the contact information of your US Senators and representatives. He also encouraged Texas Baptists to check out the resources of the [Evangelical Immigration Table](#) for ways to think biblically about immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

Have more questions? Contact Daniel Rangel, Director of River Ministry and Mexico Missions by [clicking here](#).