

19:20

S. Elvia Looking at the Reality.

I will speak in Spanish, I want to share with you a little of what we know about the journey that our migrant brothers make, the way in which they arrive here to the United States, this is what I will try to share looking at the reality that they live.

Here on this map that you can see, these are the countries where they come from. Many are currently arriving from Haiti, but many are also arriving from Venezuela, really from everywhere, Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and even from far below, here we cannot see it on the map, but they also come from Brazil, they come from Argentina as well; what I want to share with you is all this journey they undertake.

The way they get here to southern Mexico, the way they must cross the entire country of Mexico to get to the southern border of the United States. For some, it takes more than 5 years to get from down here, from where they come, cross through all these countries, and reach the United States, if they make it. For me it is very shameful/painful to talk about the reality that our brothers live in Mexico.

Now I'm going to zoom-in in Mexico, and here I'm going to try to explain how they travel through Mexico. Later I'll explain what all this means, (dots in the map) all that you are seeing here. Later I will put an interactive map where you can see some events that our brothers suffer from here below, all along, not only in Mexico, but certainly Mexico is the largest territory.

According to Daniel Groody, a priest of the Cross, two of the deadliest borders for migrants in the world are the deserts located between Mexico and the United States and the waters between southern Spain and Morocco. More than 1,000 people per year lose their lives on these borders between America's "promised land" and the fortress of Europe.

Because of its geographical location, Mexico is a country of origin, transit, destination and return for people in human mobility to the United States. These four elements (origin, transit, destination, and return), put Mexico in a complicated situation.

Migration flows from Central America to the United States, entering Mexico through multiple points along the country's southern border, and then move to a medium or large city to find means of transportation to continue their journey north.

Much of the northward migration is done by land, either by roads or paths, or by riding "The Beast." "La Bestia" is the colloquial name given to the trains, usually freight, that

use the railroads that cross Mexico from its southern border to its northern border. Transit migrants who have fewer economic resources, board these trains to reach the United States' border. Migrants who have the possibility, can pay a bus ride if they choose to use the system of roads and paths, or otherwise request "rides". Whether by road or in "La Bestia," transit migrants are on the lookout to avoid being detained by Mexican immigration authorities. Along their way to the northern border, migrants can combine and use various means of transportation.

There come from 3 main routes to try to reach the United States border: The Northeast, is the shortest distance with approximately 2,332 km, equivalent to 1450 miles, if they begin from here and cut through here. The route of Ciudad Juarez, it is practically crossing the entire country reaching here the center, this route's distance is 2,998 km equivalent to 1863 miles. And the longest route the Pacific comes from here in the south and reaches Tijuana, is 4,019 km, equivalent to 2500 miles approximately.

All these icons you see on the map, means that something happen to a migrant.

From 2011 to date, 5,049 deaths of migrants in transit through Mexico have been documented. It is estimated that 100 deaths have as a specific cause of death the lack of medical assistance. This information has been gathered by the International Organization of Migrants (IOM)

What I am showing you here in the next slide, are the assistance houses where the migrants receive aid. According to the IOM there are 96 migrant assistance houses registered in Mexico. 14 of these houses are in Northeast Mexico, the area where we are serving. We participate in two of those 14 houses. Later, we will give you more details about the service we give at those two houses.

Now, I will show you, I hope technology does not failed me, the same interactive map you saw in the picture. Now you can have access to the map. As I said, each one of these icons represents an event. On the left side you will see a description of what happened there. For example, if I click here, it says that the event was the repatriation of the bodies of migrants that had an accident in St. Luis Potosi. It also shows where they got the information from, the year, and the place of origin of the people that died.

I was just told that you couldn't see the map...explanation from S. Grace about how to open the map and share S. Elvia's screen once again...

Screen is on again.

As I said, here you can find the event that happened to a migrant in a particular place. For example, the black dots represent a killing. Here a woman was killed and stuffed into

a bag, this woman was from Guatemala, this happened in 2022, in Vera Cruz, south Mexico. You can click on each one of these dots. For example, this one tells us that the migrant died after falling when trying to jump the border's fence wall, in 2022. This is how you obtain the information. If you see, the events run all through central America, but the highest concentration of events are here in Mexico. The blue dots mean the people died by drowning; in here says that two Honduran migrants died in Veracruz. You will have access to the map. I will stop sharing my screen.

Now Rose will explain a slide about a family that took the same rout.

S. Elvia

48.17

Ok, the pictures that you are seeing are from Senda de Vida in Reynosa, Mexico, Path of Life, it has two centers, Senda de Vida I and Senda de Vida II. The center that you are seeing here, services about 1800 people, sometimes even 2000. You can see Father Loui and Rose, walking in between rows of tents that are not in good condition. The top right picture shows a roofed area for the people that do not have a small tent. All of them sleep there, the area resembles a giant bed for hundreds of people. The living conditions are subhuman, the area has a lot of trash and is very unsanitary.

Next slide please,

Here you are seeing in the large picture two women from the migrant group cooking and there is also a volunteer woman. You may be able to see behind the window a line of people holding their plates to receive rice and beans. Food is served twice a day until the food runs out. Generally, they are asked to allow children to get first in line to receive food.

On the picture on the other side, we see Rose, she is making tortillas with them, she is now an expert at making tortillas. Below is the place that the women adapted as their kitchen.

Next one please,

Here you see a group of men playing dominos, I must mention that here, unlike the house that Mary Elaine told us about, here there are men and women, children, entire families. You see a group of men playing dominos, below you see the children. Kids amid adversity do not lose their joy and find something to entertain themselves.

In the pictures below, we are playing Jenga with them just trying to make the day enjoyable. We saw that no matter the place they were, they spend a lot of time on their

phones, trying to communicate with their families. Rose will explain about the new App, they need to spend a lot of time on their phones and the groups look for places to charge their phones to keep in communication. This is what I can say about Senda de Vida II.

Senda the Vida I is another area, they shelter about 800 people, we don't visit this area frequently only occasionally; Senda de Vida II is where we generally have a presence.

1:13

S. Carmen

Sorry I was not able to say my part but I want to say thank you to the community because it helped me to get to McAllen, finally—I think that the job we have done has been helping many people, we have been looking for a way to accompany them, I believe that here from Juarez I was able to help a little, and once I got there (McAllen) I saw that it is an intense job the one we need to do, but if feel that we still have a lot to do. Perhaps we can do more and get together with other people. Sorry I was not able to connect properly the connection was not good, I always have issues with this. I hope that soon I will find a way to use this way of communication. Thank you.

1:24 S. Carmen

To me it has been very hard being here in Juarez, waiting to be able to be there with them, but also here, seeing the people that are waiting to go across with the hope that soon it will happen, and then nothing happens, they are kept waiting hours, days, years. I have seen people waiting here before the pandemic, they have been waiting for three years. I think that is too much, and when they are allowed to go across, they are again kept waiting with their phones, not allowed to move more that 3 or 4 miles from the place. I say that is too much cruelty, they are people, beings with feelings, just like any of us. Why not to give us the opportunity to discover that we are all one, one life together and find harmony to give to them. Sometimes when I hear them and I cannot give them anything, not even words, I feel terrible, I think... how can we not support them. Just being there seeing them...but also when I see the priests blessing them, and they are there to receive the blessing, that blessing fills them so much, and the company we give them. I think that is something very beautiful for them and fulfilling for us, but we still need to do a lot more than what we are doing.