



Oregon New Sanctuary Movement

June 2008, Vol. 1 # 3

Let My People Stay: Week of Action and Prayer

When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the stranger. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. (Hebrew Bible, Leviticus 19:33-34)

Week of Action and Prayer

All are invited to join in

A week of remembrance
on the anniversary of the Del Monte raid
June 6th - 14th, 2008

One year Ago - June 12, 2007

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents raided the Del Monte plant in north Portland and arrested more than 167 workers. Many were taken to a private prison near Tacoma and deported. A small number of women who were pregnant or had very young children were put under house arrest.

In recent months more and more undocumented people have had their homes raided and their families torn apart in the name of homeland security.

The Oregon New Sanctuary Movement has been standing in solidarity with these undocumented workers to:

- work for justice,
- to prevent tearing apart of families,
- to change systems that punish workers instead of punishing those who profit from cheap "illegal" labor.

Join us and our allies in a week of activities remembering the injustices and working for change.

For a full schedule of events see back of newsletter.

But those who entered the city and the faith before them love those who flee unto them for refuge, and find in their breasts no need for that which has been given to them, but prefer (the refugees) above themselves though poverty become their lot.

And who is saved from his own avarice - such are they who are successful. (Qur'an, Verse 55:9)

ONSM Information

Mission The Oregon New Sanctuary Movement (ONSM) is an interfaith coalition of over 20 different religious leaders and congregations, called by our faith to respond actively and publicly to the suffering of our immigrant brothers and sisters residing in the United States. We stand together in our faith that everyone, regardless of national origin, has basic common rights, including but not limited to: 1) livelihood; 2) family unity; and 3) physical and emotional safety. We witness the violation of these rights under current immigration policy, particularly in the separation of children from their parents due to unjust deportations, and in the exploitation of immigrant workers. We are deeply grieved by the violence done to families through immigration raids and unjust detentions. We cannot in good conscience ignore such suffering and injustice.

We are committed to lifting up the voices of our immigrant brothers and sisters, working for just and humane immigration reform, and the transformation of the social and economic systems that perpetuate the poverty in immigrants' home countries that drives



much of the migration to the US. We also seek ways to build relationships of solidarity between faith community members and immigrants - relationships that have the power to change hearts and minds and transform our communities.

Contact us: portlandsanctuary@gmail.com
503.550.3510 or www.oregonsanctuary.org

ONSM Members Host Immigrant Family

On May 24, 2008, the ONSM interviewed host couple Eddie and Catherine about the Guatemalan woman to whom they have given sanctuary. This is the first time someone has sought sanctuary since the Oregon New Sanctuary Movement was started in 2007.

How did you get involved in the first place?

Eddie: I was asked by a good friend who had been involved with the organization why our parish, St. Andrew's, didn't have somebody regularly at the meetings. So I decided I could be the person to go and check into it. I attended my first meeting last fall and was impressed with the importance of the work and the compassion and respect I saw on the part of the people involved. So then I went back to the parish and started in with fundraising, mainly trying to generate rent and food money for families affected by the ICE raids here in Portland.

So next thing you had a woman staying with you.

Eddie: Yes, in the course of volunteering, it came to our attention that there were three particular women who needed immediate housing assistance. One of them, Maribel from Guatemala, had a six-month-old infant son. Her story was that her apartment in southwest Portland had been raided by ICE at 5:00 in the morning. They were specifically looking for her son's father and she got nabbed, too. The father spent some time in the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, and then they deported him.

But not her?

Catherine: No, it seems that ICE often puts mothers with small children under house arrest. They immediately affixed a monitoring bracelet to her ankle so they could keep track of her movements. After she wore it for about a month and made all of her check-ins, they took the bracelet off – but she still checks in.

So how did she end up with you guys in your home?

Eddie: It was apparent to the organization that we needed to find housing for her, and we started brainstorming about how we could find placement. It occurred to me that Catherine and I and our two boys might be the right family. And that night I presented it to them. The boys, without hesitation – they are 18 and 12 – said, Yes!

Catherine: As soon as Eddie started talking about Maribel, I knew where he was headed. What could I do? My gut tightened up the way it does when God challenges you. She came to us on the eve of Lent, February 5.

Who is she?

Catherine: She's 25 and from a very humble background, the oldest of nine children. She started school at age ten and left at age twelve to work, so she reads and writes Spanish. She has an eight-year-old daughter who lives in Guatemala with her parents, and she sends monthly support for both the child and her own mother's medicines.



The Murphy family with Maribel and her son (second from right).

How is this arrangement working out for her?

Catherine: It's a mixed bag. There's a lot of sadness – from the separation and from the thought that when she leaves she'll have no way to support her mother or her children. She's very mentally, socially and emotionally healthy, a very stable and calming person, as well as being very bright. I think she really likes living with us because everybody in our house loves her and the baby, and I think she feels like she's contributing to the house, so it doesn't feel like charity. From the beginning we made it clear that she was going to be a member of our family, and not a servant. But she contributes by cooking and cleaning, without being asked.

How is it working out for you?

Eddie: As well as we could have imagined. I know that Catherine has had to work extra hard because she's the only one with any Spanish, and they are often in the house together during the day.

What advice would you give someone who is contemplating offering sanctuary?

Eddie: The whole household needs to be on board. That's what's made it work for us.

Catherine: It's absolutely worth it, but be prepared for all the urgent emergencies that come up when somebody is in her situation. You are always put in the position of being her liaison to the culture, her driver, her translator – never mind all the government red tape.

Eddie: But it became very clear to us that Maribel is somebody we've committed to. We will always want to have a connection to her wherever she is.

One Family Torn Apart by Deportations

The following was written by Maribel's husband Alvaro, who was deported to El Salvador four months ago.

Tuesday, April 1, 2008

"My name is Alvaro. I am going to tell you my story of when I was picked up by immigration agents. The day that I was taken by immigration I felt very worried because they took my wife, too, and our baby boy was left alone. But when they told me that they were going to let her return to the house, I was happy because she would be there to care for our son.

After this they took me to Tacoma. When they brought me from Portland to Tacoma, they treated me like a serious criminal, placing handcuffs around my hands and feet.

When I was held prisoner, it was very difficult to be there. When I was in jail, I didn't sleep at night, thinking about my son and just how much I missed him and my wife. But I also thought about my parents and my brothers and sisters that were here in El Salvador. And these things, and many others, gave me the strength to keep going and gave me the strength to be in that place.

And when I arrived here in El Salvador, I found that things were very different. I can see that things here are much more expensive than when I left, but the salaries haven't gone up at all. The minimum wage hasn't gone up – it's the same as it was three years ago. This is why so many people want to go to the United States. Also [in El Salvador] there aren't jobs; when I go out to look for work, I run into so many others who are also looking for work. And they [the companies or bosses] ask for so many papers just to give you a job in a factory, earning \$5 a day.

Thank you for all that you are doing to help all the immigrants. -Alvaro."

In El Salvador the prices for the basic diet of beans, rice and corn have skyrocketed but minimum wage has not risen at the same rate. In 2004, the cost of a month's worth of staple foods in urban areas was \$128.19 a month and minimum wage was \$151.25 a month. However by January 2008, a month's worth of food cost \$159.90 but minimum wage was at \$162 a month.

These are among some of the challenges facing the people of El Salvador today which were referred to in the letter above.

Original letter translated by Sarah Loose. Statistics on El Salvador found at www.ipnews.net

Frozen Dreams June 12, 2007

By: "El Llanero Inmigrante" Javier Pérez H.

Translation by: Sarah Loose and Marco Mejia

Pay attention everyone
To what is happening
In the city of Portland
There are many people suffering
From the things that happened
Under the government's orders

To Del Monte company
Ice arrived as agents
Freezing the hopes
Of innocent children
Violating numerous rights
They took away our people

Many men and women
That at Del Monte they worked
Were very frightened
As the "migra" yelled
"Everyone hands up"
Or you will know why we get paid for

A very courageous woman
With citizenship rights
Publicly defended
Our human rights
Reporters were filming
The abuses committed.

While those that make the laws
Blaming each other up above
They rob the taxes
Of our vulnerable people
To pay for their wars
These are things that aren't forgotten

We must launch a strike
Of international dimension
We mustn't buy from the rich
Nor go to work for them
Until they fix the laws
To allow for migration.

We should keep in the struggle
The people are decisive
To them we give our thanks
For defending the food
And the right of the poor
Looking for a better life.

This Del Monte company
Now is very famous
Its owners are millionaires
From exploiting the wives
Of the men that now suffer
In the City of Roses.

Author's note: We hope that this song will help to raise the spirits of our hardworking people that suffer the assaults of obsolete laws that the government doesn't want to change; for it is easier to steal the taxes of our hardworking people and ignore our rights as human beings.

Translators' note: We opted for a more literal translation to preserve the message of the song, but in doing so had to sacrifice its rhyme and meter. We encourage you to buy the new CD "Sueños Congelados" and listen to the original Spanish version to get a feel for the flow and rhythm of this brilliant and beautiful "corrido" (traditional Mexican narrative folk song).

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Por: "El LLanero Inmigrante" Javier Perez H.

Traducido por: Sarah Loose y Marco Mejia

Todos pongan atención
A lo que esta sucediendo,
En la ciudad de Portland
Hay mucha gente sufriendo
Por los hechos que ocurrieron
Por ordenes del gobierno

A la compañía Del Monte
El hielo llevo en agentes,
Congelando la esperanza
De los niños inocentes
Violando muchos derechos
Se llevaron nuestras gentes

Muchos hombres y mujeres
Que en Del Monte trabajaban.
Estaban muy asustados
Mientras los migras gritaban
TODOS las manos arriba
O sabrán por que nos pagan

Una mujer muy valiente
Con derechos ciudadanos,
Defendió públicamente
Nuestros derechos humanos
Los periodistas filmaban
Los abusos consumados

Mientras los que hacen las leyes
Se echan las culpas arriba,
Robándose los impuestos
De nuestra gente jodida
Para pagarse las guerras
Son cosas que no se olvidan

Hay que lanzar una huelga
De fuerza internacional,
No hay que comprarle a los ricos
Ni hay que irles a trabajar
Hasta que arreglen las leyes
Para poder emigrar

A seguir en pie de lucha
La gente esta decidida
A ellos les doy las gracias
Por defender la comida,
Y el derecho de los pobres
En busca de mejor vida.

Esa compañía Del Monte
Ahora ya es muy famosa,
Sus dueños son millonarios
Por explotar las esposas
De los hombres que ahora sufren
En la ciudad de las rosas.

Nota del autor:
Esperamos que esta canción, ayude a levantar el animo de nuestra raza trabajadora, que sufre atropellos por las leyes obsoletas que el gobierno no quiere cambiar; porque es mas fácil robarse los impuestos de nuestra gente trabajadora, ignorando sus derechos como seres humanos.

Poems of Hope

Students at Clarendon Elementary School responded to the traumatic raid at a Del Monte packaging plant, using their words and poetry as a creative outlet to voice the ways in which they were affected.

Writing teacher, Wendy Thompson, explained that "the Hope poems were written in groups using images of hope such as the Statue of Liberty, our families perhaps, our teachers, etc. as a way to personify hope, so that we recognize hope around us everyday."

She compiled these poems into a book titled *From Here, There & Everywhere*, which is available for purchase.

Relaxing in Hope

- by Brianna, Erika & Kyrah S.

Hope's voice is sweet like a humming bird's song.
Hope likes playing basketball.
Hope shares with people when they need it.
I can hear hope in her heart beat.
Hope is loving.
She is a calming blue.
She spreads a cozy quilt over us.
I see love in her eyes.
She carries memories in her pocket.
Thoughtful to tears,
she drip drops into puddles,
and holds your hand.
Hope will never let go.



Marchers at the May Day Rally

The Path I am Walking

- by Kinsey

I am taking a journey to look for my pride,
my dreams, and most of all my heart.
My pride, a generation of pride, is sleeping right now,
but it will wake when the time is right.
My dreams flow through my head at night.
When I wake, I will tell people about them.
My heart stores all the love I had;
it will come back to me.
But wait, I've reached the end of my path.
My journey is over.
Now I can go home with my pride, my dreams,
and my heart.



ONSM Members at Peace March

La Luz de Mundo

- by Estela

I am from Mexico
and an apple tree.
I am from my mom and dad,
they are nice to me.
I am from roses and seeds.
I am the oldest ~
I take care of my brothers and sisters.
I am from la luz de mundo,
the light of the world

To Purchase *From Here, There & Everywhere* you can go online at www.lulu.com (ID 2396906), and the cost online is about \$15. There will also be copies available at the New Sanctuary event recognizing the one year anniversary of the raids. DeEtte Waleed has the copies for \$10 (editor discount). Any profits from the book are donated to New Sanctuary Movement.

Update on Two Anti-Immigrant Ballot Initiatives

Written by Shizuko Hashimoto, Portland Central America Solidarity Committee(PCASC).

July 3, the date that all ballot initiative petition signatures must be turned in is quick approaching. With less than one month to go, it looks like IP #19, which would severely limit funding for English as a Second Language (ESL) programming in Oregon's public schools, will appear on the ballot in November. IP #112, dubbed the "Respect the Law" Act by its creators, has much less chance of making it on the ballot in November. This initiative would do three things:

1. Compel police and other state and local government employees to cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement.
2. Require voters to present identification to elections officials before being able to register to vote.
3. Require proof of residency in order to obtain an Oregon's drivers license.



Since IP #19 will likely be on the ballot in November, let's take a moment to dissect this ballot initiative and see why exactly it would be detrimental to immigrant and refugee families living throughout Oregon. IP #19 would limit access to ESL classes for immigrant and refugee children. Students entering the school system in high school would be limited to two years of access to ESL classes and students entering

between K-8 would receive access to only one year of ESL classes.

Studies show that it takes between 4-7 years for student's whose first language is not English to catch up to their age peers in school. There are many circumstances that affect the number of years it might take, including access to basic schooling in their country of origin. Many immigrant and refugee children that grew up in refugee camps or severely impoverished communities have not had access to formal education. Students who lack a stable home life also need more support.

By limiting access to ESL classes, this ballot initiative is setting up Oregon's immigrant and refugee students to fail in the classrooms, potentially leading to higher drop out rates. I can't help but think that this is exactly what the authors of the initiative, Bill Sizemore and Company, want. They will set the stage for immigrant refugee students to fail and then blame them for dropping out. This will only further the negative stereotypes that are placed on immigrants and refugees.

If we respect equal access to education, we must ensure that Oregon's immigrant and refugee students get access to the classes and resources they need to succeed in the classroom.



ONSM Member Profiles...

Alice Vetter

Alice Vetter, a volunteer with the ONSM, joined the organization a year ago after she read of the raid on Del Monte. “I was shocked by the pictures in the press. I knew people shouldn’t be treated that way.” The following Sunday at her church (Bridgeport UCC), her pastor, Susan Leo, lead an interactive sermon on the raid and its implications. “I was brought to tears by Pastor Susan and the



Alice Vetter, on the left, at a meeting.

congregational response. It was so overwhelming to know how strongly this event resonated with my faith community.”

The following week, a church group, led by Pastor Susan, attended a large community meeting following the release of some of the women detainees. It was there that Alice met representatives of the New Sanctuary Movement. “I plunged right in, so relieved to find a place to help in addressing the wrongs of a broken, punitive system.”

For the past year, Alice has assisted in holding fundraisers for raid victims, talking with other faith groups about the work of ONSM, holding a baby shower for 4 of the detainees, organizing educational events, attending vigils and rallies.

The activity which has been especially gratifying is accompanying women to their court hearings. “This is where I get to know people. I’ve made some great friends in the Latino community because I was able to spend time with them one-on-one. These remarkable ladies are very dear to me.”

May Day Rally and March

To celebrate international Worker’s Day, marchers came to support workers’ and immigrant rights by carrying banners and rallying together. ONSM members and volunteers were present to show their support of the march.



May 1st, 2008:

Left: Committee of Solidarity and Mutual Support
Center: Oregon New Sanctuary Movement
Right: Portland Immigration Rights Coalition (PIRC)

Week of Action and Prayer

June 6th – 8th: Special Prayers for Immigrants

June 10th: 6 pm – One Year After Del Monte, Community Responses to ICE Raids

Presented by Portland Central America Solidarity Committee (PCASC)

St. Andrew's Catholic Church, NE 9th and Alberta

June 11th: 10:30 am - Vigil and Press Conference

Calling attention to unfair working conditions and our broken immigration system that terrorizes innocent people.

Del Monte plant, 9243 N Rivergate Blvd

June 12th: 6 pm – Interfaith Service and Dinner

Augustana Lutheran Church, 2710 NE 14th Ave. Bus line #8, child care provided

Interfaith Service:

Religious leaders reflect on faith responses to ICE raids. A woman detained at the Del Monte raid tells her story. Children of immigrants read their poetry; Music

Mexican Dinner:

Prepared by immigrants. Donations gratefully accepted to support immigrants in their struggle.

June 14th: 4 pm and 5:30 pm - Screening of "Frozen Dreams"

A testimonial of the people detained at Del Monte and how their lives have been affected. Produced by Emiliana Aguilar and the Committee of Solidarity and Mutual Support CSAM.

James John Elementary School, 7439 N Charleston. \$10 suggested donation



May Day Rally and March

Presented by Oregon New Sanctuary Movement, with Portland Immigrant Rights Coalition, Comité de Solidaridad y Apoyo Mutuo, Jobs with Justice, American Friends Service Committee, Portland Central America Solidarity Committee, Witness for Peace NW, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Bridgeport UCC, Zion UCC, the Jobs with Justice Faith-Labor Committee, CAUSA, Ascension Catholic Church, Peace and Social Concerns Committee of the Multnomah Friends Meeting, and the Social Justice Council of the First Unitarian Church, Downtown Chapel, and Augustana Lutheran Church.



**Oregon New
Sanctuary Movement**

www.oregonsanctuary.org
portlandsanctuary@gmail.com

503.550.3510

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