Human Remains Along the Immigrant Trail

An Artist’s Response to Immigration along the Border
Sponsored by Catholic Round Table and the USCCB at the Social Action Summer Institute (SASI)

www.catholicroundtable.org
http://justiceforimmigrants.org/
Remains of a Sacred presence

Along the border are remains of human presence.
Remains that speak of the heart

Bibles, photos and other relics that remind the observer that humanity with heart and soul had passed through.
Embroidered cloths that are traditionally used to wrap tortillas and food for travel. A wife, a mother prepares the journey for her husband, son or daughter. Food – the symbol of life and communion.

**Servilletas for the Tortillas**
Backpacks with images of the Pink Panther, soft blankets, and water bottles, left behind, likely because there was cause for them to run, to escape, to leave behind the little comfort they had with them.
Hygienic remains
Upon seeing toothpaste and tooth brushes collected, someone stated: “I never even thought about them brushing their teeth”!
Women too!

Mascara, perfume bottles, jewelry, cell phones, cd’s, the remains from women, perhaps with children, in flight with hope.
Humanitarian Aid
Catholic and non-Catholic parishioners organize to walk along the immigrant trail with water and food to offer to the travelers. Many will even be given “posada” to shower and rest for the night.
When they saw a group of 7 Mexican young men approaching, one of the parishioners shouted to them, asking if they had any food and water. The young men consulted one another. Then one of the young men stepped forward and shouted to the parishioners in Spanish, “We don’t have any more food, but we have a little water you can have”.
The Journey is long...
Each step is hope shrouded with fear!
The humanitarian aid provided has been called by ICE as “aiding and abetting criminals”, threatening to arrest the parishioners who go out to provide drink and food for the travelers; to help them stay alive!

Hearts
The commitment of the parishioners
It’s about faith and trust in God.
It’s about family, survival and the future
It’s about humanity
It's about justice
Migration is a human phenomenon, and nature’s instinct. It is not a political choice based on the lack of pride or desire for one’s homeland.
The Art and the Artists

Deborah McCullough: www.deborahmccullough.com
Pamela C. Hoffmeister: pamelahoffmeister.blogspot.com
Resources:

No More Deaths: http://nomoredeaths.org/
Border Links: http://www.borderlinks.org/
Borderlands: A Short Documentary: http://vimeo.com/8243652
Sierra Club: http://www.sierraclub.org/borderlands/
The Wall

Creates a manmade dam that causes flooding...something that never had happened before the wall.

Creates impediments for wildlife migration.

Created separation of families of Native Americans whose nations were divided on both sides of the international border.
Indigenous Peoples of the Southwest

We were invited to listen to the testimonies of the Tohono O’odham Nation of South Tucson, who shared about the great work that CCHD has done in bettering their lives. Also how the “wall” has divided their nation and separated families living on opposite sides of the international border. Even though their nations are considered sovereign by law, their governors were not consulted about the “wall”!
Rev. John Fife and the Sanctuary Movement

Various speakers gave important input throughout the seminar. The most poignant remarks were by Rev. Fife, a Presbyterian pastor, who fought to win the right to sanctuary in the late 1980’s. He came to the conclusion that the gospel cannot be real without embracing the reality of the immigrant on the journey. He reminded us that since the time of Abraham, God’s people have always been on a journey, moving towards fullness of life at every level of humanity’s existence.