

ANGELS WITH ONE WING

Part III —Thinking Outside the Border

Borders are arbitrary and the luck of the draw determines where we are born...into a life of possibility or crushing poverty. Do we really believe that just because a happy accident of fate allowed us to be born here, we have an inherent right to claim all the privilege for ourselves and ignore the human community?

Before I went to Guatemala in 1988 I was the director of a refugee house for Central Americans in Arizona. Strangely enough, it was Guatemalan refugee who posed the question that would change the direction of my life. "Why don't you and some sisters of your community go to Guatemala and live? It seems only right with so many of us coming here that some of you go there." I had 100 reasons not to go, including my intense love of lying on the couch to watch Sunday football and ordering pizza delivery, and one very compelling reason to go - for years I had preached the message that we are *accidentally* citizens of any country. And if we could one day name and claim the truth that there is one human family, one community of persons sharing this tiny planet, we might just move closer to providing all children with the possibility of a future filled with hope.

So it came down to asking myself did I truly believe that those things which moved my soul -- family, love, community, friendship, dignified work, education, health care -- were felt by peasants in remote Guatemalan villages as well as miners in Virginia? Be careful what you preach. You may one day be challenged to make the choices that support your message. The bottom line is we must recognize the fragility of this tiny planet, the need to come together, or we are going to majorly mess up. Decriminalizing the undocumented immigrant, decriminalizing the dreamer who is in awe of what we have here and have achieved in less than 250 years, would be one fine step. Let us invest the same money we spend for a border wall that will never work on solutions that would be true to the promises this great nation holds most dear...liberty and justice for all. *"We are each of us, angels with one wing..."*

It's a great time in the United States -- a lot of energy and a lot of hope have been set loose. May it lead to a time when we are once again recognized as one of the greatest nations on the face of the earth because of our fidelity to the values we have dared to speak in our country's documents.