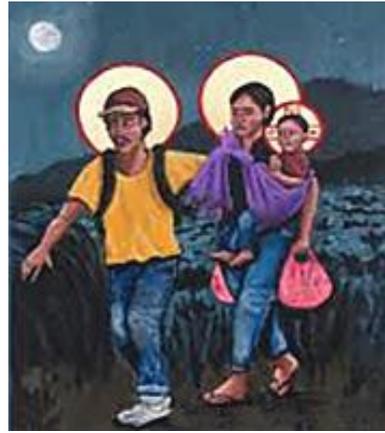


***The people who walk in darkness
have seen a great light.
For those who dwell
in the land of the shadow of death
a light has dawned.***

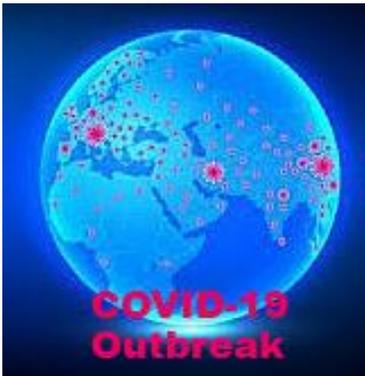
- Isaiah 9:1



Dear friends,

Your Sisters at the Guadalupe Center send you a cordial greeting in this Advent and coming Christmas Season. Our hearts are filled with gratitude to the God of life and tenderness who fills us with hope, light and faith in this unpredictable time filled with such sorrow and death. At the same time, we are aware of so many people living in solidarity who are attending to the needs of those suffering.

Amidst this reality we hope that you are well in spite of what we are all confronting in these days and months. Thanks be to God we are well and are experiencing the presence and love of God through prayer and the solidarity outreach of many you, our friends. We trust that God's presence with us (Emmanuel) will fill your hearts with love and peace.



As we Sisters began the year 2020, we eagerly hoped that our plans for the new year would be brought to fruition. Yet as the time evolved, we were jolted by the unexpected corona-virus that came with such powerful force. This Pandemic was affecting the whole world. This previously unknown virus has caused tremendous fear and uncertainty, feelings of powerlessness and insecurity; and now it is resurfacing with unusual force in so many countries. In the wake of this painful reality a huge number of lives have been lost and the local economy in our country has drastically impoverished many

more people, especially as they lost the little means of employment they may have had. They have been left extremely vulnerable without any possible economic recourse.

Initially we Sisters thought this pandemic may not affect us, but little by little we realized that we were in the midst of a powerful hurricane. Maybe we all were in different boats, but we were all affected by the onslaught of the waves. Those overseeing health care were warning us: "Stay safe at home." With these health precautions and warnings, the whole State of Morelos, especially the city of Cuernavaca, seemed paralyzed with everything closed: the Churches had no services, Holy Week without the people's processions through the streets, the warning not to go outside the confines of one's dwelling. Everything looked so desolate. The words of a song reverberated:

**JESUS GOES IN OUR BOAT
SO THAT TOGETHER WITH HIM
WE CAN PASS THROUGH
THE ADVERSITIES OF THE PANDEMIC.**

As a community of Sisters we gradually understood that COVID-19 is an important moment to begin to assess our life in a constructive way and to interrupt the regular rhythm of our activities by asking ourselves fundamental questions: who are we and in what ways do we need inner conversion? What does it mean for us to believe and what is essential for our community life together during this time while we are enclosed and quarantined? Also is it a time to look anew at our mission and reassess the day-to-day activities we take for granted? Through our prayer do we find new strength we need for our life? Is it a source of light and joy as we continue to exchange and serve one another? Do we witness in our lives the love and mercy of God who is merciful and patient with us, always welcoming and forgiving us? We have been inspired to renew with one another our commitment of joyful and generous service to the Reign of God through visiting our neighbors and accompanying families in need, for example, the accompaniment of our friends at the Women's Cooperative.

We have also been continuing our ongoing education as Sisters through video conferences of recorded lectures on themes of Christology and Care for the Earth, Fraternal Life and Health.

During these days we have tried to appreciate even more how nature has favored us. The sky has been clean and clear. The beauty of nature surrounding us and the air we breathe have been such a Gift of Earth. We have been blessed with "our daily bread" and are able to welcome in hospitality persons seeking an encounter with God's presence in their personal and community lives. We are so grateful for the support and solidarity of our brothers of Weston Priory and for all those persons who have come to visit and stay with us at the Guadalupe Center.

The Visit of Our Brothers and Other Guests



The brothers of Weston Priory came to be with us from January 22nd to February 5th. Always their visit brings joy to both our communities. There is a deep friendship that continues to grow over the years because it is rooted in the love of God and the Spirit of St. Benedict. During this visit we also enjoyed the presence of the Community of our Benedictine Sisters from the Monastery of Pan de Vida (Bread of Life) in Torreon, northern Mexico. We shared our experience of community life with

its enriching challenge and hope-filled inspiration to become witnesses and bearers of Peace and Justice through our monastic lives in the world in which we live today.

During January we also offered hospitality to Paul McKay, his wife, Mary, and their son-in-law, Tony, who have been long-time friends of our community. They are committed to living in solidarity with the people of Mexico and Central America. They have supported and accompanied Guatemalan Refugees for many years and who are now back in their home country. Paul and Mary continue assisting them with the development of sustainable agricultural projects.



From February 14th to 16th we received a group of married couples from the Parish of Huitzilac in the State of Morelos. They were working together to strengthen their personal relations as married couples and to become signs of unity through their family life.



March 3rd to 12th we welcomed a group at the Guadalupe Center that was organized by Pastor Carol Hovis, a pastor of a Presbyterian Church in North Carolina along with a number of friends of the brothers at Weston Priory. It was a very dynamic and engaging group of persons who are already living a vision of active solidarity with the poor and who were eager to experience the culture and values alive in the faith of our Mexican people. This was the last group we were able to welcome

this year. The other groups we were expecting in coming months had to be cancelled due to the emergence of Covid-19.

We live with the hope that maybe sometime in the coming year the health conditions of our countries and travel in our world we enable us again to welcome others to our home.

We remain grateful and value the friendship that you extend to us. You have shared your hopes and concerns as well as moments of sorrow and tragedy especially in the loss of loved ones. All this makes us feel very close to you and your families. Along with your communiques through e-mail and your donations, the fruit of your own labor, you have generously helped to support us and the people so in need whom we try to serve especially during this difficult time.

To all of you, our friends, who have honored us through your presence in our lives, we wish a Christmas and New Year 2020-2021 filled with grace and blessings. May God shower upon you Love, Health, Peace and Joy.

**We complete our letter
by extending to you a big embrace from Mexico,
*Your Sisters of the Community at the Guadalupe Center,***



***Sisters Rosana, María del Carmen, Rosario, Leticia, Reyna,
Guadalupe, Fidelina, Joaquina and María Francisca.***