



**Statement of Sister Norma Pimentel,  
Executive Director of Catholic Charities Rio Grande Valley  
on Newsvars Video**

April 8, 2021

*On April 6th, an inaccurate and unauthorized video was taken of vulnerable children and families entering the Humanitarian Respite Center, in downtown McAllen, Texas, which is operated by Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley. Sister Norma Pimentel, SJ, Executive Director of Catholic Charities Rio Grande Valley issued the following statement:*

The illicitly taken video of families and children peacefully entering the Humanitarian Respite Center in McAllen is a contrived misrepresentation of the work of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley. The video clip is a staged confrontation interrupting the goodwill of someone providing assistance in the form of transportation for three mothers and their children to the Humanitarian Respite Center. Ideally, the children should have been wearing seatbelts; unfortunately, this was not the case in this instance.

The Humanitarian Respite Center and Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley are not involved in any human smuggling or trafficking networks, but instead have worked tirelessly with Presidents Obama, Trump and Biden and their administrations as well as with local elected leaders to ensure that all asylum-seeking and citizen families alike are treated with human dignity and given clean clothes, food, and a moment of rest at the Humanitarian Respite Center.

I want to express my deep concern and disappointment regarding this attempt to sensationalize the work of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley and so many in the city of McAllen who have consistently worked together to provide humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable. Pope Francis says to us: "God is love! It is only on the path of love that you can know God. . . and through our love for our neighbor we can get to know God, who is love. Only through loving can we reach love." I aspire to live this message daily and to ensure that we, as the staff of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley, practice this affirmation through our work. I urge you to look past the fear mongering and mischaracterizations and remember to actually see the human beings fleeing persecution and their need for human dignity, which mirrors our own.

As always, I urge you to come visit the U.S. Mexico border, and the Humanitarian Respite Center and volunteer so you can learn for yourself about our wonderful and multi-cultural community and our collaboration to help those in need.

For more information on Catholic Charities see <https://www.catholiccharitiesrgv.org>

<b>Newsars claim</b>	<b>Fact</b>
<p>Alex Jones sees a group of children being crammed into the back of a car to be smuggled away and intervenes.</p>	<p>No one was being smuggled. The three mothers and the children were returning to the vehicle to be transported to a COVID-19 testing site.</p>
<p>From there, Infowars tracked the illegals to what appeared to be a fake Covid-19 test facility then to Catholic Charities, where Jones sat for hours watching children being crammed into the back of taxis and driven off to airports and bus stations.</p>	<p>Daily the families who arrive at the Humanitarian Respite Center are only there while they make arrangements with their families who are living in the United States to travel on and connect with them.</p> <p>The Covid-19 testing facility has been in operation since February by Catholic Charities in collaboration with city and county officials. The U.S. Department of Health Services is now overseeing the testing facility so that Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley can focus on the humanitarian aid it provides to hundreds of families every day.</p>
<p>At that point, the crew spotted people with Catholic Charities attempting to unsafely load young children into vehicles, with many being crammed into the back of vans without seatbelts, or carseats.</p>	<p>Catholic Charities staff are diligent about ensuring the safety of all the adults and children who come to the Respite Center, both during their stay and as they depart to continue their journey.</p>
<p>Jones called out the illegal and unsafe smuggling attempt, prompting police officers to get involved.</p>	<p>Again, there was no attempt at smuggling anyone.</p> <p>The Humanitarian Respite Center and Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley are not involved in any human smuggling or trafficking networks, but instead have worked tirelessly with Presidents Obama, Trump and Biden and their administrations as well as with local elected leaders to ensure that all asylum-seeking and citizen families alike are treated with human dignity and given clean clothes, food, and a moment of rest at the Humanitarian Respite Center.</p>
<p>Catholic Charities is the same organization handing illegals manilla envelopes which</p>	<p>These envelopes are to help asylum seekers keep their documents together which have</p>

have money, vouchers and instructions on how to be transported to their destination of choice within the US.

been given to them by border patrol. The envelopes do not include any money. They do include a "Know Your Rights" sheet and another that states:  
"Please help me, I don't speak English" in case they need assistance during their travels.