

DIOCESE OF ORANGE



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DIOCESE OF ORANGE AUXILIARY BISHOP JOINS DELEGATION ON COMPASSIONATE MISSION TO BORDER

Bishops' visit highlights deplorable conditions & human trafficking

ORANGE, Calif., (October 23, 2006) – Jaime Soto, Auxiliary Bishop of Orange will join Most Reverend Gerald R. Barnes, Bishop of San Bernardino and Most Reverend Armando Ochoa, Bishop of El Paso, October 23-29, 2006 in touring portions of the U.S – Mexico boarder. The delegation of American Roman Catholic Bishops seeks to study the circumstances facing victims of human trafficking, the conditions unaccompanied minors face while in U.S custody and to explore strengthening the Church's cross-border collaboration.

“I am blessed to represent the Diocese of Orange in this humanitarian mission to our border region. My brother Bishops and I seek to call attention to the plight of these vulnerable migrants and to find ways to expand and strengthen the Church's social and pastoral concern for their welfare,” said Bishop Soto.

The delegation will meet with a broad cross-section of agencies and individuals involved with this issue to gain insights and to better understand needs. The bishops will also meet with Church officials, government officials, community-based organizations, and others. Particular attention will be paid to potential areas of collaboration between Church programs and others in Mexico and the United States.

Delegation Schedule:

Monday, October 23 – Tucson, Arizona & Altar, Mexico

1:30 p.m. – Visit migrant guest homes

3:00 p.m. – Mass with migrants at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Altar

4:00 p.m. – Visit Sásabe road where migrants begin the last leg of their journey

Tuesday, October 24 – Nogales, Arizona & Tucson, Arizona

8:30 a.m. – Tour Nogales border patrol station

12:15 p.m. – Mass at Mission San Xavier

Wednesday, October 25 – Houston, Texas

- 9:00 a.m. - Meet with Donald J. Gegabriele, Jr., United States Attorney – Southern District of Texas, regarding identification and prosecution of trafficking related cases in the Houston area.
- 10:30 a.m. - Meet with US Department of Homeland Security, ICE Special-Agent Robert Rutt, regarding trafficking investigations and apprehensions in the Houston area.
- 4:00 p.m. - Tour St. Jerome Emiliani's Home for Children and talk with trafficking client.

Thursday, October 26 – Galveston, Texas & El Paso, Texas

- 9:00 a.m. – Visit with Dominican Sisters and other representatives of Catholic & faith-based organizations responding to Human Trafficking.
- 10:00 a.m. - Visit with Houston Trafficking Coalition Representatives & Mr. Joe Vail and relevant US DHS ICE Staff and Private Practitioners involved in trafficking and special immigrant juvenile representations.
- 11:30 a.m. - Visit with Staff and Residents of Catholic Charities – Houston, relating to housing of unaccompanied children and trafficking victims.

Friday, October 27 – El Paso, Texas

- 8:30 a.m. – Tour Canutillo child detention facility
- 1:00 p.m. – Bus tour of border region with immigration judge Robert Hough - includes Border patrol detention facility, border crossing, etc.

Saturday, October 28 – Juarez, Mexico

- 12:00 p.m. – Bus tour of Juarez with Most. Rev. Renato Ascencio, Bishop of Juarez

Sunday, October 29 – Fort Worth, Texas

- 10:00 a.m. – Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral

About USCCB Migration and Refugee Service:

Migration and Refugee Services carries out the commitment of the Roman Catholic bishops of the United States to serve and advocate for immigrants, refugees, migrants, and people on the move. This commitment is rooted in the Gospel mandate that every person is to be welcomed by the disciple as if he or she were Christ himself and in the right of every human being to pursue, without restraint, the call of holiness. Migration and Refugee Services contributes to this commitment in an integrated fashion by:

- Assisting the bishops in the development and advocacy of policy positions at the national and international levels that address the needs and conditions of immigrants, refugees, migrants, and people on the move.

- Working with the federal government and local churches in resettling refugees admitted to the United States into caring and supportive communities.

- Assisting local churches and specialized apostolates in responding to the pastoral needs of Catholics among these populations, including the facilitation of pastoral

accompaniment of migrants as necessary and possible, thereby aiding in the development and nurturing of a welcoming and supportive Church in the United States.

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