

**Lecture: “Preaching from the Borders: The impossibility of Hospitality”**

Preaching from the borders.... What do I mean by it? What borders am I talking about? Are they real, symbolic, religious, political? Perhaps the one between United States and Mexico, or the one that divides Palestine and Israel? What am I talking about? And what about this “impossibility of hospitality,” what do I mean by it? Well, mainly, what I want to propose is a place from where we preach, a hermeneutical space to think about God, and to find ways to live. But if you stay with me a little longer we will get there. We will just take a little detour before we get there.

Let me tell you a story. In 1997 I started to work as a pastor in an immigrant community, made mostly of non-documented people. Check this out: Brazilian missionaries supported by one of the Presbyteries of the PC-USA, being hosted by a local Lebanese church, in a heavily influenced Azorean community. It was a wonderful and at the same time extremely difficult experience. A church bordered by many cultures.

The local Lebanese church welcomed us well at the beginning but along time they could not deal with the messy aspects of a guest church in their territory. Have you ever been to an immigrant church? If so, I am almost sure that you didn't go more than once. I hear people say to me often, “Claudio, it is too messy, they don't start on time, things are always out of control, their services never end, their music is great, but to be part of this community I just can't.” Even our Presbytery almost gave up and for “just reasons”. They could not support any work with non-documented people. Who wants to support the work of immigrant non-documented communities? Only the owners, agribusiness, factories / maquiladoras that pay these immigrants much less than they would have to pay for North American citizens.

Anyway, the Lebanese church welcomed us for a while but after some time, despite of all their love, they couldn't take us anymore. It is understandable. This community was made of undocumented, i.e., “illegal” people, always on the edge of being caught up by the immigration police, la migra. This immigrant community was led by a crazy immigrant pastor, who had ideas of having child care in the church throughout the week, cultural events every Saturday, Sunday luncheons and various events with the city. Besides, our kids were terrible, they used to run around playing with the toys of the church kids, and messing things around. How could one cope with such barbarians and uncivilized people that knew no respect? And we used the temple ten times more than the hosting church. So much so that they felt we were taking over their building.

They started to be threatened. We, the guests, would also invite the hosts to visit the church and be part of our worship services, our luncheons and events. An inverse process started to occur and they sensed that we were somewhat, turning them, our hosts

into our hostages. Afraid, they gently kicked us out. Understandable. And please understand me right here, I am not trying to convey this hosting church as evil-doers and we the immigrant community as the good-doers. We were terrible and very annoying. My story however, is to tell you how difficult it is to undo borders of control, to share space with the stranger, and lose our local identity in order to gain a multicultural one. Who wants to lose their own identity, their space and share their tradition? In the matter of “immigrants versus any receiving country,” it is the task of the immigrants to lose their identity and adjust to the ways of the receiving country.

Borders, we are surrounded by borders, whether we see it or not.

PAUSE

Before I go on with the idea of borders, let me say few words about preaching, sermons and preachers.

Preaching, among other things, is about issuing constant invitations. When I preach I am inviting people to dialogue with me. When I preach, it is up for the community of believers, who I believe are not and should not be primarily a community of listeners but rather, an engaging community of interpreters, to say yes and no, to raise arguments, to develop a critical mind, and to expand each other's views, including the preacher, by creating a dialogue.

When I preach, I invite people to think with me about God's word, I invite people to share their stories, I invite people to live with me, I invite people to encounter one another and to encounter God. Issuing invitations, sermons have the power to help us become something else.

And every time I preach, I hope and pray that what I am becoming through my preaching, might be of help to God's people, so that they can get strength and support to live their lives, gain a passion for the work of God in the world and extend this same invitation to others.

When I preach I bring myself, my history, my commitments, my eyes and my blindness to see God, and also my loyalties to bear witness to the word of God within the congregation of interpreters.

When I preach, I am not looking only for what people should know, believe or wrestle with but also to that which I need to believe, I need to know and I must wrestle with and sometimes have difficulties to do so.

When I preach, I am caught up between my own paradoxes, between my gaze to the world, my gaze to the word of God and my gaze at you. When I preach I have to encounter you in this space between your gaze and mine, between your body and mine, between the word unspoken and sermon I have to write and/or preach.

Fred Craddock says that when one preaches: “One is reminded of oneself, of what is like to trust and to doubt at the same time, to be inside and outside at the same time, to run from and to run toward at the same time, to love an activity more than anything and at the same time welcome every chance to be free of it.”<sup>1</sup>

Sermons have a strange force. They can change the history of people’s lives and entire communities. What we preach feeds the thread of the cultural values in our society. Preachers have changed and keep on changing the lives of many people around the world. Preachers can and do make history happens.

We can name a profusion of great preachers that have made history in this and other countries. What would history of United States be without the sermons of Jonathan Edwards, Billy Graham, Malcolm X or Martin Luther King Jr.? What would be of South Africa’s present if Desmond Tutu’s sermons didn’t exist?

And yet, in spite of this powerful force, to preach is as fragile as a candle in the wind. As Fred Craddock also says, “sermons are vulnerable, tossed as a seed which even the birds can take away.”

And we preach for people who we never know how they are going to take it. Bill Muehl says in his book *Why Preach? Why Listen?* That we preach for those who “almost didn’t come this morning.” And yet, this audience keeps coming back looking for something, searching either for some continuity, some certainty and/or for some help as they process in chartered and unchartered territories. Our audience comes to hear us and God’s word for infinite reasons, the most important one, I hope to believe, being the love of God, but also, they come because, perhaps, they need to share their burdens, get a little help do deal with the daily stuff of live that are so hard d to deal with, learn from each other’ stories, try to remember and to forget, find some solace when they are feeling lost, like a motherless child, desiring to be happy, find ways out of no ways to cope with life and perhaps, even unconsciously, make belief. For church also means to make belief, to pretend as we believe wholeheartedly, that this faith is enough.

Nonetheless, what we preach has the power to awaken and heal people, create worlds, facilitate relations, connect people to people, empower communities, transform people’s lives, change the course of history and invigorate God’s mission in the world.

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<sup>1</sup> (Barbara Brown Taylor, *The Preaching Life*).

There is one thing however that bothers me and it has to do when we often see the sermon as “the” event in a worship service. The way we understand what sermons are tells us about the ways we look at the entire worship service. We have Christian denominations that base their worship services around the sermon, and other traditions that base their services on the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper / Communion / Eucharist. In many Presbyterian worship services, Communion is celebrated once in a while. The office of theology and worship of the PC-USA is trying hard to give incentives to people to celebrate Communion every Sunday but this is a difficult task.

The reformed theology says that preaching is always correlated to the eucharistic table, one reveling the other, one witnessing to the other. However, if John Calvin, who wanted to have the Lord’s Supper celebrated every Sunday in Switzerland, cannot be a good reason to make our churches do that, who can? Some people say that the Eucharist is so special that we cannot celebrate it often otherwise it will lose its power. However, if Communion is to feed our spiritual lives and nurture our bodies, to celebrate communion periodically is to starve for a while so that the eucharistic food will be better! Uh??

I guess that the reasoning behind it might also have to do with the fact that the SERMON is what feeds us properly and once we have had the sermon we had church. It is as if everything else in the worship service is important but, well, not as important. So much so that pastors often cut and paste worship programs Sunday after Sunday and do not spend much time on preparing it carefully.

I remember when I was a kid, the most important thing was to get to church in time for the sermon. In some churches in Brazil it was even worse; I used to see pastors deciding the order of the service right before the worship started. But let me tell you, this is not only a privilege of Brazil. By cutting and pasting worship programs here, we are not doing much different. And let us ponder it in a little more structural way. If one looks at the PC-USA seminaries you will find that seminaries have one, two or even three professors of homiletics; however, when it comes to worship, not every seminary of the denomination has a single worship professor. Columbia seminary has two amazing worship professors but they are there part time. We often have endowed chairs for preaching but rarely have money for worship professors. I am Louisville seminary has had the vision to open the liturgy position again. And I am sure other professors and people would say the same thing regarding other important areas of knowledge as well.

But don’t get me wrong, I do believe in the importance and the power of a sermon! BUT, I believe in the power of the sermon IN RELATION to the table, to the baptismal fount, to the prayers we pray, the songs we sing, to the fact that we invite each other to eat together, and to tell our stories to each other. The sermon AND the prayers AND the hymns AND the eucharistic table AND the baptismal fount are privileged

places for God's grace to come to us. My desire for this conference is that, along with the marvelous sermons and lectures you are hearing, you would also leave with a sense of a having had broader encounters with God from the worship services experienced here.

One of my dreams as a seminary professor is to see those of my students who are becoming pastors to spend time preparing their liturgies, getting their church members during the week and planning creative and exciting worship services, gathering people to write prayers, research on the internet for some information, finding new ways to get together around the table, invitation people, and inventing something for people to do. And here is a big thing: we created a culture in our churches that during worship services, one must sit still and listen, occasionally singing and reading prayers. And that's it. My dream is that people could do more than that and we, pastors and preachers, are the ones to help people move. **For I believe that we become what we do.** And we should do more, in order to expand our eyes to see God!

It is around the worship space that we rehearse our lives, open up channels for God's grace and invent ways to go about our daily lives. In the worship space, we learn how to invite and to offer hospitality to the stranger.

#### PAUSE

All that is to say: in order to become a good preacher one has to be, first, a good worshiper. One has to learn to pray and talk to God first, before one is able to talk about God to others. The way we nurture our communities is not only by preaching but with the prayers we pray, the food we eat, the songs we sing, the peace we share, the movements our bodies do in this place. The worshiper who becomes a preacher is the one who carries vivid experiences with God within the community of interpreters. Fred Craddock calls the episcopal preacher and scholar Barbara Brown Taylor, neither a preacher nor a teacher but first and foremost, a worshiper. He says: "She is a worshiper. Whether in the study, in a classroom, in a hospital room, on a mountain trail, or in the pulpit, she is in the sanctuary."

For one learns the ways to believe only after one learns to pray. One of the tragedies that happened to the church of Christ is that we trust more in our theologies than in our prayers... The *lex orandi*, the law of prayer, comes first, before the *lex credendi*, the law of beliefs. Thus, in order to become a good preacher one has to learn how to pray first. For preaching without prayer is a discourse emptied from the experience of God.

I grew up listening to stories about the power of prayer and up to this day, every time I call my mother, she will tell me how a prayer transformed somebody's lives. So

my question to you dear preacher this afternoon is: do you pray? And do you weep when you pray? Because a good theology only comes out of prayers and tears.

So finally, after this long detour, here we are: at, around and within borders. And to pray, to sing, to confess, to weep, to share Christ's peace, to preach and to celebrate communion, ought to be done from the borders. But again, what borders? And in what ways are the borders of the liturgical space and of our sermons marked by the borders of the outside world?

### Borders, what to I mean?

Have you seen the movies *Crash* or *Babel* or *Bordertown*? These movies show the tension, the nervousness and the relatedness of borders in our lives. We are all intertwined, interconnected and these movies are good examples of what means to live at, around and within borders.

I wish I could show you some but our chapel is technologically illiterate. We need to do a serious remix in this chapel. If we talk about technology in this place, Moses would be ahead of us. We would need to go back to Jacob, or Isaac or Abraham or even to the hovering waters in the uncreated world.

Borders are everywhere. Every border establishes at least two and many more sides that regulate and are regulated, enact and are enacted by paralleled, tangent or deviant borders. Borders are controlling apparatus, concrete and symbolic, real and imaginary, paradoxical and determined, entangling space and power within various other areas such as knowledge, identities, politics, religion, economics, etc.

Borders are also about spaces: margins, hinges, lines and thresholds in constant relation with something else, separating, marking space and differing positions. Usually a border is controlled from the inside to keep on the outside everything that cannot be accepted, invited and lived. The various degrees of invitation entail categories of participation according to some chosen criteria. Some will be invited as short term guests, others as distinguished guests, other as a long term guest, and so on. Borders also serve as signs of protection, safety, and order. They inspire and aspire to show stability, resistance, permanence and duration. On the other hand, this protection and stability demand that those who are inside do not challenge the authenticity of the borders. Gloria Anzaldúa says that the borders of “culture take away our ability to act – shackle us in the name of protection.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera. The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987), 21.

However, in spite of the idea of protection and separation that borders threaten and promise, they are often made of a porous structure with unattended spaces, i.e., blind spots. Borders are nervous spaces filled with anxiety.<sup>3</sup>

When I think about borders, I think about signs of power, the enactment of limitations, separation, hospitality, hostility, acceptance, rejection and avoidance. Moreover, when I think about borders I think about excluded people, those who are outside the hospitable walls of recognition, acceptance and inclusion that the Bible calls the stranger, the widow, the cripple, the lame, the poor, the foreigner, the non-documented. Christian communities are called to be hospitable, to care about the other and to offer hospitality, especially to excluded people. We are the ones who have to preach about welcoming, we are the ones who have to expand the lines of hospitality in the world.

When I look at borders I see Jesus at, around and within them: across gender roles, social classes, economic structures, religious practices, theological disputes... in all of these borders, Jesus is siding with the poor, offering a place for them. He comes from a poor family and he knew where his loyalties were located...

It is at, within and around the borders of the eucharistic table and its liturgical practices, theological reasoning and ecclesiological limits that Christian communities preach the gospel and show their modes of hospitality.

Borders are markers and they entail political recognition, social rules, sexual acceptance, theological beliefs, and ethnic presence or absence. Our preaching has to deal with these markers and whether or not we deal with these markers consciously, we are always setting up and undoing boundaries in our preaching. Where is Jesus amidst these borders?

Let us take the concrete example of the borders between US and Mexico. These borders are marked by tremendous injustice. These borders are open wounds in the life of this country. And this border is bleeding, spilling its blood over immigration policies, economic structures, social classes, who is in, who is out, defining power and the access to the table. Don't think that the borders between Mexico and US do not have anything to do with the very prayer you pray at your worship service, the very sermon you preach, and the things you forget to say. Borders are everywhere! Borders are a war zone where people kill and die. And as it is often the case around the world, it is where women and children suffer the most. Around the borders at St. Juarez, about 400 women were raped, tortured and kidnapped. Where are they in our Eucharistic table?

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Anzaldúa develops this border's anxiety and nervousness from a woman's perspective.

This whole thing about the borders between US and Mexico has a long history. A history that says something about hosts and guests, and about the stranger today who was the native yesterday. This was the movement of your forefathers and foremothers in this country.

At first, they were strangers, immigrant, non-documented people in this land. But now you are the citizens of this country. But you might say, they were legal in this country and we must avoid illegal immigrants. And then I ask you who is it that defines illegal? How much is the law to be obeyed or challenged? We should ask for a little help from Martin Luther King Jr. of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and their letters from prison. And I wonder if our fear of undocumented people is not the fear of demographic change more than the term illegal.

What do we have to offer to the recent foreigners today? What are their places in our speech? Ana Carter says that preaching as testimony is about showing where we see God and what we believe. SO here is my question to you: Where do you see God, if anywhere, in the struggle around undocumented people and what do you believe is their place around the table of Jesus Christ. Not my table, not your table, but Jesus Christ's table.

For we all came to the baptismal fount as strangers before God and God immersed us in God's womb and from the water of God's womb we were born again. "Our mother, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name..."

How are you now to preach at, around and within the borders of the table today? With whom do you stand side by side? As Sweet Honey in the Rock sings:

Would you harbor me?  
Would I harbor you?

Would you harbor a Christian, a Muslim, a Jew  
a heretic, convict or spy?  
Would you harbor a run away woman, or child,  
a poet, a prophet, a king?  
Would you harbor an exile, or a refugee,  
a person living with AIDS?  
Would you harbor a Tubman, a Garrett, a Truth  
a fugitive or a slave?  
Would you harbor a Haitian Korean or Czech,  
a lesbian or a gay?

Would you harbor me?  
Would I harbor you?

Would you stand closer and preach about those who are not accepted around the table of Christ? Are we to be like the recent minute man around the borders of US and Mexico with rifles on our hands ready to send people back their way, or are we to welcome the stranger into our land? This is complicated.

How are we to preach about borders? And I would say that, in order to preach about borders, one has to be aware that one is always at, around and within borders.... borders constantly set up around the liturgical space, the backyard of our houses, the pulpit and around our schools and restaurants, the baptismal fount, our checking accounts, the table of Communion, and our expending habits. All intertwined and interconnected.

So, here is the challenge for you this afternoon: to be at, around and within nervous, tense and fragile borders is not a choice. This is our hermeneutical space and from there we make sense of our faith and read the world. But to be at, around and within borders has to do with:

- A radical choice to be with and on the side of the least of these, the poor, the stranger, the lame, cripple, the blind and the undocumented.
- It has to do with our need to consider that we are part of a divided world with different agendas and that to preach the gospel of hospitality is to go against the cultural trends and economic and social safety.
- It has to do with the uneasiness of being constantly at a conflicting area. Instead of only searching for a comfort zone and protection, one has to know that borders are dangerous places, a war zone, and we hang in there in the midst of bullets, murders, passports, the poor, banned gays and lesbians, corruption, raped women, police badges only by the grace of God, living by faith and faith alone.

For to be at, around and within the borders is to gain strength from each other and live and move simultaneously in different worlds, with different languages, with sometimes funny, but sometimes scary people near us.

By the way, do you speak another language? To be at the borders you must learn to talk the language of those you are standing with.

To be at, around and within the borders is to be aware that this location is mined with ambiguity and paradoxes and contradictions.

To be at, around and within the borders is to inherit a certain disequilibrium in our words and a certain excess in our practices.

To be at, around and within the borders is about making mistakes and asking for forgiveness. Constantly!

For in this place,

We try to set up God's rule that often twists our theological certainties and dismantle our assured assumptions;

In this place, we invent God's world with tears and weeping;

In this place, we create a place for everyone;

In this place, we call upon God's Spirit day and night and especially during the night by praying *Come Holy Spirit, Come*;

In this place, we are reminded that our fight for justice under the gospel of Christ has also to do with the restoration of our own lives and of the earth, knowing that we are to care for God's creation. The destruction of God's creation and the exclusion of billions of people from the economic market are intrinsically connected.

It is from this place that you might want to figure out not only what to preach but also how to preach.

In this place, we are called to practice our faith, for our faith is only alive if practiced, and practiced around many borders. As John Caputo says, we are TO DO God's name in the world, to serve, to give, to surrender;

In this place, love is not primarily to be understood, felt, knew or thought but rather, DONE. Go do love because this is the love that saves. For God's love is the key that unlocks all the doors that perpetuates exclusion.

When we do this love, we practice a radical hospitality, a hospitality that goes beyond any law, any concern for self protection, an unconditional hospitality that goes beyond any border. However, this constant call for a radical hospitality is impossible. No one can invite everybody, at anytime, without any prevention or protection. We must

create borders to keep living. And here lays our first and foremost task as Christians: to do the impossible, to preach about the impossible, to search for the impossible, to offer the impossible and not be happy until we get there. However, we must know that to make the impossible happen takes a little longer...

As we slowly start to get rid of all of the locks from our church doors and offer a radical hospitality, we must think about *borderless borders*. What does it mean?

Borderless borders are ways of wrestling with the very impossibility of hospitality, finding “intermediate schemas,” negotiating between the possibilities and the impossibilities of hospitality, expanding the negotiations toward the unconditional without losing the concern for the conditional, aligning ourselves to “**forms of solidarity yet to be invented**,”<sup>4</sup> loving and preparing a place for the other, *as an instant*, “*as if the stranger or foreigner held the keys...* It’s *as if* (and an *as if* always lays down the law here) the stranger... was going to save the city or promise it salvation,”<sup>5</sup> as if the stranger held the keys of my happiness, as if “prolong[ing] the moment of the open door.”<sup>6</sup> *Borderless borders* are ways of improving the laws of hospitality, as if we were taking a step “... once again, of progression, aggression, transgression, digression.”<sup>7</sup>

My intention here is to access our liturgical and preaching borders as they entail a double movement: first, a search for various forms of hospitality within Christian communities, then, to redraw the lines of the eucharistic table as we keep inviting everybody to break bread with us.

Yes, preaching is about inviting people who are not our people to break bread with us, so that they become our people. If black people are not my people they will become! I will invite them to break bread with me.

If Native Americans, Latinos/as, Asians or Africans are not my people I will invite them to break bread with me and we will become each other’s friends, each other’s people. It might take a while, but we will get there. Remember, it takes a little longer to get to the impossible.

As someone has said, when we think about hospitality we have to think about *blindness* and *madness*. We must see that we do not see everything and that we must be mad enough to preach about this impossible hospitality. For to offer hospitality is a dangerous enterprise. Our guests will challenge and even change us.

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<sup>4</sup> Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, 4.

<sup>5</sup> Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, 123.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

Let me tell you about Deb Crawford, she is one of our students here at LPTS. She was born blind but I tell you, she can see way more than many of us. Last semester, in the class “Intro to Worship,” she kept asking me, perhaps not knowing the use of her own words, “why people can’t see the fact that they exclude me here in our worship services?” She was telling me that everybody takes for granted that everybody see things, gestures, movements, and read the worship program. And she would ask: “Why is it so hard for people to pay attention that we need to do some things differently?” “Why people can’t see?” was the cry of her heart.

Deb discovered that the worship space is also her space and now she is on a mission to reclaim it. With her presence and voice, Deb is becoming a prophet in our midst.

Just last week, during our worship service, she stood up, came to the middle aisle of the church and said that we pay attention to some people but never to disabled people. Again she was crying out loud: “Why can’t you see?” As people of God, we must hear her cry and be helped by her in our blindness. This is about creating hospitality for somebody else, it is to change our space, the way we do things, the way we worship, so that she can participate. As she challenges and changes us, Deb has become God’s word and help, so that we can get a little closer to the impossible. For the liturgical space also belongs to her and to whoever comes to break bread with us.

I see the world in distress, a world that is continuously creating borders and boundaries everywhere, be it among nations and territories, dividing people according to social class, ethnic categories, gender definitions, sexual orientation, body abilities, and so on. We need to call upon the Spirit to come disguised in the face of the other, to contaminate our congregations with the presence of someone else, who is even stranger than we are and blow God’s Spirit on us. We need to preach Jesus’ gospel at the four corners of the earth and say that we need to live among diversity, among those we cannot even think we can live with. Then, right there, which is also right here, among strangers, refugees, the blind, the lame, the crippled, the deaf, the mute, the ill and the abandoned, is where we must worship God together.

Our task as preachers of this powerful *kerigma*, the powerful message of Jesus Christ, is to stand at, around and within borders, and draw the maps of another world, not the maps that our world of exclusion constructs but maps that are drawn with the pencils provided by God’s grace. Because God’s pencils always tells us of another story, shows us another map, and open another possibility.

This mapping of human encounters is about living *with* one another and to explode borders of exclusion, fear and hatred. By exposing ourselves to one another around our sermons and communion tables, we might find ways to cope with ourselves, with the other and with the world at large. My hope, then, is that Christian communities, if they want to live a radical hospitality, will have to dare to move away from their rigidity of place, safety and sacrament and liturgical practices and venture into a world that belongs to neither them or to others. By preaching sermons that issue constant invitations to the eucharistic table, we will find new gestures, movements, and practices of radical hospitality that will expand the limits, the borders of our own comprehension, so much so that the stranger and the poor will be welcomed, even at the risk of losing one's own place at the table.

The whole worship experience must move our communities toward their identity by way of the stranger, willing to be open and accepting to negotiate who we are or think we are.

We "do" hospitality with the underlying assumption that all people are children of God and therefore, are to be accepted (and acceptable) at the table. Our sermons have to create a heterogeneous space for this hospitality.

Yes, it is around our pulpit and communion table that lays our task to preach, and to break bread. As we preach and break bread, we are called to undo the borders of exclusion, and to offer a radical hospitality, an impossible hospitality, a space for all, even if we might not agree with them. It is in, around and within these borders that we wait for the Spirit of God to guide us to do God's name in the world.

Is this a radical, utopistic and even stupid proposal? Yes, it is. So be it. I started preaching from a very early age. When I was in my teens I was a street preacher and continued to be a street preacher until I went to seminary. Then I realized the enormous challenges and requisites for preparation and I didn't preach on the streets anymore. As Tomas Long quotes a man saying in his book *The Witness of Preaching*, "I used to preach better before I understood the issues." (p. 19) What I am saying here, is that, perhaps we might need to go back and preach from what we don't know. And I myself do not know much about borders... but one thing I know. I won't leave these borders. Even if I have to die right here which is also right there. For I'd rather die among the poor, the lame, the cripple, the blind, the stranger, and the undocumented, than to live among those who use the borders to protect themselves.

So today, at this very moment, as I give you this lecture/sermon, I am inviting you to stay there, which is right here, at, around and within these borders with me. Would you come?

Thank you.