News



Maira Bordonabe, a member of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis and a married mother of two, shares her story of being taken for deportation at an Aug. 30 rally. (CNS/Natalie Hoefer, The Criterion)



by Dan Morris-Young

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Editor's note: *The Field Hospital blog reports on parish and other grassroots efforts across the U.S. and Canada to accompany those on the margins. Pope Francis said he sees the church as a "field hospital" that labors "from the ground up" to "heal wounds."*

Maira Bordonabe arrived some years ago as a youngster in the U.S. from Mexico. She later married a U.S. citizen. The mother of two children ages 7 and 12, Bordonabe has been working toward a degree in human resources. On her way home last spring the member of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis was stopped by two Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents and taken straight to a deportation holding facility in Chicago. She was there for nearly five months before winning the right to remain in the U.S.



Veronica Zapeda, a 29-year-old Salvadoran refugee and mother of three, is pictured at the Golden Gate Bridge. She spent six months at an Immigration and Customs

Enforcement detention center in Bakersfield. (Courtesy of Catholic San Francisco)

A similar story in California: On July 28 a 29-year-old Salvadoran refugee was released after six months languishing at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Mesa Verde Detention Center in Bakersfield. The mother of three, Veronica Zapeda, was set free by immigration Judge Dana Leigh Marks who made note of "the presence of nearly 100 members of the local faith community packing the courtroom," reported Catholic San Francisco. Parishioners from several San Francisco parishes — including St. Agnes, St. Peter, St. John of God, St. Ignatius and St. Dominic — took part in the interfaith campaign directed by Faith In Action Bay Area.

Hurricane Harvey rains and rising water from a nearby bayou covered St. Francis of Assisi Parish and its school in Houston, Texas, in at least 4 feet of water. Parishioners and pastor Fr. Martin Eke are salvaging what they can.

Meanwhile, Galveston-Houston Cardinal Daniel DiNardo in a video statement describes the Hurricane Harvey devastation, the archdiocese's response, and the Archdiocesan Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund.



Fr. Martin Eke, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Church in Houston, recovers a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe Sept. 6 that was severely damaged from the floodwaters of Tropical Storm Harvey. The parish is home to a large African-American community in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. (CNS/Bob Roller)

Related: Our Lady of Lourdes Interparish School, also known as OLLIS, in Columbia, Missouri has been in contact with two Texas Catholic schools via the National Catholic Education Association's Student to Student campaign to help schools impacted by Hurricane Harvey. The Texas schools are Our Lady of Lourdes in Hitchcock and True Cross Catholic School in Dickson. Each OLLIS student is being asked to contribute at least $1 to help other students in need by Friday, Sept. 15.

Also datelined Missouri: In what might be unique to that state, varied Knights of Columbus councils have formed "Clown Clubs" since the 1970s. Members and relatives — outfitted as clowns — bring smiles and accompaniment to residents of nursing homes, persons with special needs and others.



Talitha Koum Society staff trim and water the lawn outside the organization's second home for women recovering from substance abuse. (Sharon De Lalla / Special to NCR)

The Talitha Koum Society, based in Coquitlam British Columbia, recently announced purchase of a second home to serve women recovering from alcohol or drug addiction. The purchase was made possible through a grant from the City of Coquitlam. A significant amount of the organization's ongoing support and funding derive from Catholic parishes, the Knights of Columbus, the Archdiocese of British Columbia and Catholic religious communities. According to the group's website, *Talitha Koum* are words spoken by Jesus, meaning, "Little girl, I say to you arise."

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Lisa and Paul Carani, parishioners at St. John Neumann in St. Charles, Illinois, reflect on their recent mission trip to Guatemala with Healing Hands Medical Mission.

[Dan Morris-Young is NCR's West Coast correspondent. His email is dmyoung@ncronline.org.]

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