

## Ode to the Wall

by Marilyn Wilson, BVM

A real wall, you are, O Wall!  
A U.S. "walling off Mexico and beyond  
Walling US (us) in . . ."

My journey to you this October 2016  
From congested Bay Area (CA) to my former home many years ago  
. . . Phoenix . . .  
and then on to Tucson . . . Nogales, AZ . . . Nogales, Sonora Mexico.

Via a comfy van (with erratic AC) and 6 eager pilgrims—soon to be joined by 3 others.  
BVMs, associates, friends. A motley but dedicated and spirited crew. (accompanied by over 400 Peace Pals—  
Peace dolls to share) [www.knitting4peace.org](http://www.knitting4peace.org)

To the desert as I remembered it . . . a solitude of cactus, saguaro, ocotillo, creosote bush, juniper tree—All  
speak desert beauty—in the distance, bluish mountains, sandy hills, red and tan stone monuments—All  
surrounded by —94°+ heat.

We come with schedules, program listings, directions, hopeful hearts . . . but unsure of the path ahead.

We join other journeyers—DC, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Hawaii, Texas, Oregon, Maryland, Florida, Canada  
and beyond—All beckoned to you, O Wall!

THEN there you are—Nogales Border Crossing

I CATCH MY BREATH— You stretch out wide in either direction.

Your dark stark nature— towers HIGHER and HIGHER . . .  
You meander up and down the *innocent* hills . . .

Homes and businesses crouch close on either side.  
Your rusty-colored slatted beams let in ordered swaths of light . . .  
making bold patterns on earth below.

The open blue sky above, the pure white free-flowing wispy cloud  
contradict your baseness of divide . . .

So we gather, march, and come to you, O immovable one.

Ironically you offer some intermittent shade amidst the 94°+ heat

WE vigil, sing, listen, encounter, relate . . .  
Our words and songs bounce off and through you.

¡NO MAS! NO MORE! TEAR DOWN THE BORDER WALL! Basta Ya, Basta Ya, Basta Ya



We wander through to the other side—we witness poverty and welcome.  
We hear stories . . .

Ordinary folks on both sides reaching out and through you . . .

A single rose here  
a peace-Pal doll there  
A shared story you cannot silence



You, O Wall, witness the hopes and dreams of those who only want:

A roof over their heads  
An extra room  
a job to provide food and water for the family  
A uniform and books for their children to attend school  
An escape from violence and death.



You, O Wall, capture voices calling for justice you cannot ignore  
for Jose Antonio Rodriguez, 15-yr.-old shot four years ago by the U.S. Border  
Patrol through the slats in the fence for throwing stones,

For Shana's husband beaten almost to death and herself assaulted,  
and after four years no justice,

For the over 3,000 lost in the desert—who died in the land of "freedom."

BUT You O Wall, are really blameless

It is our fearful hearts,  
our prejudiced minds,  
our unwelcome spirit that walls others out  
And walls us in  
**that built you.**

SO I promise you, O Wall, like Joshua I will commit with other compañeras  
to raise a trumpet voice,

to walk tirelessly around you,  
to listen to the cries for justice,  
to speak and do peace,  
to wake up the policy-makers,  
to continuously transform my heart,  
to witness to others,  
to open with welcome arms

ALL WHO COME TO BORDERS EVERYWHERE . . .

