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Hispanic Pastor Contradicts Leftist Claims of Deplorable Conditions at Immigration Facility

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A group of pastors are boldly contradicting claims made by the major media and U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) that immigrants held at a detention center near El Paso, Texas, are living in deplorable conditions.



The Reverend Samuel Rodriguez (shown), a U.S. pastor and head of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC), recently led a group of fellow clergy to the immigration facility spotlighted by the liberal media and Ocasio-Cortez for the supposed inhumane conditions in which illegal immigrant detainees were required to live.

In an NHCLC report Rodriguez said that after reading comments from “media pundits and some political figures” citing such things as soiled diapers and a lack of basic hygiene and sanitation, he found himself “full of indignation” and decided to see for himself “what was actually happening in order to better enable our efforts to find a fair and a just solution to our broken immigration system.”

As previously reported by [Reuters](#), “migrants held at a border patrol station in Texas were subjected to psychological abuse and told to drink out of toilets, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said after a visit with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to the main border patrol facility in El Paso.”

Of her visit to the center, Ocasio-Cortez claimed that “after I forced myself into a cell with women and began speaking to them, one of them described their treatment at the hands of officers as ‘psychological warfare.’”

Another congresswoman, Representative Madeleine Dean (D-Pa.), tweeted that she had found over a dozen women “in their 50s-60s sleeping in a small concrete cell, no running water. Weeks without showers. All of them separated from their families. This is a human rights crisis.”

Rodriguez, however, challenged the claims, saying he and his clergy delegation had visited the same facility, and found nothing like what the liberal Democrats had insisted they experienced. “I must be living in a parallel universe somewhere,” Rodriguez told Fox News. “I did not find soiled diapers. I did not find crying children. I did not find deplorable conditions. Quite the opposite, I found amazing people on both sides trying to make a very difficult circumstance better.”

He said agents and guards on duty insisted that Rodriguez’s delegation was not given a sanitized tour of the El Paso facility. “I don’t know where everyone else is visiting,” he told Fox News. “I spoke to border patrol agents, the vast majority of which are Latino ... and I asked, ‘Hey guys, did you stage this? Did you flip the script to accommodate people like me?’ And they said, ‘Pastor Sam, absolutely not. You are



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looking at the very thing that existed here for a number of weeks, so it's not that we shifted because of any deplorable conditions that were discovered.”

Suggesting that the claims by Ocasio-Cortez, other Democrats, and the liberal media may be politically motivated, Rodriguez quoted one agent on duty at the El Paso facility, who told him: “Pastor Sam, what they're saying about us is completely false. We care about these kids and have a passion for our calling.”

The Reverend Kevin Wallace, one of the clergy who who accompanied Rodriguez on the tour of the facility, called Ocasio-Cortez's allegations absurd, insisting that what he and the other clergy found were border patrol agents who were “kind, considerate, and passionate” about helping the immigrants held at the facility. “The congresswoman is entitled to her opinion, but her opinion should never shape the truth,” Wallace told Fox News. “The truth doesn't have a side. The truth stands on its own, and people with integrity have got to make up their minds to stand on the side of truth.”

Another pastor, the Reverend Tony Stewart, confirmed that what he and the other clergy observed “was much different than what was said” by Ocasio-Cortez, the Democrat congressional delegation, and the media. “The reality, it is not a great situation,” Stewart told Fox News. “We are in a crisis and I would urge Congress to make this work.”

He added that the border agents on duty “are doing the best they can in the circumstances. It has been over-politicized, boiled to a point and ... exploded, but I would say when we were there it was much different than I expected.”

Rodriguez is not the first Christian leader to challenge the leftist characterization of conditions at immigration facilities. According to Faithwire.com, “Prestonwood en Español Pastor Gilberto Corredera said border agents have good relationships with the children, often spending their own money to buy food and water for them. ‘They have families, they have feelings,’ Corredera, who has toured detention centers on the border, said of the Border Patrol agents. ‘I saw them so compassionate about it, so concerned about it, heartbroken for [unaccompanied migrant kids].’”

Photo of Rev. Samuel Rodriguez



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