

# ☩ ST. JOHN OF GOD SANCTUARY COMMUNITY ☩

## 1986-2018: Thirty-Two Years of Immigrant Advocacy and El Salvador Support

In 1985 the members of the St. John of God community embarked on an eight-month course of prayer and discernment regarding the plight of the Central American refugees coming to the Bay Area. Members studied Archbishop John R. Quinn's 1983 Pastoral Letter on Central America, participated in house meetings in which refugees shared their stories, and informed themselves about moral and legal issues regarding political asylum. In January 1986, over 90% of the parishioners voted in favor of Sanctuary. Since Palm Sunday 1986, our community has reaffirmed the covenant, which articulates the vision of faith taught by our brothers and sisters of El Salvador and Guatemala.

*Christ's call is to reach out to our brothers and sisters in need. In response to this call, the members of the St. John of God Community enter into this covenant to provide sanctuary -- support, protection, and advocacy -- to Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees who request haven out of well-founded fear of persecution and possibly death if they are returned to their homeland. We do this out of concern for the welfare of these refugees, regardless of their official immigration status. . .*

*St. John of God Covenant of Public Sanctuary, Palm Sunday, 1986*

As in the early years, Sanctuary work focuses on advocacy, emergency aid and accompaniment for immigrants in San Francisco and the Bay Area and support of development projects in El Salvador.

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### ☀ Report on Projects ☀

Guided by the Spirit, we have continued the Sanctuary commitment to solidarity through:

**Human Rights Advocacy and Accompaniment:** Funds were given to the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity and Faith in Action to sustain their work of human rights advocacy for all people, regardless of their immigration status. With the increase in deportations and more restrictive immigration policies, members of the St. John of God community have accompanied our immigrant sisters and brothers in deportation, asylum, detention and bond hearings. Through accompaniment and solidarity, as well as our prayerful support, our sisters and brothers know they are not alone in their fight and that they have the support of faith-based communities.

**Development:** Funds were given to anti-gang efforts at Santa Rosa of Lima Church in San Salvador. The funds enable parish teens to continue their high school education in a collaborative project with the Ministry of Education. The teens study in a supportive environment that is safe from gang-related threats and intimidation. There are 102 students in the program. Also, funds given to Voices on the Border were used to fund a project in El Salvador to help men and women wounded in the Salvadoran civil war (1980-1992), assert their rights to Salvadoran institutions.

**Direct Support:** In the past year funds were given to the Central American Resource Center (CARECEN), for legal and social services for local immigrants. This nonprofit is a leader in providing legal and social services to low-income Latino immigrants.

### ☀ Please Support SJOG Sanctuary Work in 2018-2019 ☀

Please make checks payable to **St. John of God (in memo line put "C.A.R. Fund")**

**We invite parish community members to join us!**

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