

Strangers No Longer Receives Grant from the Catholic Foundation of Michigan

Strangers No Longer has just received a grant of \$5000 from the Catholic Foundation of Michigan (<https://catholicfoundationmichigan.org/>) to continue their work of forming Circles of Support among immigrants to the U.S. from Mexico and Central America. SNL has already formed one immigrant Circle in Wayne County with the help of Sr. Martha de la Torre SMR and Amy Ketner (St. Mary Student Parish, Ann Arbor) known as Mujeres Bajo la Proteccion de Dios (Women Under the Protection of God.)

Sr. Martha tells us that even as Michigan's COVID-19 cases continues to increase and the number of deaths continues to rise, the hope of life abounds when this new group of immigrant women gather to be in solidarity through the pain and needs that arise in the pandemic. When one woman received help from Strangers No Longer this spring, she sparked a desire to reach more women with such support. This led to the formation of a group of women, who now gather virtually every three weeks to share how they are affected by the pandemic and by their stories of immigration, including how the virus is affecting their children.

“Our respectful listening and empathy allowed us to trust each other and share more vulnerably. We all consider this Circle of Support to be a space in which we, the women, can openly express our feelings. We believe this Circle is our method of communication and our outlet for the day-to-day problems we face as immigrant women. Though in this pandemic we risk our lives daily going out to work to feed our families, it is our faith in Jesus Christ that gives us strength and courage to keep fighting for our families and loved ones. Our faith in Jesus is an example for our children – both those born in this country or brought here at a young age. It is our sons and daughters who push us to be better people every day. This is why we believe we are a group of women extraordinarily determined, brave, and most importantly, full of faith. This faith that moves mountains has given us the courage to cross the border and build a life in the US.”

This grant of \$5000 will help Sr. Martha and her team form more Circles of Support to help immigrant women throughout south eastern Michigan.