

Andrea's Story



**storming
heaven &
earth**

prayer
dignity
justice
solidarity
compassion

The Dominican Sisters ~ Grand Rapids invite you to join us in prayer for Andrea.

Andrea is a former police detective from a country in Latin America, where she spent years investigating government corruption and human rights abuses. Because of her work, she became a target of the very authorities she once served. After she and her partner uncovered evidence of serious crimes committed by government officials, an arrest warrant was issued for her. Shortly afterward, her partner was killed. Fearing for her safety, Andrea made the difficult decision to leave her country.

She entered the United States lawfully and applied for asylum — a legal protection created for people who cannot safely remain in their home countries because they fear persecution and whose governments are unable or unwilling to protect them. Andrea has now been in the United States for three years while her asylum case remains in process.

She has complied with every legal requirement.
She has attended every hearing.
She has followed the rules.

Despite this, Andrea is now detained in GEO North Lake Prison and Processing Center in Baldwin, Michigan and is being pressured to sign a deportation order. Returning to her home country would put her life at serious risk given the documented threats tied directly to her work exposing government wrongdoing.

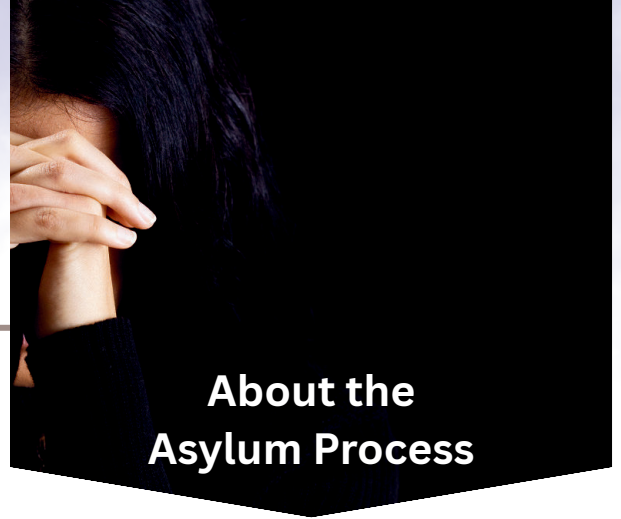
This story reflects the most accurate information available as of February 6, 2026, shared in a spirit of prayer and solidarity. Names and identifying details have been changed to protect the individual.

“First and foremost, notice the human person before us” is a foundational commitment of the Dominican Sisters ~ Grand Rapids. **Storming Heaven & Earth** is a call for attention to the human beings detained by ICE in the Midwest United States’ largest immigration detention center: GEO North Lake Prison and Processing Center in Baldwin, Michigan. Personal experiences and prayer requests will be shared regularly with family permission as an act of solidarity and hope, reflecting our commitment to those most vulnerable among us. Please join us calling for prayer, dignity, justice, compassion, and solidarity.

The Gospel teaches us that every person is made in the image of God. Why can’t immigration policies and practices reflect this fundamental dignity?

Andrea’s asylum claim is based on a credible fear of persecution connected to her professional duties — precisely the type of situation U.S. asylum law was designed to address. She is following the legal process for asylum. Being forced to return now would place her in grave danger.

We Pray for Andrea



About the Asylum Process

O God,

We thank you and praise you for inspiring all those individuals who have welcomed refugees and immigrants throughout the U.S.

We pray today for Andrea.

Companion of the Companionless,
On this day, hear our prayer for Andrea,
who fled her homeland due to political conflict,
and has complied with every legal requirement,
attended every hearing and followed
the rules of the asylum process.

Comforter of the Injured,
the prophet Hosea describes your love
as that of a parent lifting a child to her cheek.
Lift, now, our sister Andrea,
who has worked for 3 years in this country,
Today she needs your healing touch
as she is asked to sign deportation orders!

Refuge of the Lost,
Save those who are tossed upon the seas!
Be near to those thirsting for safety and freedom,
and searching for community that welcome.

Hope for the Hopeless,
lift up the heavy hearts of families
who have lived for years in refugee camps.
Provide them a secure home
and hope for the future. Amen.

*Prayer adapted from the
Christian Community
Development Association
by Dominican Associate
Karen Malmsten and
Sister Ann Walters, OP*



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The right to seek asylum is recognized in U.S. law and internationally under the 1967 Protocol to the Refugee Convention, an agreement embraced by many nations to protect people fleeing persecution and violence. At its heart, asylum law exists to offer refuge to those who cannot safely return home.

Under U.S. law, people can apply for asylum only after they are physically present in the United States or arrive at a port of entry. Applications generally must be filed within one year of arrival (1). The process is long and complex, requiring extensive paperwork, interviews or court hearings, and multiple appearances before immigration officials or judges. Because there are far more cases than judges, families often wait years for a decision (2). During this time, their case is considered “in process,” and they must follow legal requirements such as checking in with authorities.

In recent years, the path has grown more difficult. Border procedures have narrowed who may begin a claim (3), and some cases are decided more quickly, sometimes without a full court hearing (4). While cases are pending, asylum seekers are not eligible to work until 180 days after their application is filed (5). Because asylum seekers are also ineligible for most federal benefits (6), delays in work permits can create serious hardship while families wait, often for years, for their cases to be resolved.

Sources:

1: [USCIS](#). 2: [American Immigration Council](#).

3: [White House](#). 4: [NPR](#). 5: [USCIS](#).

6: [National Immigration Law Center](#)