

## US-CLM Report



✚ If CLM in your RMU is a body of water, what would it be like?

CLM in the US Region can be likened to water from the well. At times its presence is depleted but it continues to give life in different forms. The well continues to be a place of encounter. This water gives life to people who are in search of a better life; water that opens new possibilities to people who are in search of greener pastures, like the many migrants and refugees who cross our border these days.

✚ Water never stops flowing, how is CLM working well in your RMU? Why is it working?

At times the well runs dry but a sudden rain or seeping ground water brings it back to life and, once again, it becomes a source of refreshment and nourishment to the thirsty. CLM is not an independent entity but since its beginning a part of the larger Columban Society and will continue to be so as long as we are available for God's mission. With the networks and collaboration that began when the first LMs came to the US Region in 1994, and served the people, mostly undocumented migrants, in the Columban parish in Grand Prairie, Texas, the water in the well continues to give life. Vicky and Raul later came South to the Border and there had their second child, Marieli. Dixie returned to Chile and Claudio married and now works with the Diocese of Dallas in Religious Education. With or without CLM in the region, the water in the well will continue to give life and nourishment in different forms. The invitation and facilitation of the laity to participate in the mission of God has given birth to various wells. Within or outside the structures of CLM, they continue to give life to those who are thirsty.

At present, there is one LM in the Region who is working as a full-time volunteer at Annunciation House, at the US/Mexico Border, in response to the top mission priority of the US Region: Accompanying the poor in migration. And she is not the first to go "solo" here. Sai Tamatawale spent several years as the only LM at the border and when she was assigned to Hong Kong, Rosalia Basada served alone for over a year. It is not about the quantity of LMs but the level of commitment and openness to respond to the emerging needs of the Region. It is about the connection, presence and involvement we can offer. As most Columbans, the Columban LMs in the US Region, have always been with the people at the margins.

**✚ Just as water erodes even the strongest of rocks, persistence and hard work can overcome any obstacle. What areas of CLM in your RMU need attention and why? What are you doing to address those areas for your RMU?**

As the well continues to provide water even in dry season, it is because the Living Water never runs out. The need for more workers in the vineyard is palpable. It would have been ideal to have more LMs to work at the mission priorities of the region, but acknowledging the present reality of CLM, and the Columban Society in general, we need to continue to be creative by focusing our energy where the needs are greatest and to strengthen our network with like-minded individuals and groups. We will continue to influence and inspire others by the witness of how we work and live.

Apart from the challenge of continuing the LM mission and spirit in the US Region, it has become more difficult to obtain the necessary R-1 Religious Worker visa here. This ‘limits’ the preferred scope or the area of mission involvement. Hence, Beth’s original desire to accompany Columban Bill Morton and Migrant Ministry Coordinator, Cristina Coronado, with the team of Casa San Columbano in Cd. Juarez, has been put on hold. But it has been providential in some sense because the Spirit has placed Beth at the service of Annunciation House where she is living 24-7 with other volunteers, migrants and refugees, hearing their stories, meeting their needs and, all the while, improving her Spanish. God’s plans are always better than ours! The well continues to serve its purpose in another location.

**✚ The depth of water holds infinite possibilities. What new possibilities within CLM are emerging in your RMU?**

We are recognizing, acknowledging and strengthening the places where streams of water come together to create a larger body. By saying this, we explore the possibilities of tapping resources from within the US Region, for example, with co-workers, local collaborators and networks as well as benefactors and other Columban supporters, to strengthen their participation by inviting them to Border Awareness Experiences so that they will be able to “Come and See” the realities and the suffering and be moved to respond with us in God’s mission, today.



**✚ Do you have any other comments?**

‘Water never stops flowing... it erodes even the strongest rocks... its depth holds infinite possibilities...’ We in the US Region continue to be open to follow the movement and celebrate the ripples this body of water creates.

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