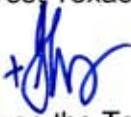




*Office of The Bishop
The Rt. Rev. Gary R. Lillibridge*

***The Episcopal Diocese
of West Texas
The Bishop Jones Center***

April 7, 2010

TO: Congregations of West Texas
FROM: Bishop Lillibridge 
RE: Youth Mission Trips on the Texas-Mexico Border

As we all know, several government agencies have strongly discouraged crossing the Texas-Mexico border due to the severe instability and violence in some areas that are on the border. This is a tragic situation for people on both sides of the border, and we must exercise wisdom and caution as the violence in Mexico continues to be a very serious concern.

In light of this, we are not permitting youth (including college) mission trips across the border with Mexico in this calendar year. Although our teams have never experienced any difficulty up to this point, the safety of our youth is our top priority and we make this decision with regret.

Considering the current instability, we strongly discourage adult teams as well; and advise adults to thoroughly consider all factors should they decide to move forward with their own trips. It is our recommendation that adults refrain from including their children on mission trips, but we realize that decision is an individual family one.

We are aware that some youth groups have planned mission trips in Mexico this summer, and that this announcement will disrupt those plans. The World Mission department of the diocese will be glad to work with all youth team leaders to identify other mission opportunities for our youth groups. For more information, please call Betty Chumney or Marthe Curry at the diocesan office, (888 or 210) 824.5387.

We will continue to carefully monitor the situation and provide updates as appropriate. I encourage you to continue to hold the people of northern Mexico in your daily prayers.