

SEEING IS BELIEVING

An Important Message from Worldwide Documentaries

September 2021



Matamoros, Mexico tent encampment, 2020. Photo by Cindy Andrade Johnson.

WE NEED YOUR HELP. CAN WE COUNT ON YOU?

Our film *Oh Mercy's* message is more important now than ever. On August 24th, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to block a ruling from Texas Federal Judge Matthew J. Kacsmaryk that would require the Biden administration to reinstate the former administration's "**Migrant Protection Protocols**" (MPP), as detailed in a [Border Report article](#) that broke that Tuesday evening. Though its title suggests otherwise, MPP does the opposite of "protect" migrants. Instead, it ensures that anyone wishing to seek asylum or refuge in the United States must remain in Mexico, where they are at heightened risk of extortion, rape, kidnapping, torture, and murder until they are allowed to enter, if ever, into the US.

This ruling is immensely devastating and will revert the United States back to this inhumane practice where we were in 2019 - Jan. 2021. However, as noted by Director Bob Bilheimer, there is one exception. Now, there are thousands upon thousands more people on the dangerous southern border

towns than there were in the past, and it's no longer just Central Americans, but Haitians, Afghans, Venezuelans, and Africans as well.

In Sister Norma Pimentel's recent [Washington Post letter to President Biden](#)*, she wrote, ***"We must not make children live for months in rain-logged tents. We cannot abandon them to communities where their mothers are afraid to let them use the bathroom at night for fear they might encounter a gang member or be assaulted."***

For most of the American public, the "huddled masses" on our southern border have been out of sight, out of mind. But they can no longer remain so. ***Oh Mercy*** sheds light on a policy that for two years had created immense human suffering. With that, we've decided to dedicate October to **a national initiative of *Oh Mercy* grassroots screenings**. In as many homes and communities as we can, we must spread the message of ***Oh Mercy***, and share the stories that live within it. **Will you help us accomplish this goal?**

"Seeing is believing," as Sr. Norma has said. The hope that comes with ***Oh Mercy*** is that if it continues to be widely seen, shared, and discussed, then a new wave of believers all across the country can heed the film's warning and say, *not again!* These are human beings, and none of us can rest until their rights have been respected, and their human dignity restored. We may not have the solutions to the immigration crisis on our border, but with a film like ***Oh Mercy***, we at least have the knowledge to prevent history from repeating itself. Again.

Can we count on you to host a screening? We will provide you with a free link to the 12-minute film, along with a discussion guide. Whether you share the film with the members of your family, friends, faith fellowships, or members of your community, any participation in this screening month will be appreciated and important. The most important thing is sharing the film's message. No number of attendees is too small or too large.

Keep an eye out in the next couple of weeks for our follow-up newsletter where we will provide you with additional details and suggestions on how to prepare and host a screening. Additionally, we will share those details on our website and through our social media sites. We must move forward, not backward, in creating a more humane and dignified immigration process in our country. **"Let's start from a place of compassion,"** as President George Bush has stated.

In other news, this Fall, ***Oh Mercy - Searching for Hope in the Promised Land*** was honorably chosen for two film festivals - the [2021 Washington West Film Festival](#) and the 2021 Bozeman International Film Celebration. We are particularly excited to be participating in the Washington West Film Festival (Oct 21-25), as it marks its 10th Anniversary celebrating the idea that "story can change the world." In a couple of weeks, the festival website will have details about the event and when ***Oh Mercy*** will be shown.

Also, on the film series website runningtostandstillfilmseries.com, you'll find our new **project blog**, the first one of which is a conversation with Director Robert Bilheimer. Our second blog highlights the work of Sam Bishop and [Global Response Management](#). We were honored to hear what inspired Sam to embark on his humanitarian work, so please take a minute and check it out. This blog page

will be updated frequently to feature insights from the courageous people we work with, impressions from advocates and NGOs, news from the front lines, including first-hand accounts from Bob and the crew during production, and more.

We understand that the times we currently live in are challenging and sometimes overwhelming. A natural instinct is to turn inward and shut out what is unpleasant. However, the most vulnerable among us are counting on someone to give them a voice, to know that 'we see them.' Please help us by making them visible, by sharing their stories, by sharing ***Oh Mercy's*** message. It is so very important.

If you would like to learn more about the upcoming ***Seeing is Believing*** screening initiative, please contact heidi@worldwidedocumentaries.com.

As a not-for-profit, your tax deductible contribution to our work is needed and very much appreciated.

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