



U.S./MEXICO BORDER WALL

What we see: The current border wall has made no significant change to the influx of illegal drugs or to the entry of migrants and it bears only symbolic value. Worst of all, significant laws that protect human and environmental rights are being set aside to facilitate the construction of the border walls.

- Development pressure has led wealthy landowners to intimidate the residents of border towns such as Lomas del Poleo, to abandon their land. They use illegal methods such as kidnapping, rape, torture, and murder.
- In constructing this barrier, the Department of Homeland Security has dispensed with more than 30 laws enacted to protect public lands and wildlife.
- Close to 3,000 migrant deaths were recorded between 1998 and 2005 with numbers increasing every year without a corresponding increase of illegal entries.
- Agriculture is suffering due to the inaccessibility to the Rio Grande, leading to the loss of countless farms.
- The wall prevents animals from reaching water sources and blocks travel and migration routes. Wall construction has destroyed habitat for several species.

What our faith tells us: Our faith mandates us to welcome the stranger. In his 2009 encyclical, Pope Benedict XVI calls for migration policies focused toward “safeguarding the needs and rights of individual migrants and their families, and at the same time, those of the host countries.” Catholic Social Teaching affirms the right to migrate, but also the right to not have to migrate. We must welcome migrants into our communities and places of worship while working with other countries to address the root causes of migration, including economic injustice, environmental catastrophes, armed conflicts, and religious or political persecution.

What we hope for:

Legislation: We call on Congress to enact legislation on the U.S./Mexico border wall that includes:

- The removal of the DeMint Amendment to 2010 DHS Appropriations.
- The repealing of the Real ID Act waiver authority.
- Effective oversight mechanisms that support community security, human rights and accountability in the U.S.-Mexico border region.
- Funds to mitigate damage to communities and natural resources.