

**FIFTH WORLD CONGRESS
FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**

Presentation of the Fifth World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees

Address of Pope John Paul II

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Final Document

PRESENTATION OF THE FIFTH WORLD CONGRESS FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Since 1979 our Pontifical Council has convoked a World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees every five years. These gatherings have a particular character, something unique in the world of those concerned with migration, namely an intimate connection with the pastoral concerns of the Universal Church and of the Holy Father in particular. Our Council, as a Dicastery of the Roman Curia, assists the Holy Father in his mission of confirming his brothers and sisters in faith, love and hope. Its official activities, like a World Congress, are carried out with his permission and blessing. They thus become expressions of the listening, teaching, and action of the Church that lives and exercises its mission, sharing “the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted” (GS 1).

Not by chance, each day of the Congress began at the Tables of the Word and the Eucharist, celebrated at the Tomb of Peter, with the participation of the bishops, priests, religious and lay faithful entrusted with the pastoral responsibility of eighty-nine Local Churches for migrants and refugees. This was a sign of communion among themselves and with the Successor of Peter and in a special way of what the Congress was trying to promote: “beginning afresh from Christ” (NMI 29-41), being renewed in this sacrament, and being confirmed in the courage to stake everything on the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ, always with the light of the Magisterium of the Church.

The Congress was celebrated in the context of the situation of migrants and refugees that has continued evolving in the last five years. This is evident on several counts, first of all, in the process of globalization with its positive and negative effects, including that of encouraging – and even forcing – migration. Second, while migration realities of the past five years are no less dramatic than before, coverage in the popular media remains selective and often negative, thus not permitting an in-depth and truly global appreciation of the phenomenon for the general public. This weighs heavily on the challenges and duties facing local ecclesial communities as they develop their pastoral responsibility towards the migrant in general. Third, our history has entered a new millennium, marked not only by September 11th and an increased fear of foreigners, but also by the theological and pastoral vision offered us by Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, three of whose leitmotifs determined the movement of the Congress.

This interpretation of the new millennium also explains the special pastoral character of this Congress. Yearly there are thousands of meetings about migrants and refugees, but only a few reflect on related pastoral issues. The daily mission among migrants and refugees, which likewise aims at their integral human development, is seldom something that attracts the attention of the media. This specific area of pastoral care, owing to the better known humanitarian and legal issues closely connected with it, is something that needs continual development in its practice and theology as well as publicity. The Congress was intended to be an encouragement in that direction.

These Proceedings are dedicated to those who participated in the Congress as well as those who were included in its discussions and prayer. In the first place these are migrants, foreign students, refugees, and displaced people who share the full communion of faith with us or are Christians or believers of other religions. They are not simply “objects” of pastoral care but, in the wide sense of this term, “subjects.” The Catholic faithful among them (re)build community far from home, educate their children for the future, bind up the physical

and spiritual wounds of their fellow travellers, and enrich and even revitalize the ecclesial communities that receive them. These *Proceedings* are, of course, primarily for the bishops, priests, religious and lay faithful who daily help bear the burden of their migrating brothers and sisters, those who forcefully remind us that we are a Pilgrim Church. Among them are also those whose cooperation with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities for the sake of migrants and refugees promotes the unity of the Church for which Jesus Christ prayed and offered his life. Pastoral agents who, among many activities, welcome migrants of other religions with the love of Christ should also feel included as they engage especially in that dialogue of life that assures the name of God is a source of peace.

May this record of the Fifth World Congress keep alive and encourage the development of the reflections and paths for action indicated in the excellent reflections and edifying testimonies and experiences that enriched us during its five full days. And may our efforts be inspired and formed by the Spirit of the Risen Lord, who daily calls us to begin our mission afresh from him.

ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

*Your Eminences,
Dear Brother Bishops,
Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

1. Peace be with you! It is with joy that I welcome you here today. I extend a special greeting to the President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Cardinal Stephen Fumio Hamao, and I thank him for the kind words addressed to me on your behalf. I am glad to greet the other Cardinals and the Bishops present among you, and to offer a particular welcome to our brothers and sisters from other Christian communities. On this occasion of your Fifth World Congress I also assure you of my spiritual closeness to the migrants, refugees, displaced persons and foreign students throughout the world whom you seek to assist.

The work of promoting the well-being of the many men and women who for various reasons do not live in their homelands represents a vast field for the new evangelization to which the whole Church is called. An important condition of this task is to recognize the mobility – voluntary and involuntary – of so many families today.

2. The Church continues to seek to respond to the signs of the times; a challenge which always calls for renewed pastoral commitment. Inspired by Pope Pius XII's Apostolic Constitution *Exsul Familia* and in response to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, the Pontifical Council is currently preparing an Instruction that will address the new spiritual and pastoral needs of migrants and refugees, and present the phenomenon of migration as a way of fostering dialogue, peace and the proclamation of the Gospel.

Special attention needs to be given today to the ecumenical aspect of migration, with reference to Christians not in full communion with the Catholic Church, and likewise to the interreligious dimension, with particular regard to the followers of Islam. I am confident that the Instruction will meet these requirements as well as articulate the need to promote a pastoral programme open to new developments yet always attentive to the duty of pastoral workers to collaborate fully with the local hierarchy.

3. It is in this context that the theme of your Congress was chosen: "Starting Afresh from Christ: towards a renewed pastoral care of migrants and refugees". Taking my Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* as its starting point, you intend to consider today's challenges in the light of the Word of God and the teachings of the Church, emphasizing charity and taking into special consideration the mystery of the Eucharist, particularly its celebration on Sunday. I encourage you in this task and remind you that it is not a formula that we seek but a Person, and the assurance which he gives us: "I am with you always" (*Mt 28:20*).

To this end, I affirm once again that pastoral renewal, regardless of the particular focus, "is not a matter of inventing a 'new programme'. The programme already exists: it is the plan found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition. Ultimately, it has its centre in Christ himself who is to be known, loved and imitated, so that in him we may live the life of the Trinity, and with him transform history until its fulfilment" (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 29). This is our common proclamation of Christ, which must "reach people, mould communities,

and have a deep and incisive influence in bringing Gospel values to bear in society and culture” (*ibid.*).

4. It is precisely in society and in culture that we must show respect for the dignity of man, of the migrant and of the refugee. In this regard, I once again urge States to adhere to the International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families which took effect on 1 July 2003. Similarly, I appeal to States to respect the International Treaties concerning refugees. Such protection of human persons must be guaranteed in every civil society and espoused by all Christians.

5. With gratitude for the work of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People and the support of all those who collaborate with it, I gladly share these reflections with you and encourage you in your deliberations over the next five days. To you and all those entrusted to your particular care I impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of strength and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

**ADDRESS OF H.E. STEPHEN FUMIO CARDINAL HAMAOKA
TO HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II**

Holy Father,

It is my privilege to present to you the participants of the Fifth World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees. We are about three hundred participants and include Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops, Priests and Religious, lay people engaged in the pastoral care of migrants and refugees. They include some of your closest collaborators in the Curia Romana as well as Members and Consultors of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples. The group that surely profits the most from this Congress and makes its particular contribution to it are the Representatives of the Episcopal Migration Commissions or similar structures from about 100 Local Churches throughout the world. They are closely linked to the service of religious Institutes of men and women engaged in this area, who are represented here. Many lay Associations and ecclesial Movements that contribute to the Church's vitality today and who directly or indirectly serve the cause of migrants and refugees are present with us too. We also rejoice in the participation of Fraternal Delegates from the Anglican Communion, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Lutheran World Federation, and the World Council of Churches. They deeply share our concerns in the often dramatic world of human mobility. Our efforts to work together in this field, which is inspired by the Holy Spirit - we believe - is a force that brings all followers of Jesus Christ closer to Him and to unity. Finally, we are honored with Representations of Diplomatic Missions to the Holy See who manifest the interests of their Governments in a reality that today no civil Institution can ignore and listen to the credible testimonies of pastoral workers who are daily engaged in it.

Allow me also to thank you, Most Holy Father, in the name of all migrants, refugees and itinerant people who are the concern of our Pontifical Council, for the honor conferred when you raised me to the dignity of the Cardinalate. It is an honor not only for myself personally but also for the Pontifical Council that I represent, as well as recognition for the generous day to day efforts of so many Bishops, Priests, and Pastoral Workers who are represented here.

Holy Father, we began this Congress celebrating the Eucharist at the Tomb of Peter on the Solemnity of the Dedication of the Basilicas of Saints Peter and Paul. Now we are privileged to be with the Successor of Peter, and we ask you to give us a word of wisdom and encouragement with your Apostolic Blessing as we try to fulfil the mission that the Lord has entrusted to us.

WELCOME ADDRESS

Card. Stephen Fumio *HAMAŌ*
President of the Pontifical Council for the
Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

Your Eminences
Your Excellencies
Reverend Monsignors, Fathers, Sisters and Brothers
Distinguished guests
Brothers and sisters in Christ

It is my privilege to welcome this assembly of more than three hundred people to this opening of the Fifth World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees. It is truly a *world* congress, with more than a hundred nations represented in the three hundred people present in this hall.

I wish to welcome, first of all, the Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops of the Roman Curia. Your presence is a testimony of how this special area of pastoral care enters into the concerns of the whole Church represented by your Dicasteries.

To the Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops who are members of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, as well as to the Bishops, Clergy and Religious who are its Consultors, a warm welcome. Your task is to give direction and advice to our Council as it carries out its mission on a day to day basis. May this meeting help you in this task entrusted to you by the Holy Father.

At the heart of this Congress are the Archbishops, Bishops, priests and pastoral workers representing the pastoral structures for migrants and refugees of Local Churches throughout the world. Your presence and experiences are vital to this Fifth World Congress. You are welcome. We expect that your contributions will enrich all of us here – in terms of knowledge as well as spiritual fervor -- and we hope this week together will be encouraging and enlightening for you. Many of you have sacrificed to be with us. Thank you for these efforts, especially on the part of those who have had difficulties in obtaining visas and documents. Your stories of getting to Rome are also a reminder of the daily hassle that migrants and refugees face at borders all over the world in their efforts to make a better living and even simply to survive.

Among those who contribute in a special way to the efforts of local Churches are the men and women of various religious congregations who have made service of migrants and refugees an important part of their activities, some being dedicated entirely to this service. Our Pontifical Council has often encouraged the presence of religious in this apostolate. We are happy you are represented here and grateful for the way the presence of your confreres and sisters have so often been a blessing for people on the move.

Our Congress is also privileged to have the presence of special guests in the persons of Fraternal Delegates representing the Orthodox Churches and Churches and Ecclesial Communities within the World Council of Churches. There are many good experiences of Ecumenical cooperation that have benefited refugees and migrants and brought Christian communities, separated on confessional lines, closer together. May this World Congress

strengthen the bonds of communion existing among us and be a step forward towards the unity among the disciples of Christ for which Our Lord prayed.

We welcome the Ambassadors and representatives from diplomatic missions accredited to the Holy See, members of inter-governmental organizations, and the Italian authorities. Thank you for being with us and showing the importance that questions of migrants and refugees have for those who bear the responsibility of governance in our world today.

Last but not least, a warm welcome to experts in academic fields related to our pastoral concerns as well as to representatives of associations, movements and organizations that are directly and indirectly concerned with migrants and refugees. We appreciate the need for scholarly research and discussions as well as the activities that on a day to day basis contribute to forming a culture of welcome and appreciation of the gifts that migrants and refugees can bring to a host society. May this Congress will open up ways in the future for a closer collaboration and exchange of insights.

We all make present, in some way, the 175 million international migrants and 40 million refugees and displaced people throughout the world as well as the Church's pastoral concern for them. They have a right to know Christ and experience his love for all men and women of all nations, ethnic groups and from all history. We are, if I may borrow an expression from Blessed Mother Teresa, his hands, his ears, his heart. Confident that the Lord will assist in this mission that He has entrusted to us, we go forward. To all, *buon lavoro*.

PRESENTATION OF THE CONGRESS

Card. Stephen Fumio *HAMAŌ*
President of the Pontifical Council for the
Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

Human mobility is an age-old phenomenon. From time immemorial, human beings have left their homes to look for greener pastures or more abundant game. At times, they have fled to escape the violence of nature or others' hostility. Today, the phenomenon has acquired world-wide dimensions, especially with modern-day globalization which sometimes almost pushes people to cross the frontiers of nation-states with or without authorization. Moreover, wars, violence, persecution, the violation of human rights, terrorism underlie the flight of refugees and internally displaced people. All this obviously brings with it untold suffering and pain, problems that need urgent solutions.

Today's challenges in the world of migrants and refugees will soon be discussed more extensively by Ms. Gabriella Rodriguez, UN *Rapporteur* for the Human Rights of Migrants, and by Prof. Stefano Zamagni, President of the International Catholic Migration Commission.

In this context, the Holy Mother Church cannot remain indifferent. She wants to share the joys and the grief of all migrants and refugees, there where they are, and be with them in their search for a better and safer life, worthy of being children of God. Thus, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, Member of our Pontifical Council, will present to us the pastoral challenges involved in such a complex situation.

To be able to respond adequately to these challenges, the present Congress will concentrate primarily on the pastoral aspects of the plight of migrants and refugees. This is its rationale following the four World Congresses that preceded it. The last Congress held in 1998, toward the end of the last millennium, for example, examined more closely the socio-economic and political aspects of the phenomenon.

Today's reality, including the world of migrants and refugees, is beset not just by any evil. As the Holy Father once affirmed, we are before Evil with a capital E. Against it, human forces alone, however competent or powerful they may be, will never be effective or sufficient. There is only one force that can overcome this Evil: the power of Good, the *Supreme Good*, that is, only God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This does not exempt anyone of us, individually or as a group, from doing his/her part in seeking a concrete remedy to every painful situation. It requires taking Christ as our ally, indeed the best ally, in our daily endeavour in favor of migrants and refugees, and putting all our trust in his power.

Crossing the threshold of the Third Millennium, the Holy Father accompanied us with the Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* and invited all the faithful, Bishops, Clergy and Lay, to formulate resolutions and guidelines for action, profiting from the grace received from the celebration of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. With deep wisdom, Pope John Paul II warned us not to believe that, faced with the great challenges of our time, we would find the solution in some formula. "No," he said, "we shall not be saved by a formula but by a Person" (NMI 29), Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only Saviour of the world, yesterday, today and forever, who gave the assurance that He will always be with us till the end of time (cf. Mt 28:20).

Thus, in this present Congress, in line with the Holy Father's thought, we decided to *start afresh from Christ* (cf. NMI 29) and renew in Him our pastoral programme for migrants and refugees for the coming years. "It is not ... a matter of inventing a 'new programme'" –

the Pope emphasized – because “the programme already exists: it is the plan found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition [of the Church]... It has its centre in Christ himself, who is to be known, loved and imitated, so that in him we may live the life of the Trinity, and with him transform history until its fulfilment in the heavenly Jerusalem.” This is also our programme among migrants and refugees. Obviously, it does not change with variations in times and cultures, although these must be taken into account for the sake of true dialogue and effective communication. What do change, therefore, are the *pastoral initiatives* which must be “adapted to the circumstances of each community” (*ibid.*). For this reason, a competent representative, from each of the five continents, will illustrate to us a more detailed regional picture of the phenomenon of migrants and refugees. This is because it is ultimately in the local Churches “that specific features of a detailed pastoral plan can be identified – goals and methods, formation and enrichment of the people involved, the search for the necessary resources – which will enable the proclamation of Christ to reach people, mould communities and have a deep and incisive influence in bringing Gospel values to bear in society and culture.” (*ibid.*).

Thus, we shall “start afresh from Christ” by looking at society and culture according to the vision of the Church, and also by recalling its teachings regarding human mobility. For the first aspect we shall be aided by Cardinal Paul Poupard, President of the Pontifical Council for Culture, while for the second we shall have the assistance of the Secretary of our Dicastery, Archbishop Agostino Marchetto. Then we shall study the Church’s vision and guidelines for ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue, specifically in relation to the world of human mobility. The former will be presented by Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, and the latter by Archbishop Pier Luigi Celata, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue. The Christian view will be enriched with statements of the Fraternal Delegates representing the Anglican Communion, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches. We hope that this will mark an increasing ecumenical collaboration in the sector of migrants and refugees that will contribute to the realization of full unity among Christians, the will of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We shall also “start afresh from Christ” by staking everything on charity. As Pope John Paul stated, “if we have truly started out anew from the contemplation of Christ, we must learn to see him especially in the faces of those with whom he himself wished to be identified: ‘I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me’ (Mt 25: 35-37).” This is not just a reminder of charity, but a page of Christology.

There is a special presence of Christ in the poor that requires “the Church to make a preferential option for them” (NMI 49). Of course, we know that the poor today are countless: the hungry, the illiterate, the sick, the homeless, but also those threatened by despair, lack of meaning in their lives, fear of being abandoned in old age, the marginalized, those who are discriminated against. Many forms of poverty can easily be found in the world of migrants and refugees, too. If only we can make them feel “at home” in our Christian communities!

Yet, the aforementioned page of Christology means that “no one can be excluded from our love, since ‘through his Incarnation the Son of God has united himself in some fashion with every person’” (GS 22, NMI 49). If we keep this in our minds and hearts, then we can dream of a new world that is more Christian and fraternal, more welcoming in solidarity, more just, free and peaceful.

To help us reflect on how “to start afresh from Christ” towards this goal, we will listen carefully to the presentations of Fr. Albert Vanhoye, SI, Professor *emeritus* at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya, outgoing President of SECAM,

and Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, outgoing Secretary for State Relations of the Secretariat of State.

Finally, how can we ever think of “starting afresh from Christ” without contemplating the mystery especially of the Holy Eucharist, sacramental sign of the fulfillment of the Lord’s promise that he will be with us always and tangible proof of the infinite love of God who is our bread, nourishment and the seed of our resurrection? Moreover, Liturgy and Sunday Eucharist are a constant living memory of the truth on which our faith is founded: Christ’s resurrection on that “first day of the week” (Mk 16:2,9; Lk 24:1; Jn 20:1). By the celebration of the weekly Passover, the Church will continue to show to every generation ‘the true fulcrum of history, to which the mystery of the world’s origin and its final destiny leads’ (*Dies Domini*, 2)” (cf. NMI 35).

Thus, every week, the Sunday Eucharist “gathers Christians together as God’s family round the table of the Word and Bread of Life” (NMI 36). This means that migrants and refugees, together with all the other members of the Church, are brothers and sisters in Christ, one sole family of God’s children. They, and all of us, need to experience this fact.

To delve into this sublime Eucharistic mystery and contemplate its divine beauty, Card. Geraldo Majella Agnelo, Archbishop of São Salvador da Bahia, in Brazil, will speak to us about the Eucharist as Bread and Word of Life, our Hope, while Bishop Renato Ascencio León, President of the Mexican Episcopal Commission for Human Mobility, will present it as the sign and instrument of the unity of the whole Christian community.

By his death and resurrection, Christ not only redeemed mankind but also transformed the whole of creation. The Risen Lord, present in the Eucharist, is in fact the seed, the promise and the assurance of new heavens and new earth. In this regard, Cardinal Godfried Danneels, Archbishop of Malines-Bruxelles will be our guide.

We, however, “start afresh from Christ” not from zero, but from very concrete and positive experiences all over the world, which will be shared with us by the participants in the daily round table dialogue. To them we are particularly grateful because it is they who, day after day, roll up their sleeves and respond to the needs, material and spiritual, of migrants and refugees.

Then it will be your turn to share your experiences, give your suggestions and come up with recommendations, plans and projects for the future in the daily workshops. This will all contribute to our final document.

As this Fifth World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees opens, allow me to say with the Holy Father that “ours is a time of continual movement which often leads to restlessness, with the risk of ‘doing for the sake of doing’. We must resist this temptation by trying ‘to be’ before trying ‘to do’” (NMI 15). I myself have no hesitation in saying that all pastoral initiatives must be set in relation to holiness, which is an objective grace offered to all the baptized, as Vatican II stressed. In the context of pastoral planning, this means that holiness must be the standard of ordinary Christian living and must imbue the whole life of the Christian community and the domestic sanctuary of the Christian family (cf. NMI 30-31). Only in this way can we hope that the responses, which we will try to formulate during these five days to the challenges offered by migrants and refugees, will be effective. Only then will our pastoral plans and programmes truly contribute to the realization of God’s design of love for mankind, a single family of brothers and sisters, and we can truly say that the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven.

THE PRESENT SITUATION OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION WORLD-WIDE

Dr. Gabriela *Rodríguez Pizarro*
UN Rapporteur for the Human Rights of Migrants

On 6th August 1999, the United Nations Commission for Human Rights approved Resolution 1999/44 in which it was decided to appoint, for a period of 3 years, a Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights of Migrants.

In the resolutions that brought this mandate into being and promoted it (1999/44, 2000/48, 2001/52, 2001/53 and 2001/56) the Commission charged me to establish criteria and to develop strategies and recommendations for the promotion and application of policies in defence of the human rights of migrants. At the same time, I was advised to bear in mind the bilateral and regional negotiations that particularly concern the return and reinsertion of those migrants who hold no documents or whose position is irregular.

With respect to the international norms that, as Rapporteur, it is my job to promote, an international legal framework of protection for human rights exists to regulate the obligations of States in promoting and protecting those rights. This normative framework includes all international and regional agreements on human rights according to which such rights are inherent to each individual and, consequently, to migrants as well, be their position regular or irregular.

Although these international norms set minimum standards of rights for all people, we must nonetheless congratulate ourselves on the coming into effect of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. This Convention represents a step forward in the promotion and protection of the rights of this group of people who are so vulnerable to the violation of their human rights, be their position regular or irregular.

The rights of migrants in a globalised world

Migration is a phenomenon inherent to globalisation. Today, a greater number of people than ever before live outside their native countries. According to recent statistics from the year 2000, 175 million people live outside the countries of their birth. Of these, some 158 million are migrants, approximately 16 million are refugees, and 900,000 are asylum seekers. Globalisation affects the nature and impact of migration; news and images travel at great speed and provide information – not always accurate – on economic opportunities in other parts of the world.

There exists an undeniable tendency to implement restrictive immigration policies, limiting migrants' access to social services. Nonetheless migration, including irregular migration, continues to grow throughout the world. In host countries, the great migratory flows have been accompanied by prejudice, at times violent prejudice, against the migrants. Many citizens see migrants as a source of threat and competition in the work market, as possessors and

propagators of a strange culture and, more generally, as foreigners who must be kept under control.

In this globalised world, information spreads almost instantaneously and is easily available. This has doubtless advantages, as new communications technology can be used as a means to protect the human rights of migrants. Unfortunately, communications technology, including Internet, can also serve to disseminate racist and xenophobic propaganda.

Furthermore, the communications media have given a distorted view of the effects of migration. On some occasions, migrants are charged with responsibility for the collapse of healthcare, education or social security systems in the host countries. Such perspectives, and others similar, have led to violent reactions against migrant peoples in many regions.

The ageing population in the industrialised world is giving rise to a substantial increase in the demand for work in those nations. At the same time, the countries of origin of migration depend on workers' remittances as never before in history, in order to maintain basic needs and to encourage, either directly or indirectly, investment and development. Thus, migration has become a vital question both for the countries of origin and of destination; a situation which should encourage international co-operation in this field. The protection of the human rights of migrants must become an integral part of binational, international and regional dialogue on migration strategy.

Irregular migrants, the trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants

In many cases migrants have lost their lives in attempting to cross frontiers illegally and, in some cases, there has been an excessive use of force by officers of the immigration police; there have also been deaths by drowning, hypothermia, dehydration and asphyxiation.

From the point of view of the human rights of migrants, it is important to underline two concepts in the context of the international migration phenomenon: the trafficking in human beings, and the illegal smuggling of migrants or clandestine crossing of frontiers. According to article 3 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, which complements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, the trafficking of human beings is defined as the capture, transporting, transfer, acceptance or reception of human beings, with recourse to threats, to the use of force or other forms of coercion, to abduction, to fraud, to deception, to the abuse of power or of a situation of vulnerability, or to the offer or acceptance of payment or benefits in order to obtain the consent of a person who holds authority over another, with the aim of exploitation. Such exploitation may include, at the least, the exploitation of prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour and work, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the extraction of organs.

Moreover, article 3 of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, which also complements the above Convention, defines the illegal smuggling of migrants as the facilitation of the illegal entry of a person into a State of which that person is not a national or a permanent resident, with the aim of directly or indirectly obtaining financial reward or other material benefit. The illegal crossing of frontiers – for which migrants pay large sums of money, mortgaging their own and their families' possessions in their countries of

origin – often gives rise to fraud and subjection to debt which, in their turn, facilitate the expansion of the trafficking and smuggling of migrants.

According to information of the International Organisation for Migrants (IOM), around 700 thousand people are victims of trafficking in the world. I have also noted with concern how the channels of irregular migration are used by unaccompanied minors. In countries with a low level of development, women and young people, as well as children, are particularly vulnerable to these trafficking networks.

It is extremely difficult to classify the migrants who use the channels of irregular migration, because they travel and are detained, judged and sentenced with identities and nationalities that are not their own and that their own families do not recognise. Many people turn to the smuggling networks in order to obtain false passports or visas, clearly putting themselves in a high-risk situation of severe violations to their human rights. For example, some unaccompanied minors are attracted by these offers, yet they do not possess an exact knowledge of the risks and vulnerability they face. Thus, they are easily exposed to abuse which, in many cases, can lead to sexual exploitation, death, or the abuse of members of their families.

Unfortunately, transnational organised crime works with great mobility at the international level, and has become one of the factors facilitating modern forms of human rights violations. National and international legislation must bear in mind the levels of impunity which these criminal networks enjoy, in the specific case of the trafficking of human beings and, more generally, in the context of international migration.

Migrant women

The problem of violence against migrant women, being a particularly vulnerable group, is of great importance. Female migrant workers, because of their double marginalisation both as women and as migrants, may easily find themselves in a situation of vulnerability to violence and abuse, both in the domestic sphere and at work (see E/CN.4/1998/74/Add.1). As I indicated in my first report (E/CN.4/2000/82), these female workers predominate in the informal labour market where they perform domestic, industrial and agricultural duties, or work in the service sector.

Women who migrate can end up in situations of exploitation, violence and abuse. The granting of sexual favours in exchange for an opportunity to transit, a frequent practice at a number of frontiers, is just one form of the persecution on the basis of gender to which migrant women are often subject (E/CN.4/2002/82).

In many countries, large numbers of women are enslaved in the sex industry and it is particularly worrying to observe how a considerable proportion of them are underage. Furthermore, they are penalised when found in irregular situations, despite the indignities they may have suffered at the hands of the international networks. I am also concerned at the plight of women employed as “*entreteneurs*”; they sign a contract in their country of origin but, on arrival in the host country, are immediately subjected to degrading sexual employment which was not, of course, stipulated in the original contract. I have also expressed my concern over the position of women enlisted for marriage to men they do not know but who live in countries with a high level of economic development. The issuing of visas to these women and their entry into the country of destination takes place in the context of regular migratory flows.

During the four years I have exercised my mandate, I have given particular attention to the position of migrant women in domestic employment. I have brought the spotlight to bear on this sector at all gatherings in which I have participated, indicating that the recognition of such work is fundamental for the protection of their rights. I have emphasised the problem of the sub-strata of human rights violations committed against these workers, and the need to create accessible mechanisms to protect domestic workers and enable them to denounce abuses. The violations of the human rights of domestic workers take place in the private sphere and this makes it difficult to denounce them or even discuss them, because the power of the boss or employer is absolute. Often this power becomes even greater, when the employer holds the domestic worker's documents as a means of coercion and pressure.

Migrant women represent some 50% of those who send remittances to their countries of origin. In Asia, women constitute the majority of workers abroad. In Sri Lanka in 1968, 30% of those working abroad were women; this percentage rose to 65% in the year 1999. In the same country, remittances last year passed the mark of 1,000 million US dollars. (Ndioro Ndiaye, IOM 7/3/2002). In the same document it says that in the Philippines women constitute 70% of the total number of workers overseas and that in 2001 they generated an income of 6,200 million US dollars. The question upon which we must reflect is this: what cost in human rights must migrant women pay, as individuals and in the family, in order to generate an economic benefit in their countries of origin?

Unaccompanied minors

In the course of my work, I have noted three situations of particular concern regarding unaccompanied minors. The first involves cases of the detention of unaccompanied minors. On this subject the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention during its visit to the United Kingdom stated that "unaccompanied minors should never be detained" (see E/CN.4/1999/63/Add.3, para. 37). In a report to the Commission for Human Rights (E/CN.4/2002/94 and Add.1) I documented the alarming situation of the expulsion of minors at international frontiers, with a consequent risk to their well-being and physical integrity.

According to article 2 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of Children, States parties must respect the rights laid down in that Convention and must ensure they are applied to all children under their jurisdiction, without distinction and independently of race; colour; sex; language; religion; political or other opinions; national, ethnic and social origin; economic position; physical handicaps; birth or any other condition of the child, of his or her parents, or of his or her legal representatives. Under the terms of article 3 (1), States parties undertake – in all measures concerning children in the care of public or private social welfare institutions, the courts, administrative authorities or legal bodies – to give absolute priority to the higher interests of the child.

I have also noted the paradoxical situation that comes about in States who consider the children of migrants born in their territory as nationals, but who do not authorise the legal domicile of the parents. In such cases, the State denies its own national – the child – the right to live legally with his or her parents in his or her country.

Administrative detention

The legal grounds for the administrative detention of migrants are often too broad and discretionary, they are not always legally established and their terms are not always respected. In addition to this, there is often no automatic mechanism for judicial or administrative examination, as well as a lack of other procedural guarantees such as access to interpreters and lawyers. Moreover, the right to be informed on the reasons for detention and on the means of appeal is frequently restricted, as is the right to inform consular representatives or embassies of the countries concerned.

Sometimes legislation and its practical application can prolong, perhaps indefinitely, administrative detention, even though the structures created or used for such detention are not equipped for the purpose. Within such structures there are no facilities for or access to education, recreational activities or adequate medical services.

It frequently happens that immigrants without documentation and deprived of their liberty receive no adequate legal, medical, social and psychological assistance or protection, either from the host countries or from their own consular representatives.

Furthermore, migrants are deprived of their liberty without consideration for their personal antecedents or condition. Victims of the trafficking in human beings are considered as criminals, and are detained and deported for infractions or crimes committed as an inevitable consequence of the violations they have endured. Often there are no specific provisions concerning the detention of children and other vulnerable groups, which means that they are often held in conditions that violate their basic rights and prejudice their physical and mental health.

Refuge and migration

I feel it is important to analyse certain aspects of the links that exist between refuge and migration. Our analysis must revolve around two central axes: first, the protection of the human rights of migrants in the context of migratory management and, second, the position of refugees who do not benefit from the protection ordained by the Convention of 1951 and the Protocol of 1967.

The dividing lines and distinctions between migrants and refugees become ever more complex when we consider the problem of the hundreds or thousands of people who reach the country of destination, request refugee status, and have it denied them. These people remain abandoned and unprotected, often in a situation of irregular or clandestine migration, broadening the so-called “grey areas” which are the result of the ineffectual implementation by certain States of the 1951 Convention and of other international obligations. In this situation, the unrecognised refugees find themselves vulnerable and exposed to the dangers that afflict irregular migrants in general.

Final observations

In considering the phenomenon of contemporary migration we find aspects which, if analysed from a purely economic point of view, may be seen as positive, such as the income generated for the countries of origin of migration. Nonetheless, if we do not want to forget the human dimension of the phenomenon, we must analyse these aspects while bearing in mind the consequences of the lack of development at the national and local level in the countries of origin, of the corruption which gives rise to abuse and social

exclusion, and of the disinformation of people who want to migrate and work overseas but who are unaware of the risks associated with irregular or clandestine migration.

Indeed, if the countries of origin of migration only consider the importance and necessity of the income generated by migrants' remittances, without considering the need to protect their human rights and those of their families, we will often be faced with situations that increase migrants' vulnerability to violations of their human rights.

Furthermore, today more than ever, in the context of the globalisation or transnationalisation of organised crime, we must consider where the true interest of these networks that often act with complete impunity actually lies. It is paradoxical that countries with a high level of development should need a workforce, not only for dignified employment, but also for illegal activities such as slave labour, degrading jobs, forced prostitution, child pornography and trade in organs, among others. This has created a true transnational market, a consumer niche where those without documents are called "illegal" and become victims of trafficking and its criminal networks. Women and unaccompanied minors are particularly vulnerable to these trafficking networks.

Within the globalised world, we cannot avoid thinking about the violations of migrants' human rights, I have said as much on various occasions, respecting the human rights of migrants is not contradictory to the sovereignty of States. Migratory management in full respect of rights would generate positive results at an individual level, as well as nationally and internationally.

It is of interest to me, as Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights of Migrants, that there should be awareness and profound commitment on the part of the Church and non-governmental organisations to promote the human rights of migrants. It is fundamental that work be undertaken in various areas of the migratory phenomenon such as:

- Organising seminars and courses on human rights and educational workshops to cover the entire process of migratory management and aiming to provide information and training in the field of human rights for both national authorities and communities of potential irregular migrants.

- Promoting the use of mechanisms for disseminating information and denouncing abuses, using the instruments for the defence of human rights signed by countries at the regional and international level.

- Sensitising the communications media in order to eliminate the use of the racist and xenophobic stereotypes that feed and foment the violation of the human rights of migrants.

- Promoting the visibility of human multi-ethnicity and respect for differences of all kinds: religious, cultural, social, ethnic, of gender, and of sexual orientation. It is necessary to perceive differences and make them known, but not as disadvantages or forms of inferiority. In this context, the specific nature of migrants' contribution to the host societies must be recognised.

Finally, in my 25 years of work with refugees and with displaced and migrant peoples, I have seen how their categorisation and de-categorisation depends in many cases on political agreements which, once signed, are put to one side and shrouded by a veil of apathy while circumstances evolve that separate migrants from the humanitarian protection of the international community, leaving them at the mercy of repressive situations. We are being faced with a daily-repeated phenomenon; deaths on frontiers in all regions of the world, abuses in gaols and detention centres, racism and xenophobia, work that

enslaves, subjugation to debt, along with many other aspects, paint a daily pattern of the here and now for millions of migrants whose hope is that we extend them full protection as dignified human beings.

I would like to pay recognition to the work done by the Pastoral Care of Human Mobility, the Houses of the Migrant (order of Scalabrinians), Caritas, the Catholic Commission for Migration, the Catholic Relief Service, the Carmelite Sisters, the Adoring Sisters, the Sisters of Mother Theresa of Calcutta, and many others. Their efforts in favour of the human rights of migrants give faithful testimony of the commitment of organisations belonging to the Catholic Church.

I urge the Church to continue supporting migrants, within a context of solidarity, macro-ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue. We are witnessing events in which thousands of people – men, women and children – drown as they attempt to flee poverty, war and hunger. This must bring us, within the very bosom of the Church, to reflect on the need to respond to the phenomenon of migration in a way that does not just involve controlling frontiers.

The Catholic Church must strengthen its commitment to the poorest of the earth and accompany them, especially at the present time when xenophobia and racism are threatening millions of human beings.

Thank-you very much.

REFUGEES AND INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION ANALYSIS AND ACTION PROPOSALS

Prof. Stefano Zamagni
President of ICMC, Geneva

One of the most intricate “vexatae quaestiones” of our times regarding asylum policies has been the accusation that asylum seekers are in fact economic migrants who take advantage of current legislation. Consequently, many voices are increasingly being heard, proposing that the classic distinction between refugees and economic migrants should be considered as superseded. Albania is interesting in this respect, as it is a country that has generated both genuine asylum seekers and economic migrants. Recent experience would suggest that the distinction between the two categories still makes sense, and should therefore be maintained at the level of policy-making. Indeed, it is a mistake to compare poverty and insecurity. Fleeing hunger is not the same as fleeing persecution. Confusion between the two has put the issue in the public spotlight. The refusal of governments in the North to accept asylum applications on the grounds that such requests come from people who have escaped from their country in search of “the good life” at the expense of others has led to a crisis in the institution of political asylum. As is well known, this institution is a typically European invention that goes back to the early 1950s. However, at the same time, the temptation should be resisted to consider refugees as a separate case in themselves, merely due to the special legal status they enjoy or the particular nature of the problems that affect them. The argument defended here is that refugees and asylum seekers should be considered as an integral part of the new diaspora of migrants, but a part that has its own specific nature and as such warrants special attention.

As UNHCR has stated: “For many years flows of migrants and refugees were considered as moderate phenomena, and the task of distinguishing between them never posed great problems for nations... Nowadays, refugees are increasingly part of a complex migratory phenomenon in which political, ethnic, economic, environmental and ethical facts combine together to bring about population movements”. (“Managing migration in the wider Europe”, UNHCR, Strasbourg, October 1998). Along the same lines, a recent UN report states: “Many people are persuaded to leave their countries out of a mixture of fear, hope and aspiration that may be difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish”. (*Technical symposium on international migration and development*, The Hague, July 1998, UNFPA, New York, 1999, p.70).

As Crisp appropriately wrote (1999), the majority of refugees in Western Europe and North America inhabit a heterogeneous social universe, experiencing life situations in common with migrants - from their own and other countries - who are not refugees. In terms of social networks it is therefore more worthwhile to focus attention on this community as a whole, rather than on those who have been admitted as refugees. This is also due to the fact that a substantial number of asylum seekers are people who have already spent some time in the country to which they are applying, as students, diplomats, businessmen, illegal immigrants or visitors. Moreover, it should be pointed out that the global networks and transnational communities that refugees belong to do not only consist of refugees. On the contrary, they include a wide variety of categories of migrant, which helps to explain why in practice certain asylum seekers obtain refugee status rather than others.

Indeed, scant attention is paid to the role played by social networks in facilitating, sustaining and directing the movements of asylum seekers. How can this lapse be explained? The primary reason is that debate on asylum in Europe has been polarised. On the one hand are those who cynically dismiss asylum seekers as cunning people who seek to take advantage of current legislation, and on the other, defenders of the cause of asylum who aim to demonstrate that asylum seekers are solely motivated by escaping from certain and immediate danger. And it should be acknowledged that even asylum seekers who deserve refugee status have clear preferences regarding the place in which they finally end up, and that their exit from their countries of origin is often facilitated by the above-mentioned transnational social networks.

The second reason is that research, whether theoretical or empirical, on asylum seekers is woefully scarce. We know very little about how such people arrive at the decision to leave their countries; what information is available when the decision is taken; how the journey is funded; or whether or not they have previously established contacts in the country of arrival. The fact is that while information on so-called economic migrants is currently plentiful and above all credible, the same may not be said for the migratory strategies pursued by asylum seekers. In particular, even though they play a key role in the process of migration for reasons of asylum, the specific ways in which the transnational social networks operate are unknown. Just think of their role in transmitting information via informal channels and mobilising the necessary financial resources to leave the country. How do asylum seekers manage to obtain the ready cash to pay for a journey which has been getting increasingly expensive as the costs of illegal migration rise? Do these funds reach the would-be refugee from remittances sent by members of the migrant diaspora, or do the latter directly pay the people traffickers and their local agents to enable the flight of their relatives, friends and fellow ethnic group members? And how do the social network manage to provide help in psychologically and financially supporting them once they have been granted refugee status? We know that in Western Europe refugees are excluded from regular job markets and social security systems. What do they live off and how do they get by when they reach their final destination? It is immediately obvious that these are vital questions, yet empirical evidence on the points raised is largely non-existent. We do know quite a lot about what happens when asylum seekers arrive at the border of the potential host country, but on what happens before and after that we have no idea.

This is an extremely serious gap. To appreciate the situation, consider the following. When the number of asylum applications began to increase in Western European countries in the early 1980s, states immediately responded by introducing more restrictive practices. Such measures included introduction of entry visas; application of the safe third country and safe country of origin rules; interpretation of the 1951 Geneva Convention so as to exclude from its sphere of application those persecuted by non-governmental parties; detention, sometimes for long periods, of asylum seekers in special camps; and the introduction of readmission agreements, on the basis of which asylum seekers are sent back to previous transit countries. And so on. (Crisp, 1999).

What is the result? That by opportunely activating the channels of transnational social networks, a significant number of asylum seekers have been able to overcome the obstacles set up by European states. However, at the same time, the success thereby achieved on the refugee front has led various governments to strengthen repressive and restrictive measures, sometimes to the extent of violating international legal requirements. The impact of such measures has been well described by Crisp and Van Hear (1998). In addition to deterioration of the well-being of asylum seekers and refugees, what particularly stands out is that the “refugee problem” as such has been eliminated and become an aspect of the wider issue of law and order. On the one hand, this has led to a steady decline in standards of protection for refugees and, on the other, money-making opportunities have increased for another

international community – professional people traffickers. As Salt (1997) has clearly pointed out, what's new is that migration has now become a highly lucrative business. But in a world in which asylum seekers may only cross the borders of Europe or North America with the assistance of people traffickers, the business in question is one in which the “customer” undoubtedly has no freedom of choice.

Since the 1980s, a new model for ways of considering categories of migrants has emerged. While migrant workers have seen extension of their social and political rights, asylum seekers have been subjected to increasingly restrictive policies. Undoubtedly, this is partly due to a rise in the number of asylum seekers. But the main reason is in fact another one. On the one hand, refugees do not serve the labour markets of host countries; on the other, since asylum seekers do not have the opportunity to organise themselves collectively, they are unable to exercise the political pressure and the advocacy role that is possible for other kinds of migrants. The trend towards steady reduction of the rights and benefits of asylum seekers has been encouraged by the rhetoric surrounding their image as unlawful immigrants or bogus migrant workers. This conceptualisation of the asylum issue has produced two consequences. Firstly, it has legitimised erosion of commitments towards asylum seekers. The view is that if the majority of them are not real refugees but economic migrants, laws for refugees and asylum systems might as well be abolished because they no longer serve the purpose for which they were created. The second consequence has been to depict restrictive policies as non-discriminatory from a racial point of view, so as not to be criticised for being politically correct. In this way, it has been possible to “conclude” inter-ethnic issues without bringing in those who discriminate on the grounds of race.

Having said this, how is it possible to reconcile immigration controls and protection of refugees? How is it possible to maintain together the principle of national sovereignty, which is expressed in a nation's capacity to control its borders, and respect for the human rights of asylum seekers? What are the main objectives that a border control policy generally aims at? Undoubtedly maintenance of law and order and crime prevention, but also protection of national labour markets and housing. Then there is the huge issue of defending the welfare system from the risk of financial non-sustainability. To achieve these objectives, which in themselves are legitimate, increasingly stringent admission regulations have been introduced. And what has been the outcome? On the one hand, to thwart - and in practice abolish – exercise of the right of free movement of persons and, on the other to foster a veritable industry specialised in people trafficking. And this has occurred in such a way that the legitimate demand of nations to maintain sovereign jurisdiction over their citizens has ended up endangering international protection of the right of persons to leave their own country. (See Vedsted-Hansen, 1999).

Over the last twenty years, while the awareness of various elements of civil society - especially non-governmental organisations - of the importance of ensuring the rights of all citizens to leave and return to their own countries has increased, states have made it more difficult to fulfil this right by raising various types of barrier to discourage asylum seekers. This position strongly prevailed at the UN Conference on Territorial Asylum in 1977, during which the sovereign right of nations to grant or refuse asylum was affirmed. (Goodwin-Gill, 1996). Yet, international obligations, deriving from international law, place limits on the power of a state to exclude non-citizens. If this were not so, what would be the sense of the 1951 Geneva Convention which confirms that refugee status neither derives nor depends on any formal recognition by a state, but rather on the fact that a person comes within the scope of application of article 1?

Indeed, article 1 states: “[A refugee is someone who] owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country”. It is to be noted that

this definition restricts the scope of the concept of refugee to those who are compelled to leave their homeland, leaving aside the specific cause of the flight. Neither did the New York Protocol of 1967 change the situation, although it did serve to remove the so-called geographical reservation, which limited application of the Geneva Convention to refugees from Eastern Europe. In 1969, in Addis Ababa, the OAU (Organisation of African Unity) included a broader definition of the term refugee, precisely to take account of the situation of African countries. In 1984 the Cartagena Colloquium (Colombia) ended up including “massive violation of human rights” among the causes of flight. However, these innovations have never been accepted by countries in the North (Iovino, 1999). Moreover, what importance should be given to article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which expressly recognises each person’s right to request asylum?

As we can see, it is not easy to resolve such a dilemma, but it is also clear that it is not possible to remain in this kind of legislative limbo. The way forward is to come up with asylum procedures, quickly if possible, that fulfil the role of real, specific, international regulations. As the UNHCR has reiterated on several occasions, because the Geneva Convention does not stipulate the type of procedure to follow in determining refugee status, each state has adopted those procedures that it considers most suitable for its administrative and constitutional structure. This explains the anarchy that still reigns in the sector today. An interesting example that well illustrates the state of play is, on the one hand, the approval of standards by the European Union to speed up asylum procedures and, on the other, the affirmation that national restrictions by member states are fully compatible with such standards!

The crux of the matter is which measures should be adopted to reconcile immigration controls with the need, which brooks no further delay, to protect the rights of refugees?

A first point to make is that while the introduction of entry visas may meet the requirements of controlling migration flows for work or reuniting families, it certainly has negative effects on potential refugees insofar as no country has ever introduced a system of *visas for refugees*.

Secondly, the direct and indirect costs of tightening up control measures should be weighed up to avoid adverse effects. Insofar as immigration controls effectively block access to asylum procedures, ad hoc measures must be provided for asylum seekers.

Thirdly, in revising asylum procedures, the imperatives of efficiency and fairness should be balanced. In particular, verification methods that violate the personal autonomy, and above all the human dignity, of asylum seekers should be avoided. For example, guidelines and action protocols should take account of gender awareness and the specific cultural background of the people concerned.

Fourthly, the benefits of the subsidiary protection scheme should encompass all those who, while not within the scope of criteria laid down by the 1951 Geneva Convention, are nevertheless in need of international protection. This refers to people who flee the indiscriminate effects of violence and the social disorder it entails, even if the violence and disorder stem from non-governmental agents. The standards to be recognised for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection should be the same as those recognised for those who enjoy refugee status under the terms of the Geneva Convention (UNHCR, 2002).

Fifthly, a formal procedure for determining refugee status is the best tool for distinguishing refugees from other migrants. In this way, justice is rendered to those who are genuinely entitled to receive refugee status and, at the same time, states are shielded from the arrival of undesirable, and unplanned, arrivals.

Sixthly, the issue of return for those whose asylum applications have been rejected should be tackled. The main problem is that some countries of origin do not cooperate at all in facilitating the return of their nationals. In such cases, those who have been refused refugee status end up falling into the hands of people traffickers. Therefore, the principle of non-

refoulement should be made operative: during the period in which verifications are carried out to define their legal status, asylum seekers should be considered as presumed refugees, with all that this entails.

Finally, in order to discourage so-called asylum shopping, which leads to injustices as well as inefficiency, rules must be defined for allocating responsibility to states which must decide on attribution of refugee status. Regarding Europe, the Dublin Convention of 1990 (which came into force on 1/9/1997) adopted the principle of exclusive responsibility: for each asylum application submitted by a non-EU resident, only one state should be made responsible for examining the request.

**THE SITUATION AND CHALLENGES OF THE PASTORAL CARE OF
MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES
IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

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The Asia-Pacific Story of Sweat and Tears of People on the Move

The phenomenon of migration in the Asia and Pacific has been in the past, often associated with adventurism and looking for the good life outside one's own land and peoples. But today it has taken on new but frightening and painful dimensions. This has been the result of a number of very complex and diverse forces that are radically affecting almost every aspect of society and all communities in the world today. There is a growing awareness today, that there exists an intimate relationship between the impact on the People on the Move and the growing power of process of globalisation. It is bringing along with it very vital and crucial alterations to both the human person and human communities. Migration as seen from the Asia-Pacific perspective is beginning to become a stark picture of cries of anguish rather than one of experiencing a fullness of life. The world of People on the Move is the heart-rending mosaic of the countless stories of broken families, inhuman conditions in prisons, dehumanising treatment in detentions centres, unhealthy refugee camps and dangers and hardships faced by women and children trafficked for prostitution and forced labour. This picture does not in any way reflect, the emergence of a civil and civilised society but sad to say, the emergence of a new culture of death.

What is even more frightening is our conviction that these are just symptomatic of a deeper malaise that is gradually infecting every level of society. Various forces in society are causing serious damage to the very foundations on the society today, by the gradual and subtle erosion of the pillars of our civilisational norms and heritage and our religio-cultural values and ways of life. When people move, they are uprooted from the very environment that gave them life's essential meanings often associated with self-dignity, self-identity and a sense of belonging to a community. Thus the People on the Move; the migrants, the refugees, internally displaced persons, victims of trafficking and even the victims of mass tourism are the new pawns of the liberalised market and the States that move labour to meet profit targets, as if they were commodities. Market driven economies that promote free-market and liberalisation of trade and services has no place for People on the Move, they are mere pawns to be moved. People in desperate situations are in search of their dignity, and seek their rights to food, shelter, education, health and freedom but are denied to them. They as human persons and as families are marginalised and thus unable to participate participating fully in all the plenty that God has created for the good of the whole human family.

Over the centuries the peoples of the Asia-Pacific have considered their land sacred and people have been struggling and trying to live in relative peace and harmony both among themselves and with others and with nature. There has been continuity and a sense of permanency. Today, not only are millions of people forced to move out for various reasons but that they can no longer be rooted in a permanent place once associated with the sense of the sacred. Their land was closely affiliated to their identity both as individuals and as a

community. Not only the firm ground below them is giving way and that their very life is being threatened by the forces of homogenising globalisation. Now their cultural identities are also being threatened especially, with their dislocation from their traditional homelands, as a result of aggressive land acquisitions by governments and business corporations, especially of the land of tribal and indigenous communities. They are ready to move for economic reasons but in the process, they realise that they have to make sacrifices that will bring radical changes to their core meaning in life.

Leaving home as migrants and refugees, has not been a joy but has brought along many sorrows and pains. The International Labour Organisation has placed the number Asian migrant workers at 15 million. Meanwhile, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees disclosed that it is taking care of 7,458,500 refugees, asylum-seekers, returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Asia. Over the years the numbers of refugees and internally displaced peoples has grown. The Church in Asia is very aware of the realities of the People on the Move. We know we cannot be silent witnesses to this modern day human tragedy, and close our eyes and walk away on the other side. In other countries, the problems related to trafficking are emerging and is linked to the increasing numbers of those involved in illegal drugs and prostitution. This is basically due to unemployment and loss of traditional rural agriculture, local wars and conflicts and rise of organised crime syndicates in the Region. It seems strange that some of the more Developed countries in the Region have some of the most draconian laws regarding the undocumented migrants and least hospitable towards refugees.

The sad plight of domestic workers, mainly women from both South and South-East Asia to foreign countries continue to be a source of serious concern. The lack of proper laws and procedures for recruitment and employment often makes them vulnerable and subject to various forms of abuse. There is also the increase in the number of contract labourers, who have been cheated by Recruitment Agencies. They charge exorbitant fees but do not offer a certain permanency of contract and regular wages that will enable them to work to repay their original fees. Thus unpaid debts bring untold misery even to the rest of the family, sometimes resulting in suicides and serious disruption of family life. Workers in search of a better life outside their own countries, ironically put themselves in very difficult situations and unable to get out of the vicious cycle of poverty.

The Challenges for the Church in Asia-Pacific – From Fear to Solidarity with Migrants and Refugees

It has always been assumed that the priority of the Local Church is to look after its Catholic faithful and see to their pastoral and other needs. Being a minority Church in the Region, we are as a community of the People of God often struggling to maintain our parish structures and services. At the same time, we are also involved in the many educational and health services for the members of society, who happen to be our own citizens and have thus a responsibility to them, as well. Unfortunately, many of our traditional educational and health services conducted by the Church are being market-driven and profit-oriented and thus have little to offer in terms of its contact with them, much less offer their services.

It is sometimes presumed that Catholics a minority in most of our countries, are unable to reach out effectively to those People on the Move who happen to be people of other faiths and cultures. In the case of migrant contract workers, most of them are from a lower socio-economic and educational status and thus few in the Church would want to be working in close contact with them. There is also the risk of being associated with them, since many of them are undocumented and would not like to face the displeasure of the civil and political authorities. It is also not just our attitude of indifference and fear of the foreigner but also fear of the authorities that prevents us from moving as Church to those on the margins of our very own societies and nations.

It is obvious that if we are talking about being in solidarity with the People on the Move, we are working against the tide of both global and local trends within the Church and in our own societies. Thus our reasons for our involvement with the marginalised People on the Move must be clear. The call for a serious commitment has to come from a firm belief that our services to our neighbours in need, is indeed a faith response. This is only possible, if all the members of the People of God grow to the awareness that Pastoral Care of People of other Faiths and visitors from other countries, is also an integral dimension of the vocation of the People of God.

Commitment to our Vocation

It is in this context that we can see the wisdom of our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, in his Apostolic Letter, “At the Beginning of the New Millennium” who calls for a firm commitment to live more faithfully our vocation to holiness in a community. Being Community in communion, is the very nature of being Church and this is the mode of its evangelising mission. This is our vocation to Communion and Mission of Solidarity by being leaven and salt in society. Furthermore, in *Ecclesia in Asia No: 5*, he reminds us that our self understanding as Church is intimately related to our critical awareness of the complex and diverse realities of the world today. It is this responsibility to mission that moves us to counter the numerous dehumanising forces that are both breaking up our family units and distorting the inherent dignity bestowed on human persons. Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees is indeed our path to being an evangelising Church.

Pastoral Care of People on the Move in the context of Asia-Pacific has for many of us has thus to be a journey that is both ecumenical and interreligious. We as Church in Asia, have committed ourselves to promoting new and creative ways of addressing the pastoral needs of the migrant people who have to move from their homeland. Our universal mission as Church is what places priority on the need for Pastoral Care to be inserted in the milieu of Church as Local and Universal Communion. Being away from home and being welcomed into a another home for the Asia-Pacific people is to offer hospitality as our witnessing to love that reigns in the hearts of the People of God. A foreign government and people may not care but the Church cares for the least, the lost and the last and this we believe is the best way to make Jesus known and loved and bring the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus to the People on the Move.

Conversion to Charity as our commitment to Solidarity

How can we as Church touch the lives of People on the Move, including the People of other Faiths, when they enter our Local Church; their New Home? The journey of the Church in Asia, with migrants in the recent past has also been for many of us a source of hope and offers us some models for emulation. One such example, is the commitment of the Church in Japan that as a result of the AISA (Asian Institute for Social Action) initiated by the Office for Human Development of the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences) Series. This programme organised by the Diocese of Yokohama began a process of pastoral planning that resulted in the setting up of a number of service centres by the Church in Japan that welcomed many migrant workers of all faiths from many countries. Till today, these Centres serve as a home for migrants where they are not only welcomed but offer legal, social and counselling services that assures them that the Church is in solidarity with them. Other such initiatives are also evident in South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, which are also Receiving Churches. It is also interesting to note that many of these programmes are collaborative ministries that involves the Local Church as the made up of clergy, religious and laity in the various aspects of the ministry of pastoral care of migrants and refugees.

The Church in Asia, is inspired and encouraged by invitation of Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II to commit ourselves to a “new creativity in charity”. *“Without this form of*

evangelisation through charity, and without the witness of Christian poverty the proclamation of the Gospel, which is itself the prime form of charity, risks being misunderstood or submerged by the ocean of words which daily engulfs us in today's society of mass communications. The charity of works ensures an unmistakable efficacy to the charity of words. (NO. 50 ABNM)

Thus a commitment to our missionary vocation as translated into a conversion to solidarity is indeed the main challenge for all the People of God and especially for those involved in the Pastoral Care of Migrants in the Asia-Pacific, indeed for the whole Universal Church. Our presence we hope during this Congress will be the source of strength to continue to deepen our commitment to our missionary vocation and conversion to love and service to People on the Move in the context of Asia-Pacific.

**THE SITUATION AND CHALLENGES
OF THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES
IN NORTH AMERICA**

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Introduction

Since the founding of their nations, both the United States and Canada have received refugees and immigrants from countries throughout the world. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, immigration from Europe dominated. In the latter part of the twentieth century into the twenty-first century, the trend has changed dramatically.

In response to refugees and immigrants, the bishops of the United States, beginning after World War I organized an immigration office, which eventually became the Migration and Refugee Service, divided into three offices: Refugee Programs, Public Policy, and Pastoral Care for Migrants and Refugees, with more than 100 diocesan offices for refugees usually in the Catholic Charities Offices. The Pastoral Care Office reaches out in two directions: Ethnic Ministries and People on the Move. The Ethnic Ministries section responds to the pastoral needs of immigrant Africans and Asians. There is an entire office in the USCCB dealing with Hispanic immigrants.

In the 1940's the Catholic Church in Canada began the Office of Social Affairs to deal with immigrants and refugees. Since that time, over 25 dioceses have entered a sponsorship agreement with the Canadian Government to accept and help integrate refugees. The Province of Quebec has its own framework for reception of immigrants and refugees. At the present time, the response of the Canadian Church is not centralized, but the major receiving dioceses have responded through diocesan offices for immigrants and refugees, national parishes, multicultural parishes, liturgical and social centers, immigration counseling offices, ethnic pastoral commissions, formation programs for immigrant clergy, religious and lay people.

Every ten years the United States' government conducts a census. The census of 2000 reveals a startling change in the population in the ten years from 1990 to 2000. Canada takes a census every five years. The changes from 1996 to 2001 have been equally startling. In the United States the paradigm is shifting from "the melting pot" to "the stew pot". In Canada a bicultural society is becoming a multi-cultural mosaic. This presentation will analyze those changes as well as the changes in population trends in Canada and the Catholic Church response in the following categories: Legal Immigrants, Undocumented Immigrants, Refugees and the Church's response to them.

Legal Immigrants

The 2000 census in the United States solidifies trends which began in the 1960s in which the place of origin of immigrants shifted from Western Europe to Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, Latin America and the Middle East. Among these new immigrants are many Catholics who bring with them different religious practices and traditions. The new Catholic immigration has changed the face of dioceses and parishes throughout the United States. A random sampling of percentage changes throughout the country gives an overview of the changes involved. As of the year 2000, there are 75% white Americans, there are 12.3% African Americans (among them, many recent immigrants), 12.5% Hispanic Americans, 3.6% Asian Americans. From 1990-

2000, the African-American population increased 21.5%; Asian-Americans increased 72.2%; Hispanic-Americans increased 57.9%

In Canada, the major source for the 250,346 new immigrants in the past year has been China 16.10%, India 11.1%, Pakistan 6.13%, Korea 3.84%.

This quick overview reveals the dramatic changes which have taken place in different parts of the United States and Canada. In the year 2000, more than one-fourth of Hispanics lived in Los Angeles, New York, Miami, Chicago. Yet in between and all around these gateway cities tremendous growth has taken place. In Las Vegas, the Hispanic population has increased 750% in 20 years. In Atlanta the Hispanic growth has been so great that the Sunday Spanish Masses have increased from 4 to 40 in ten years. In the year 2000 there were approximately 4000 parishes with Hispanic Ministry in the United States and 20.6% of parishes with a majority of Hispanic presence. The Hispanics have the largest number, but there are many other immigrants demanding special pastoral attention. Those same gateway cities with one-fourth of the Hispanic population offer Mass every Sunday in different languages: New York Archdiocese 48, Brooklyn 23, Chicago 23, Miami 13, Los Angeles 53. Along with liturgical services, many of the dioceses and parishes offer social services, legal and advocacy services for the new immigrants.

In Canada the major receiving provinces for immigrants have been Quebec: 15% (City of Montreal 13%); Ontario 60% (Toronto 50%); Alberta 6.54% (Calgary 4.06%); British Columbia 15.29% (Vancouver 13.65%). Throughout Canada, Masses are celebrated in different languages as follows: 25 languages in Vancouver; 12 in Calgary; 26 in Montreal with 15 Oriental churches functioning, 38 languages in Toronto. Toronto has proven to be a major immigrant city in North America. The 2001 census reported that 44% of the population was born outside the country. 43% of all Filipinos in Canada live in Toronto. The Chinese population in Toronto grew 69% from 1991 to 2001. 63% of immigrants to Toronto in the 1990's were Asians, many from South Asia, while 17% were from Europe with a large migration from Poland. There are also sizeable numbers of Africans, Latin Americans, Arabs and West Asian immigrants. The Church in Toronto has responded actively to what an Archdiocesan report calls, "a continual intercity shifting of population due to new immigrants and refugees coming from different parts of the world". The Archdiocese has set up intercultural courses for priests, renewal of parish life involving better communication among ethnic communities, setting up of ethnic pastoral commissions on the Archdiocesan level, expansion of formation programs to develop ethnic leadership and youth programs.

Besides the Catholic population, there has been a significant new immigration from the following world religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Taoism, Sikhism. Into parts of the United States dominated by Protestant and Catholic churches stand new temples and mosques. The Muslim population in the United States now outnumbers the Episcopalian population. Muslims are also more numerous than the Presbyterian or Jewish population. In Canada, the Muslim population grew 128.9% between 1991 and 2001. Muslims now outnumber the Jewish population in Canada.

This variety and complexity of Roman and Eastern Catholic immigrants as well as immigrants from the other great religions has posed great pastoral challenges to dioceses and parishes throughout the United States and Canada. The immigrants are often met with indifference, even hostility, based on racism and fear of newcomers. Often times clergy, religious and lay leaders do not accompany immigrants and the local church has not responded adequately with leadership to minister in ways that recognize and respect new cultures. The newcomers often lack catechetical, sacramental and devotional resources.

In March 1993, the members of the Theology Commission of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a "Pastoral Message on the Acceptance and Integration of Immigrants to Build a Community of Togetherness." In that letter, the bishops confronted the "sin of xenophobia and racism" by reviewing Canada's long history of

openness to refugees and immigrants from all parts of the world. The statement drew on Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching on Migration to reaffirm that openness and solidarity in a context of growing anti-immigrant sentiment. The statement recommended the following directions for action: 1) Allow immigrants and refugees to celebrate their faith together. 2) Help people of immigrant or refugee origin to integrate into the host society. 3) Promote the emergence of a cross-cultural local church. 4) The statement concludes with proposals for the newly-arrived in Canada as well as proposals for members of cultural communities “with the goal of forming a more harmonious community of togetherness.”

The Bishops of the United States responded to this pastoral challenge by approving two pastoral statements prepared by the Bishops’ Committee on Migration: *Welcoming the Stranger, Unity in Diversity* (November 2000) and *Asian and Pacific Presence Harmony in Faith*. (December 2001). The outline of *Welcoming the Stranger* follows the outline of *Ecclesia in America* (the apostolic exhortation promulgated by Pope John Paul II at the end of the Synod on America) in order to show that this pastoral statement is an expression of the interconnectedness of the churches in America. The call to conversion challenges local churches to overcome apathy, prejudice and fear and to promote a spirit of welcome in all believers and to develop structures that enable a sense of belonging and facilitate integration in ways that are respectful of culture. The call to communion offers guidelines for intercultural communication, multicultural liturgies and invitation and empowerment of new leadership to diocesan and parish committees. The call to solidarity encourages church leaders to advocate for the human rights of immigrants, to provide ample social and legal services through parishes and Catholic Charities, and to cooperate with local community organizations to secure basic human needs. The call to evangelization promotes the proclamation of the Risen Christ to immigrants both in dialogue and conversion settings.

The second pastoral statement, *Asian and Pacific Presence Harmony in Faith*, informed the local churches about the history, cultures, religious practices of Asian and Pacific Island rooted communities and recent immigrants, and the gifts which they bring to their new surroundings. For many US Catholics, Asians were an unknown entity, yet their increased presence and the complexity of their backgrounds (Asia comprises 53 countries) required an enlightened pastoral response. The pastoral statement is grounded in *Ecclesia in Asia*, the apostolic exhortation promulgated by Pope John Paul II at the end of the Synod on Asia. The bishops of the United States borrow the theme of the pastoral statement from that document: “This “Being Asian” is best discovered and affirmed not in confrontation and opposition, but in the spirit of complementarity and harmony. In this framework of complementarity and harmony, the Church can communicate the Gospel in a way that is faithful both to her own tradition and to the Asian soul.” EA #6

After this a parish kit with the pastoral statement, *Welcoming the Stranger Unity in Diversity*, brochures, homiletic and catechetical aids were sent to the 19,500 parishes in the US. Also, seven regional meetings were organized throughout the country for diocesan bishops and their staffs and for ethnic coordinators, refugee workers and pastors. These regional meetings reviewed the themes of the pastoral statement, offered best practices for parishes and dioceses, began a process of pastoral planning in each participating diocese. After the meetings, dioceses presented their plans to receive seed money to help carry out the plan. In the seven regional meetings, 830 people from 127 dioceses were represented including 36, bishops, 197 priests, 105 religious, 492 lay leaders. As a result of the 52 programs submitted, 11 dioceses set up new structures to welcome and integrate newcomers, 18 dioceses offered educational programs for clergy, religious and lay leaders.

Undocumented Immigrants

Besides legal immigrants, there are approximately 8 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. They come from all over the world, but principally from Mexico and

Central America. Most come in desperation for survival for themselves and their families. Because of increased vigilance at the U.S.-Mexico border, since 1995, over 2000 have died in transit crossing waterways and deserts. Besides these tragic deaths, families have been separated and at times destroyed and villages in Mexico have been decimated. The reality is that both the sending and receiving countries have become dependent on the undocumented in the U.S. (More than a million undocumented persons are employed in manufacturing and another million in service industries. More than 600,000 work in construction and more than 700,000 in restaurants.) But the presence of such a large number of undocumented immigrants who have no legal status is an invitation to exploitation and abuse. Their presence creates a tremendous pastoral challenge for the Church to stand by them as advocate for their rights and as provider of social, legal and religious services. Often their undocumented and migrant status makes even the reception of the sacrament of baptism, confirmation, first confession and communion and marriage problematic.

In order to facilitate legal proceedings, in 1988, the USCCB set up an office called CLINIC (Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.) This office serves as a resource to the dioceses to help immigrants confront the complex legal issues they face.

In the year 2002, the Migration Committees of the U.S. and Mexican Bishops' Conference prepared a pastoral statement approved by both Bishops' Conferences to respond to this pastoral phenomenon. This document, is called in English *Strangers No Longer, Together on the Journey of Hope*. In Spanish it is called *Ya No Somos Extranjeros Juntos En El Camino de la Esperanza*. The document rooted in Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching recommends changes in immigration policy and in pastoral practice. The immigration policy recommendations address the root cause of migration and challenge present policies and practices of the Mexican and U.S. government regarding family-based immigration, legalization of the undocumented, employment-based immigration, border enforcement tactics, due process rights and the human rights of migrants, including the undocumented.

The pastoral recommendations encourage accompaniment of the migrant at point of origin with appropriate counseling, en route through migrant shelters which can respond to physical, spiritual and legal needs, and at the point of arrival with greater cooperation between bishops of sending and receiving dioceses, exchange of clergy, religious and lay leaders between the two countries, as well as joint cooperation in the development of devotional and catechetical materials. The joint committees of migration will continue to meet to discuss the designation of religious communities to respond to the immigrants' needs, the advisability of a seminary for preparation of priests to accompany immigrants, seminary courses to prepare future priests in both countries to respond more adequately to the immigrant reality, orientation programs for immigrant priests, religious and laity.

In Canada, the issue of the undocumented is not so urgent.

Refugees

In the year 2001, Canada received 27, 900 refugees. In Toronto, the Catholic Immigration Bureau has been established for settlement and adaptation counseling. The Office serves 31 different language groups. In the United States, the situation of the refugees since the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 has worsened considerably. The traumatizing effect of the attacks as well as the hardening of refugee policies on the part of the U.S. government has resulted in the development of a 'fortress mentality' in the U.S. which changed from being a country which received 120,000 refugees in 1993 to a country which received 30,332 in 2002. Because of this drop in the number of refugees, the numbers of people serving in the refugee network continue to drop. The U.S. government continues to tighten procedures against asylum seekers and detainees. Meanwhile the numbers of those languishing in prisons and protracted refugee situations overseas increase dramatically. This fortress mentality presents a new pastoral challenge for the Church

in the U.S.A. especially in its advocacy and social service response. One of the responses has been to engage a greater number of volunteers in parishes to work directly with refugee families. Since 2001, Parishes Organized to Welcome Refugees (POWR) has provided assistance to 45 dioceses to strengthen parish involvement in the work of welcoming refugees.

Trafficking

Each year about 50,000 people are trafficked into the United States and forced into slave-like conditions as workers in the sex industry, sweatshops, and domestic work positions. As a response to this criminal behavior, the Migration and Refugee Service of the USCCB formed a Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking with more than twenty-five Catholic organizations to raise public awareness of trafficking and to meet the needs of victims. Trafficking in Canada has resulted in strong government measures resulting in changes in the citizenship act.

Advocacy

An important outreach of the USCCB in relation to immigrants and refugees has been the advocacy work done through the Public Policy Office and Diocesan Networks. In the last five years the bishops on the Migration Committee and the Public Policy Office have lobbied State legislatures, the Congress and the State Department to have immigration laws and policies respond to the human dignity of migrants and refugees and have advocated for a more realistic approach to migrant workers in this globalized world. In the last five years, among many other initiatives, the Public Policy Office has promoted a program of legalization for the undocumented, a guest worker program with built-in securities for workers, more flexible immigration procedures for religious workers, policy changes to protect women and unaccompanied minors. In Canada the bishops on the Episcopal Commission for Social affairs of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops bring to the attention of government officials the rights of migrants in relation to immigration policy. A recent example is a letter sent on March 7, 2003 to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration protesting “the safe third country agreement” with the United States because of the negative effects on those, especially from Latin America, using the United States as a bridge to settling in Canada.

Conclusion

Both countries, in different ways, are trying to live out the words of Pope John Paul II in the apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in America*: “With this in mind, the Synod Fathers recalled that “ the Church in America must be a vigilant advocate, defending against any unjust restriction of the natural right of individual persons to move freely within their own nation and from one nation to another. Attention must be called to the rights of immigrants and their families and to respect for their human dignity, even in cases of non-legal immigration.”

Migrants should be met with a hospitable and welcoming attitude which can encourage them to become part of the Church’s life, always with due regard for their freedom and their specific cultural identity. Cooperation between the dioceses from which they come and those in which they settle, also through specific pastoral structures provided for in the legislation and praxis of the Church, has proved extremely beneficial to this end. In this way, the most adequate and complete pastoral care possible can be ensured.” (#65)

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN LATIN AMERICA

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Human mobility in Latin America takes various forms. From being a continent of immigration, it has become a place of massive migrations into its own hinterlands; of emigration to neighbouring countries such as the United States, Canada, Europe and the East; of refugees and displaced persons; of human trafficking (for forced labour or prostitution); of sailors, airline workers, gypsies, circus people, pilgrims and tourists. The numbers involved run into the millions.

A) - FACTORS OF REPULSION:

1. Chronic poverty in many countries

With rare exceptions, the countries of Latin America have a history of misery and poverty.

Many changes have come about under the influence of the new economy: adjustments have been made and productivity and competitiveness sought. This has given rise to unemployment, to a drop in real salaries, to an incapacity to create work especially for young people; as well as to the unavailability of resources for productive investment because of the need to pay foreign debt and of the decline in the exchange of goods. The gap between rich and poor gives rise to mass migrations.

2. War, repression, violence and displacement

Many people find themselves forcibly uprooted through revolutions and counter-revolutions. In Latin America, Colombia heads the league table of expulsions with more than one million displaced persons, not to mention Panama and Peru (there are an estimated 2 million Peruvians outside their country, of whom 75% have no identity documents). There are some 15 million refugees in the world as a whole.

3. Natural disasters also cause emigration

Natural phenomena such as the drought in north-east Brazil, the hurricanes in Central America, and floods, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions also give rise to population movements

For eight days in 1998, Honduras was battered by the devastating hurricane Mitch: 5,273 lives lost, 11,085 people missing and 1,932,482 victims physically or economically injured.

4. Trafficking in people

Today, the business of trafficking in emigrants has become widespread.

Another phenomenon that is assuming alarming proportions is that of the “white slave trade” (the sale of women and children for prostitution) and the market of people for forced labour. Particularly prominent in this field is Colombia and, outside America, the Republic of China and the countries of Eastern Europe.

The trafficking of migrants and their illegal entry into developed countries has become a world-wide business generating large profits for traffickers and organised crime syndicates. A recent study by the IOM revealed that there are between 15 and 30 million illegal migrants in the world. Of this total, the US Justice Department estimates that every year 700,000 women and children become the victims of trafficking.

The need to emigrate exposes migrants to exploitation and the violation of their basic human rights; they are vulnerable and become trapped in workshops and factories, or are obliged to become prostitutes or beggars, generally under the control of criminal networks. They have no access to legal or medical assistance.

B) - FACTORS OF ATTRACTION:

1. Differences in pay

One important factor in attracting the migration of workers is the difference in pay scales. Once a migration flow has been established it engenders a social network of relations and friends who defray the cost of transportation, help those recently arrived to find work, supply accommodation and assistance in the early stages, and provide a familiar social atmosphere.

2. Globalisation

Nowadays it is very easy to communicate with any part of the world, to discover possible sources of work and study, to learn of macro- building or industrial development projects.

The objective differences in standards of living and the subjective aspirations of migrants are particularly intense; and migratory flows are not diminishing.

Economic globalisation has led to a worsening of conditions for migrants.

3. The propaganda of developed countries

Thanks to internet, television, film, news bulletins and tourism, the wonders of the developed and the developing world reach all corners of the globe, even the poorest hovels. This creates hitherto unknown needs and brings men and women to seek out this dazzling world, for their own sake and that of their families. No repressive force is capable of preventing emigrants from reaching places where they know they will find better living conditions for themselves and their loved ones.

PROPOSALS

The Church proposes an economic and social policy in which man and his vital needs are guaranteed by law and by ethics, first and foremost in his country of origin, and/or in the migratory process.

1. With relation to existing immigrants

The Document "Ecclesia in America" gives the following guidelines: "*Migrants should be met with a hospitable and welcoming attitude which can encourage them to become part of the Church's life, always with due regard for their freedom and their specific cultural identity. Co-operation between the dioceses from which they come and those in which they settle, also through specific pastoral structures provided for in the legislation and praxis of the Church, has proved extremely beneficial to this end*" (no. 65).

Local communities are also called upon to live the evangelical value of fraternity; just as the Church is called to protect, from all unfair restrictions, individuals' natural right to move freely within their own nation and from one nation to another. These values must also be practised in the case of illegal immigration.

2. The globalisation of solidarity

Help for the poor, the outcast and refugees: "*Taking the Gospel as its starting-point, a culture of solidarity needs to be promoted, capable of inspiring timely initiatives in support of the poor and the outcast, especially refugees forced to leave their villages and lands in order to flee violence*" (EA, 52 b).

New economic order: "*The Church in America must encourage the international agencies of the continent to establish an economic order dominated not only by the profit motive but also by the pursuit of the common good of nations and of the international*

community, the equitable distribution of goods and the integral development of peoples” (EA, 52 b).

The globalisation of solidarity - The economy must be founded on human dignity, on solidarity and on subsidiarity, it must be analysed in the light of social justice and of the common good while respecting the preferential option for the poor (cf. EA, 55). “Social sins” and the economic system known as “neoliberalism” must be overcome, and an “authentic globalised culture of solidarity” promoted (cf. EA, 55-56).

May God enlighten us to find the means and methods necessary to guide, welcome and protect this mass of people on the move in search of better living conditions!

**SITUATION AND CHALLENGES REGARDING THE PASTORAL CARE OF
MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN AFRICA
COMMENTS BY A WITNESS AND “PRACTITIONER”**

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Introduction

1. To speak about or give an account of the current state of the pastoral care of migrants and refugees in Africa is quite a challenge. Indeed, it obliges one to examine the experience of local Churches that spring from various traditions and are established in several countries. It imposes a descriptive rather than an analytic approach. Moreover, it is best suited to the stance of witness that I have voluntarily chosen to adopt here. But what can this approach contribute if it does not also provide the opportunity to share a dream arising from reflection? In this speech, I intend not only to bear witness to what I have seen and heard during my contacts with many local African Churches and their representatives, but also to share my dream as a “practitioner” regarding the pastoral care of migrants and refugees in Africa.

Current pastoral care: forms, trends and limitations

2. Undoubtedly, African Churches offer pastoral responses to the problems posed by migration. But what form do these responses take, and what are their major trends and limitations? Above all, how can they best be described? Since the end of the colonial period, African Churches have been faced with the problems of refugees and displaced persons on a massive scale. Their care for migrants first took the form of seeking solutions to the plight of those affected by forced migration. Assistance to refugees and displaced persons through the aid and solidarity organisations commonly known as Caritas has taken up a large part of their time and mobilised a great deal of their resources and efforts in the field of the pastoral care of human mobility. This situation has relegated the need for spiritual assistance to refugees and other categories of migrant to second place.

3. Caritas organisations also help on an individual basis certain voluntary migrants, who are isolated and in difficulty, mainly by providing them with social and humanitarian aid. Such structures have not been specifically established to give pastoral assistance to migrants. They provide social and humanitarian aid rather than spiritual accompaniment. “*Area parishes*” are still the structures that provide pastoral care to those affected by forced mobility, close to the sites where they are accommodated. This is undoubtedly because refugees and displaced persons are first of all considered as people who will be called on to go back to their homes at the end of a conflict. But when a situation persists, and people start becoming integrated in the host region, the cultural proximity of cross-border populations means that the host Churches see no point in setting up specific structures for taking spiritual care, such as “*personal parishes*”.

4. For other categories of migrants and people on the move – such as migrant workers, students and tourists – structures are rare, marginal and relatively undeveloped. Where they do exist, they are a legacy of the missionary period. Attempts are made with great difficulty to maintain them in order to preserve the faith of Catholic immigrants and ensure the Church’s presence among them. Across the continent, structures that take care of other categories of

migrants primarily offer spiritual assistance and take various forms such as: chaplains at ports and airports and for pilgrims and foreign students; and parishes that offer liturgical celebrations or opportunities for spiritual attention in foreign languages when the number or influx of immigrants justifies it. Via these structures, the local Churches in Africa seek to exercise their pastoral responsibility towards immigrants from other countries. However, there are no strong signs of the Churches' concern for African emigrants. In fact, local Churches that, for example, officially send chaplains to accompany African emigrants, or quite simply vicars apostolic or diocesan and national commissions specifically responsible for migrants, are rare.

5. Structures that take spiritual care of migrants and refugees do not appear to stem from a clearly defined pastoral strategy at the diocesan level. This is borne out by the fact that they rarely continue after the departure of missionaries and beyond the pastoral priorities of bishops, which almost always revolve around parishes, grassroots communities, the training of catechists and seminaries. They also severely lack pastoral agents with special training or expertise to lead them. This results in a degree of ineffectiveness and marginalisation regarding the specific pastoral care of migrants and refugees within the pastoral care provided by African local Churches as a whole, which, in general, have opted for the easiest solution. This purely and simply means encouraging immigrants to integrate within various existing parishes where they can receive the spiritual and social support they need, and leaving the pastoral care of African emigrants to the Churches in the countries of arrival.

6. The main problem is not just that the African Churches' responses in dealing with current migration are partial. In addition, they are not imbued with reflection or a serious pastoral vision, they do not tackle the root causes of current migration in Africa and they are not inspired by an ambition worthy of the new evangelisation. They are called on to help people in connection with their countries of origin or transit countries, which also means that such responses are obliged to incorporate a dual local and regional perspective. While current pastoral care is already a considerable asset, it should nevertheless be recognised that Africa is in great need of a renewed pastoral care of migrants and refugees. This implies improved action that goes beyond the limits of the pastoral care that is currently implemented.

The three major challenges to be taken up to achieve renewed pastoral care

7. To achieve such pastoral care, local African Churches must take up at least three major challenges: *first of all to consider current migration as a "theological place" so as to put a new slant on the issue; to rebuild lives shattered by the consequences of a destructive migration and the circumstances that led to it; and finally, effectively restructure themselves.* Current pastoral care does not go hand in hand with a serious reflection on the causes of migration and ways and means of keeping them in check. It has no vision. Without such reflection and pastoral vision, the true pastoral needs of migrants and refugees will never be properly identified and responses will continue to be inappropriate. *Theological and pastoral reflection on voluntary and forced migration in its present form, aimed at offering a new vision of the world and humankind, is therefore a requirement of current evangelisation. It is the key challenge for local Churches in Africa.* I hope that this issue will soon become part of the programmes of our pastoral councils, Catholic universities and training centres for future apostolic workers.

8. Reflection on current migration rapidly reveals the desire for a better life that forms part of the everyday aspirations of most African people and families. The bulk of African migration is determined by a desire for protection and well-being. It may entail pitfalls and often shatters people's lives. It suffices to consider the situation of migrant workers and victims of people trafficking, for example. Uprooted from their cultural and religious milieu and very often cut off from their families, migrants are left to their own devices. This leads to large-scale disordering and disintegration of their lives. *I think that rebuilding such broken*

lives is the second major challenge for the pastoral care of migrants and refugees in Africa today. But it will be difficult to rebuild broken lives without trying to rebuild the world that broke them. Solidarity, peace, communion, reconciliation, development, promotion of humankind and respect for human rights show the way forward for this task of rebuilding the world. This means rebuilding people so that do not live just for themselves and forget about God. The world to be rebuilt should become a place of fraternity and revelation of God's love for humankind. Only a pastoral care that is both social and spiritual can contribute to this.

9. Rebuilding broken lives and the world cannot be brought about just like that. Such a task requires appropriate structures and skilled leaders. To set out on the right path and recover vitality, the pastoral care of migrants and refugees implemented by local African Churches needs to be restructured and equipped with specially trained leaders. *I believe that structures and training constitute the third major challenge for local Churches in Africa in providing a pastoral response to the demands of voluntary and forced migration.* This obviously starts at diocesan level, then becomes national, and finally sub-regional. Indeed, the local level is no longer sufficient to respond to the problems arising from migration today.

Conclusions

10. Finally, I would like to point out that it is not surprising that the pastoral care of migrants and refugees in Africa is of secondary importance in the apostolic projects of dioceses and that it is so poorly structured. Indeed, this issue does not form part of either overall pastoral strategy or teaching of Churches, which, in addition, offer differing levels of response to the challenges and problems of human mobility. Most responses are partial, and very few are integrated and comprehensive. This refers to responses ranging from the setting up of social and humanitarian aid structures to spiritual care, including local, national and regional perspectives, and, above all, that are imbued with their own teaching. This situation condemns the pastoral care of migrants and refugees to being embryonic and secondary. I hope that raised awareness of this situation will lead to changed attitudes and renewal after this conference.

SITUATIONS AND CHALLENGES FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN EUROPE

Msgr. Aldo *GIORDANO*
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I. AN OVERVIEW OF MIGRATION IN EUROPE

In today's Europe we can see a wide variety of migration scenarios. There are countries of immigration, such as Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg; countries that were traditionally of emigration but are now countries of return and immigration, such as Portugal, Italy, Spain and Greece; transit countries, such as Slovakia and Poland; retirement and holiday countries, such as Spain, Malta and Italy; countries awaiting the return of their citizens who fled from war, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina; and countries where Catholics are almost all immigrants, such as the Scandinavian countries. Obviously, the event that most radically changed the European scene was the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, which had separated the continent into two blocs. This enabled exchange between Eastern and Western Europe that was previously impossible. In fact, the massive influx of people from the east to the west did not occur on the scale that some people imagined.

Around 1973/74, migration to other countries in search of work, followed by return to one's own country in a better economic situation, came to an end. The reuniting of families became the major reason for migration at that time. In the 1980s and the 1990s, the numbers of refugees and asylum seekers mushroomed due to crisis situations in Turkey, the Balkans, sub-Saharan Africa, Algeria, Southeast Asia and Latin America. In Albania, for example, there was mass emigration.

One issue should be borne in mind: due to its declining population growth, Europe needs immigrants to strengthen its workforce!

II. THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRATION AS A LABORATORY

The pastoral care of migration could become a frontier laboratory for testing decisive issues regarding the future of our continent: catholicity, ecumenism, contact between religions and the rediscovery of Europe's "vocation".

1. Catholicity

Migration highlights the question of how to build a European "house" that is able to accommodate different peoples, without, on the one hand, annihilating individual identities with blanket systems, and on the other, without lapsing into destructive conflict over differences or into terrorism. The traditional catholicity of Christianity is the great opportunity, ripe for rediscovery, needed to respond to this vital question. Catholicity, in its broadest and deepest sense, means being able to achieve universal communion without boundaries that exclude, in such a way that differences, rather than being cancelled out, develop through their own identity.

Recently in Europe we have particularly experienced how catholicity is dissolving the strong prejudices that exist between east and west, including at the ecclesial level.

2. The ecumenical way

Migration typically raises the ecumenical issue and leads to the obligation to go beyond denominational confines.

Certain thorny current issues, such as fear of proselytising, or the relations between the Orthodox and Greek Catholic Churches, lead to comparison of the Latin and Eastern traditions. Classic ecumenical issues - such as ordained ministry, Eucharistic sharing, primacy, Mariology and ethical issues – are nowadays marked by the relationship between Eastern Europe and modern (or post-modern) European culture. Behind many current difficulties lies Eastern Europe's fear of giving itself over to the pluralist, secular and relativist culture of the West, which could undermine its own traditions.

Meeting together has generated signs of hope. I have in mind the European ecumenical conference held in Graz, Austria, in 1997, where it became clear that ecumenism is alive and well in Europe. I am also thinking about the pilgrimages of Pope John Paul II, firstly the one to Romania in May 1999, when for the first time in history the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, visited a country with an Orthodox majority, followed by visits to Greece, Ukraine, Armenia, Bulgaria and so on. A paradigmatic experience is the process launched by the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE) together with the Conference of European Churches (CEC) comprising the *Ecumenical Charter – Ways of developing collaboration between Churches in Europe*. This document, which was officially signed in Strasbourg on 22 April 2001, contains 26 commitments that the Churches of Europe are invited to undertake to make historically visible the "one, Holy, Catholic, apostolic" Church of Christ. This encourages the Churches and communities to step up their collaboration.

3. *Contact with other religions*

Perhaps the most burning issue linked to migration regards contact, or its lack, between Christian and the planet's other great religions and cultures. Religious pluralism clearly exists in Europe, although Christianity is by far the majority religion (around 560 million, of whom half are Roman Catholics).

Judaism has around 3 million members, but its tradition belongs to the roots of Europe. The Muslim population in Europe has increased greatly: nowadays it stands at around 31 million. Whether Turkey joins the EU or not is still a matter for debate. The growing interest in Buddhism raises questions. Other phenomena to be considered are alternative religious groups and forms of neo-paganism.

As we know, the question of contact between religions has become very topical since the tragic events of 11 September 2001 and the crisis in Iraq. In fact, for the Churches this has been a familiar issue for decades. What is new is that it has also become a political issue, especially with regard to terrorism and fundamentalism. There is a risk that politics will impose its own rules. The Churches are therefore called upon to take up this dialogue once again in the light of their own experience, taking account of internal religious criteria.

4. *European unification*

Migration is also decisive for the construction of the European Union and its constitutional treaty. This encourages aiming high in the vision of Europe and the area of values so as to guarantee that there is room for different cultures. During the European Council held in Salonika on 19-20 June 2003, the need to draw up a common European policy regarding asylum and migration, and to tackle the issue of illegal immigration, was reaffirmed.

III. CCEE ACTIVITIES

The CCEE set up a commission to follow the phenomenon of migration, with specific pastoral intentions. This commission is also a centre for awareness and a degree of coordination of the activities the various ecclesial organisations carry out in the field of migration.

In recent years, conferences have been organised for bishops and national directors responsible for the pastoral care of migration regarding certain particularly pressing issues: 1. What is the Church's response to xenophobia? (Munich, 1993); 2. Violence and migration

(Dubrovnik,1995); 3. Migration: an opportunity to experience catholicity (Iasi, 1999); 4. International migration becomes “female” (Strasbourg, 2001); and 5. Women and families with regard to migration (Izmir 2002).

An ongoing theme is the situation and meaning of linguistic missions. Perhaps greater collaboration and sharing between the Churches of the various continents is necessary.

IV. THE WAY OF THE GOSPEL

I would like to conclude my speech by indicating three key issues that I consider should be looked into to tackle seriously the question of the pastoral care of migration.

1. The first challenge that migration poses the Church is evangelisation, namely the meeting between the original event of Christianity and people today. In Europe the Church’s greatest challenge often consists not so much in baptising new converts but in converting the baptised to Christ (!), and now in many regions of Europe – mainly due to migration – the first proclamation of faith and the initiation of catechism are also requested, as a high percentage of people are not baptised.

2. A new element that has been noted recently on the intercultural and inter-religious scene is the need to rediscover identities. This need seeks to forestall the risk of relativistic drift or positions that are too irenic. People who are uninformed about Christianity or their own Church cannot contribute to dialogue. Nevertheless, behind this strong need to safeguard one’s identity there is also a fresh risk of shutting oneself off in one’s own isolated and self-sufficient stronghold. It is high time to rethink basic concepts such as identity, truth, dialogue and love and those regarding the relations between dialogue, truth and love.

3. A potential forum for religions, faiths and cultures is the commitment to justice and human rights. This is another space that the Church is called upon to “occupy”, also so as not to leave the field unilaterally free for ideologically conditioned positions.

4. A question that is strongly emerging today regards spirituality. This spurs a refocusing on the heart of Christianity, the event of the birth and resurrection of Christ, to shed light for a life that answers the great questions of history and of the meaning of existence.

A human being is a “viator” (migrant), mainly because “inquietum est cor nostrum“. There is a restlessness of the heart that always takes us back to square one. People are nostalgic for a house, a love, or a celebration: it is the expectation of a “beauty that is so old and so new” (Augustine, Confessions). Becoming aware of our migratory nature, as foreigners or strangers, we are nostalgic about having a destination and finding a house. This is also my personal experience.

**STARTING AFRESH FROM CHRIST.
THE VISION OF THE CHURCH ON MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES
(FROM POST-VATICAN II TILL TODAY)**

H.E. Archbishop Agostino *MARCHETTO*
Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the
Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

Introduction

It was hoped to be able to replace this conference's agenda with a presentation of the document on the renewed pastoral care of migrants that our Dicastery has been preparing for two years. Its release is very close, but we are not quite there yet. So both you and us need to be patient for just a little longer.

Here, at the outset, I can see an alternative: the first option is to analyse the documents that most closely concern this Dicastery, from the Post-Concilium to the present. These primarily include Motu Proprio *Pastoralis Migratorum Cura*¹ and the Instruction "Nemo est" (*De pastoralis Migratorum Cura*)², the Circular Letter *The Church and Human Mobility*³, the Decree *Pro materna*⁴, the new CJC and CCEO Canon Law, the guidelines *Towards a New Pastoral Care of Refugees*⁵, and the document *Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity*⁶, the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus*⁷, as well the important annual Messages from the Holy Father on the occasion of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees and, finally, the Post-Synodal Exhortations of Pope John Paul II. Or, as a second alternative, I can draw from these and other documents some of the major pastoral approaches that have emerged over the last forty years. Well, I have decided to opt for the latter.

Let's begin with a quotation – which is almost like the tip of a gleaming iceberg – of a profound thought by Pope John Paul II on the phenomenon of migration: "Migrations – whether voluntary or forced – are nowadays a means for people to meet each other. They may overcome prejudices and foster understanding and fraternity, with a view to uniting the human family. In this perspective, migration should be considered as the vanguard of peoples on their way towards universal brotherhood. The Church which, in its structure of communion welcomes all cultures without identifying itself with any of them, situates itself as a sign of the unitary tension underway in the world"⁸, putting itself at the service of the specific contribution that migration makes to universal peace.

¹ AAS LXI (1969) 601-603

² AAS LXI (1969) 614-643

³ Circular Letter from the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism to the Bishops' Conferences
in AAS LXX (1978) 357-378

⁴ Decree of the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism, *Special rights and privileges for people involved in human mobility*, in EV (Enchiridium Vaticanum) 8/4 (1982) 91-99

⁵ Guidelines of the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism, in EV 9/3 (1983) 100-112

⁶ Document of the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum" and the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People
in EV 13/40 (1992) 1019-1037

⁷ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution on the Roman Curia, in AAS LXXX (1988) 841-912

⁸ Pope John Paul II, Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 1988, *The Catholic laity and migration*, 6, in L'Osservatore Romano, 4 September 1987

Starting with this brilliant point, *in caliginoso loco*, let's now seek to present some of the fundamental approaches of ecclesial vision over the last forty years. Obviously, it will only be possible to give a partial outline, given the thirty-minute time limit. First of all.

I. The implications of specific pastoral care

1. Here too we will start with a reference drawn from the "Magna Charta" of the specific pastoral care that concerns us, the *Exsul Familia*. This sets as the foundation for any project regarding the pastoral care of migrants and refugees the principle that, since they are far from their country and ethnic background, they should find specific pastoral care in the Church and thus be able to enjoy the assistance of priests who at least speak their own language. Migrants have their own way of thinking, language and culture, of which their religiosity is also part. And this spiritual heritage is an asset to be preserved and respected, including by the host Church⁹.

2. Indeed, the safeguarding of the linguistic, cultural and religious heritage of migrants and refugees, as well as of minorities, is one of the most topical fundamental themes running through the pastoral care of migrants, as affirmed by Pope Paul VI: "It is not possible to conduct such pastoral care efficiently, if due account is not taken of the spiritual heritage and culture of migrants"¹⁰. And this would entail speaking about liturgy and religiosity. But let's move on.

Migration (voluntary or forced) therefore impels the Church to reflect more specifically on the value of culture, the unity of humankind and the practice of universal love, which is rooted in the source of Christ, from which we must continually start afresh.

3. Therefore, migrants and refugees also have rights in the religious field, and in order to protect them the Church has proposed suitable pastoral structures, but not the creation of parallel Churches. The local bishop remains as the guarantor of catholicity and communion in legitimate diversity. "This is how unity in plurality takes place in the local Church, which is a unity [ecclesial] that is harmonious rather than uniform, in which all legitimate diversities are assumed in the common unitary tension"¹¹. And this is the hard core that remains even in the relative elasticity of concrete choices, namely of personal parishes, "*missio cum cura animarum*", etc.

4. Indeed, it is the pastoral care of human mobility that has led the Church to combine the structural principle of its legislation, on a local basis, with the introduction of a personal aspect, taking advantage of more supple and flexible pastoral structures, but which are not in competition with local authorities. In this respect, Pope John Paul II said: "Migration provides individual local Churches with the opportunity to verify their catholicity, which consists not only in welcoming different ethnic groups, but above all in achieving the communion of such groups. Ethnic and cultural pluralism in the Church do not add up to a situation that is to be tolerated as it is temporary, but rather it is one of its structural dimensions. The Church's unity does not arise from common origin and language, but from the Spirit of Pentecost that, by bringing together as one People those of different languages and nations, grants them all faith in the same Lord and the call for the same hope"¹².

5. However, migrants and refugees should be helped to achieve a knowledgeable interpretation of their gruelling "exodus", so that they may also gather and experience the wealth of religious culture of the local Church where they live. The Instruction *De Pastoralis Migratorum Cura*, drawing on the Decree *Ad gentes*¹³, affirms this aim: "For anyone who is going to encounter another people should have a great esteem for their patrimony and their

⁹ See Pope Pius XII, Apostolic Constitution, *Exsul Familia*, in AAS XLIV (1952) 649-704

¹⁰ Pope Paul VI, Motu Proprio *Pastoralis Migratorum Cura*, in AAS LXI (1969) 602

¹¹ *The Church and Human Mobility* 19, see Note 3

¹² Message 1988, 3c, see Note 8 and *Ecclesia in America* 65

¹³ Vatican Council II, Decree on missionary activity in the Church *Ad Gentes*, 26, in AAS L (1966) 877

language and their customs..., so migrants willingly adapt to the community that receives them and hasten to learn the language, so that if their stay is prolonged or becomes definitive, they can more easily integrate with the new society”¹⁴. The document warns, however, that “this will be more effective and efficient only if, save any constriction or impediment, this integration is spontaneous and gradual”¹⁵.

6. The language used during the 1970s and 1980s aimed at clearing a path of communion and reciprocity, has been further elaborated in speeches by Pope John Paul II. In his speech to migrants in Mainz, for example, on 17 November 1980, the Pope reaffirmed: “I would also like to encourage you to come closer to each other: amongst various ethnic groups and also to your German fellow citizens. Try to understand each other, and share your lives, with all their joys and concerns, with each other. Make efforts to build bridges between ethnic groups, patiently, brick by brick”¹⁶. This is a path of coming together in which everyone is involved, and therefore a path of mutual conversion.

7. At this point we should also recall the key role of chaplain/missionary – a person who acts as a bridge between two cultures and mentalities, as well as between two local Churches – which turns into prophecy and witness to community and catholicity, with the meaningful presence for all local Churches of the arrival of migrants and refugees.

For him and for us, in this respect, what has been written about the inculturation of the Gospel in non-Western lands also holds true for the world of mobility. The chaplain/missionary should therefore avoid any kind of cultural imperialism and understand that becoming Christians does not mean becoming Westerners (or Orientals) and rejecting one’s cultural or national heritage.¹⁷ Moreover, what missionaries practise *ad gentes* should also be effective, *mutatis mutandis*, in countries that welcome foreign workers or those who have been forced to leave their country.

8. In more recent years, the call for safeguarding the fundamental rights of migrants and their family members has become of paramount importance. For us too, although within a broader vision of pastoral theology, which stems from the integral vision of the human person that characterises Christianity. This attention is also particularly apparent when the Church refers to migrants and refugees¹⁸. This shows its preoccupation about “a legal framework that is inadequate to deal with the growing influx and, above all whose legislation fails to protect the inalienable, fundamental rights of the individual, which many nations have signed and expressly defended in international declarations, but which are not always covered by national legislations and procedures”¹⁹.

And, in addition: “Ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities living within a nation’s borders should be accorded the same inalienable rights as other citizens, including the right to maintain their particular cultural and religious traditions. They should be free to choose to integrate themselves within the surrounding culture. The legal situation of other categories of persons, such as immigrants and refugees, or even foreign workers who are temporary

¹⁴ Instruction of the Holy Congregation for Bishops *De pastorali Migratorum Cura*, “Nemo est” 10, in AAS LXI (1969) 618

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ See Speech on the occasion of a meeting with foreign workers, in “The Teachings of John Paul II”, Vol. III, Part II, 1980, p. 1265

¹⁷ See Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism, Letter to the Bishops’ Conferences *The Church and Human Mobility*, Part Two *The Pastoral Care of Migrants*, 5, p. 54, Vatican City 1978

¹⁸ See *For the Pastoral Care of Refugees* 1 and 10, l.c., 101 and 105 and Document of the Pontifical Council “Cor Unum” and the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People *Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity*, 5, in EV 13/40 (1992) 1023

¹⁹ See Guidelines of the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism, 10, l.c., 105 and *Ecclesia in America*, 65

residents, is often more precarious. As such, it is even more pressing that their fundamental rights be recognised and guaranteed”²⁰.

9. At the same time, the Church underlines the importance of defending the rights of migrants (within the framework of the “cultural profile” of a given country), and their compliance with obligations (including respect for the law and love of their host country), which is not solely limited “to the human person as an individual, but also encompasses the rights and duties of the community, groups and minorities”²¹. By recalling the teaching of Pope Paul VI, we should therefore affirm that: “We cannot remain indifferent in the face of the urgent need to build a human coexistence that universally guarantees the community and especially minorities the right to life, personal and social dignity, the development of a protected and improved environment and fair distribution of resources that are the fruit of nature and civilisation”²². In such a context of distributive justice, now is the time to deal with analysing the causes that drive people to leave their country and how to overcome them, but this would take our debate very far.

II. Demands for specific pastoral care

a. *The need for specialised training*

Regarding this important matter, we should briefly recall that the Church has repeatedly manifested the need for a serious commitment to training and the study of human mobility, and also emphasise that specific pastoral preparation is indispensable for this. As, for example: “Universities and seminaries, while freely able to choose their methods and curricula, will provide knowledge of fundamental matters, such as the different kinds of migration (permanent or seasonal, internal and international), the causes and consequences of movements, the key approaches of appropriate pastoral action and the study of pontifical documents and local Churches”²³.

b. *Updating of pastoral care and human mobility*

The constant evolution of human mobility also calls for underlining the signs of communion²⁴ and catholicity in new ways that are less locally linked. The diversity of pastoral methods and tools within the same local Church thus becomes prophecy that challenges a certain dullness and routine and embraces the Pentecostal model to overcome the new mayhems.

Without diminishing appreciation for local parishes, “mobility breeds concepts before institutions that go beyond the local level. In the pastoral vision, dioceses and parishes are not merely defined in geographical terms. They are called on to extend themselves to wherever their many faithful go and live”²⁵.

“Indeed, in traditionally Christian regions social phenomena have occurred that in themselves have already transformed the structures of society. Therefore, ecclesiastical structures should also be adapted to the new situation. It suffices to mention: the transmigration of people in industrial regions; the phenomenon of urban migration; the

²⁰ Pontifical Commission “Justitia et pax”, *The Church in the Face of Racism*, 29, in EV 11/38 (1988) 935-936 and *Ecclesia in America*, 65

²¹ Circular Letter from Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism to the Bishops’ Conferences, 18, *l.c.*, 23

²² Message to the UN on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in AAS LIII (1973) 677; see *Populorum Progressio*, 14, 32, 47, 49, 54 and 58, in AAS LIX (1967) 264, 273, 280, 281, 283 and 285; *Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity*, 8, 24, 33, *l.c.*, 1024, 1032, 1036; *Ecclesia in Africa*, 119; *Ecclesia in America*, 196, *Ecclesia in Europa*, 18

²³ Congregation for Catholic Education, Circular Letter to diocesan Ordinaries and Rectors of their seminaries on the pastoral care of human mobility in the training of future priests (1986), *Annex*, 3, in EV 10 (1986-1987) 8-15; see also *The Church and Human Mobility*, 33, *l.c.*, 35

²⁴ See Message 1992, 6, and *The Church and Human Mobility*, 8, *l.c.*, 15

²⁵ Circular Letter from the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism to the Bishops’ Conferences, 20, *l.c.*, 368

general problem of both economic and political migrants; the widespread phenomenon of long- and short-term tourism. Such phenomena call for renewed presence of priests who, in such changed circumstances, should take on specialised care of souls”²⁶.

c. Involvement among Churches and ecumenical and inter-religious collaboration

Above all, in so-called “ecumenical” documents, perspectives emerge that involve various Churches and religions, so by now their “collaboration for humanitarian, social, economic and political purposes designed to liberate and promote humankind”²⁷ should be habitual.

Today it will be possible to go deeper into this matter (thanks to the various speakers, fellow delegates and the round table), while even taking into account the growth in the West of Eastern rite Catholic migrants; we mention it here even though it is out of context.

Therefore, the ecumenical aspect of welcoming immigrants and refugees, and the positive repercussions that it may have on the relative dialogue - especially at its everyday heart - cannot be neglected. Moreover, other Churches and ecclesial communities also usually conduct dialogue and missionary action regarding immigrants and this makes comparison and real spiritual emulation inevitable, with the exclusion of any form of exploitation of immigrants or of proselytising, in the really negative sense of the word²⁸.

Today, there are so many migrants, men and women, of different religions, with just as many serious external reasons, who truly oblige us to undertake a concrete inter-religious dialogue. I am referring to an increasingly complex society, huge migrations of populations that lead to mixing of cultures and different religions and economic and social links between the North and the South²⁹. Dialogue, the transformation of closed minds and a love that is open to the innovation of life and history therefore hold central positions in our Christian identity: they are the positions of Jesus Christ, the Lord of history and vanquisher of death.

III. More recent developments

a. The culture of welcome and solidarity

“Welcome”³⁰ for the Church means discovering Christ in the faces of our brothers and sisters from far-off places, by respecting their deepest identity and not condemning them to anonymity, including within the local ecclesial fabric. As God calls each person by name, in Christ, migrants and refugees also wish to be called by name by the local Church, where there are no foreigners. Today, cultural “foreignness” thus becomes a request for the whole Church to “emigrate” and welcome the grace offered by other people. Indeed, the parish is the ideal place for hospitality and solidarity, but especially in the sense of a whole, integrated, exchanging and missionary pastoral care.

A decisive role is played here by agreed action between the Churches in the countries of arrival and origin. Indeed, the latter remains the mother Church that cannot abandon its children who leave, and towards whom it continues to show active concern and pastoral charity, like Christ the Good Shepherd. Therefore, periodic sharing of information between

²⁶ Holy Congregation for the Clergy, *Collaboration among local Churches*, 17, in EV 7/6 (1980) 259-260

²⁷ Secretariat for Non-Believers, *The Church's attitude to followers of other religions*, 31, in EV 9/51 (1984) 939. In another context, in 1986 the First Consultation on Asylum and Protection in Zurich, which led to the formation of the International and Ecumenical Consultative Committee for Refugees (IECCR), which for a period of time held annual meetings. Then in 1996, a Global Ecumenical Consultation was held in Ethiopia on the prophetic mission of Churches in response to global displacement of persons. Various forms of ecumenical collaboration exist at the grassroots, which are to be strengthened and encouraged.

²⁸ See Message 1990 *Migration and expansion of the Kingdom of God*, in L'Osservatore Romano, 22 September 1989

²⁹ See Circular Letter from the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism to the Bishops' Conferences 14, *l. c.*, 364

³⁰ See the Post-Synodal Exhortations *Ecclesia in Africa* 119, *Ecclesia in America* 65, *Ecclesia in Asia* 35; *Ecclesia in Europa* 103 and pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* 77, in AAS LXXIV (1978) 176

the Churches of arrival and origin, bilateral meetings between bishops and periodic mutual visits by representatives of the Churches will enable the bond of memory to be kept alive and also knowledge of the cultural and religious heritage of immigrants³¹, both forced and voluntary.

b. The “missio ad gentes” and the “missio ad migrantes”

It is beginning to emerge from the historical development of the matter at hand that, with immigrants, the *ad gentes* mission is coming to us Christians. Indeed, it is increasingly evident that many immigrants come precisely from those countries where Christian missionaries are sent. Together with the baptised, there are many immigrants from other religious faiths or with no faith. A person who is “sent”, whether from near or far is relative, may be considered as an *ad gentes* missionary.

In this respect, Pope John Paul II also underlines the need for explicit proclamation of Christ: “The presence of these brothers and sisters in traditionally Christian countries is a challenge for the ecclesial communities, and a stimulus to hospitality, dialogue, service, sharing, witness and direct proclamation. In Christian countries, communities and cultural groups are also forming which call for the mission *ad gentes*, and the local Churches, with the help of personnel from the immigrants' own countries and of returning missionaries, should respond generously to these situations”³².

c. The “missio migrantium”

Regarding missionaries, let's deal with a final, highly topical matter. A Catholic who, through emigration, has experienced the maternal face of the Church in its “missio ad migrantes” (mission *for* migrants), also discovers its more authentic vocation to participate in the “missio migrantium” (mission *of* migrants).

In this regard, Pope John Paul II says: “Due to migrations, peoples foreign to the Christian message have got to know, appreciated and often embraced the faith, thanks to the mediation of their own migrants who, having received the Gospel from their host population, brought the faith with them on return to their country of origin”³³.

The Church also urges the creation of a living space where the telling of the difficult experience of emigration, interpreted in the light of faith, leads to the discovery, through migration, of a priceless treasure, above all for the local Church of arrival. Therefore, a migrant is a living memorial to the call for all to be migrants, “aliens and strangers” (1 Peter 2:11). Indeed, for a Christian “every foreign land is a homeland and every homeland a foreign land”³⁴. Thus we are requested to leave the barren land of our selfishness and self-sufficiency to reach out to others, the image of the Other with a capital O, God himself. When migrants thus become prophecy of communion in diversity, dialogue and solidarity beyond borders, their meeting places will also increasingly turn from “ethnic islands” into “catholicity laboratories”, from arrival points to departure points, where all those who pass through breathe the pure air of the universal Church. And here we should talk about “pastoral voluntary work”, but the time allotted to me is running out³⁵.

Regarding this matter, I would just like to say that we have invited many of you here as observers precisely to open up - or because this has already been largely done - your

³¹ See Circular Letter from the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism to the Bishops' Conferences 19 e 23 *l.c.*, 367 and 369; *De Pastoralis Migratorum Cura* 22, *l. c.*, 625 and *Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity* 30, *l. c.*, 1035

³² Pope John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Missio*, 82 and also 33 and 37 in AAS LXXXIII (1991) 328, 278, 282; see also Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 18 and 29 in AAS LXVIII (1976) 17 and 25

³³ See Message 1990, 4, in L'Osservatore Romano, 22 September 1989

³⁴ Letter to Diognetus 5.1, quoted in Message 1999, 2, in L'Osservatorio Romano, 21 February 1999

³⁵ See Message 1988 *The Catholic Laity and Migration*, *l.c.*

associations and communities, and your movements, to the reality of voluntary and forced migration.

Conclusions

Migration involves suffering, trauma and humiliation, but it also includes Divine Providence with which, through the cross, Christians contemplate the resurrection. Thus we may confirm that the vitality of many Churches is due to immigration. “History,” said Pope John Paul II, “shows that where Catholic believers have been accompanied in their settlement in other countries, not only have they kept their faith, but they have also found a fertile soil for deepening, personalising and bearing witness to it through their lives. Over the centuries, migration has constantly been a vehicle for proclaiming the Christian message in entire regions”³⁶. Migration is, therefore, additional hope for the Church.

In any case, immigration, whether forced or voluntary, obliges us to rediscover the sign of catholicity, which gives us greater opportunity for ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue and calls on our charity – “*Caritas Christi urget nos*” (2 Corinthians 5:14) -, thus impelling the local Churches to open themselves up to the missionary cause. The *gentes* have all come to us – as we said – and are almost demanding a new “*implantatio ecclesiae*” (a Church that puts down roots). Isn’t this starting afresh from Christ and his command “Go ... and preach the Good News to all creation” (Mark 16:15)?

Forced and voluntary immigration thus highlight the need to carry out a radical transformation of institutions and people, in order to create and experience a culture of welcome, a Christian love that is genuine - rather than folkloristic or blind – for diverse cultures. Together with hospitality, this should include the grammar of dialogue, mutual respect and intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. So let’s use this grammar then!

Immigration also calls on Christians to practise doing something for nothing and the “risk” of giving. Aren’t these values intrinsically linked to starting afresh from Christ today?

While often materially poor, migrants give us an opportunity for personal and institutional conversion to Christ, whose face is inscribed on the disfigured ones of the penultimate in society. He himself has taken the last place, as the servant who washes our feet and is destined to die on the cross for our sins, “like a lamb led to slaughter” (Isaiah 53:7).

Are “martyrs” also necessary here? Yes, they are, as witnesses who also know how to incarnate a renewed vision of civil and religious society, starting afresh from Christ and the teaching of his Church, which is so plentiful, but perhaps little known and practised even less. Therefore, formulating a social doctrine does not go far enough. It must be put into practice.

Even among us there is therefore a risk that this conference will produce good conclusions and even a strong declaration, and then what? Let us then invoke the Holy Spirit to give us the strength to turn words into deeds! As the late lamented Don Giuseppe De Luca rightly wrote: “Words yes, but for what? Not problems, but deeds”³⁷.

³⁶ Message 2001, *The pastoral care of migrants: a way to fulfil the Church’s mission today*, 6, in L’Osservatore Romano 14 February 2001

³⁷ See *People on the Move*, no. 91-92, April-August 2003, p. 161

**STARTING AFRESH FROM CHRIST.
THE VISION OF THE CHURCH
FOR A MULTICULTURAL/INTERCULTURAL SOCIETY**

H.E. Cardinal Paul *POUPARD*
President of the Pontifical Council for Culture

Your Eminence,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is my great pleasure to speak to you this morning on a theme that is dear to me, and which is one of the great concerns of the Pontifical Council for Culture, but also of all men and women who are observing the profound changes taking place throughout the world, and who are striving to make it more humane, just and fraternal.

I would like to thank His Eminence, Cardinal Hamao, for kindly wishing to associate me with your reflection in presenting you a subject of common interest to the Pontifical Council for Culture and the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees in a field which is proving to be particularly crucial in this new millennium. The scandal of the ever-widening gap between rich and poor countries and the mirage of a better life in Western countries for billions of starving people, the terrible situations of injustice in too many parts of the world and “*the extraordinary global acceleration of that quest for freedom*” underlined by Pope John Paul II at the United Nations on 5 October 1995³⁸, are among the principal reasons for the massive exodus, a tragic human odyssey, which we are witnessing with some degree of impotence. The opportunities offered by the astonishing development of science and technology due to means of communication, and the enormous strides forward in transportation, contribute to the formation, under the influence of huge migration flows, of multicultural societies where men and women from contrasting cultures are required to dialogue – and far too often led to ignore each other – in a living space that seems to get ever smaller due to the effects of globalisation.

2. At the dawn of the new millennium, as the magnificent celebrations of the Great Jubilee of 2000 drew to a close, Pope John Paul II gave us his beautiful Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, and invited the Church to “*contemplate the face of Christ*” like a Bride who “*contemplates her treasure and joy*”, so as to “*set out once more on her journey, in order to proclaim Christ to the world at the dawn of the Third Millennium*”³⁹. Proclaiming the Gospel is not a quest for a magic formula that would dispel the great challenges of our times, but the presentation of a Person, Jesus Christ, who “*is to be known, loved and imitated, so that in him we may live the life of the Trinity, and with him transform history until its fulfilment in the heavenly Jerusalem*”. The programme of renewal which the Holy Father proposes is not “*a programme which changes with the shifts of times and cultures, even though it takes account of time and culture for the sake of true dialogue and effective communication*”. It is the programme for all times: “*Start afresh from Christ*”. So, our various Dicasteries at the Roman Curia encourage the “actors” of the many pastoral care sectors to

³⁸ See the *Speech* of Pope John Paul II to the United Nations, on 5 October 1995: “*On the threshold of a new millennium, we are witnessing an extraordinary global acceleration of that quest for freedom which is one of the great dynamics of human history. This phenomenon is not limited to any part of the world; nor is it the expression of any single culture. Men and women throughout the world, even when threatened by violence, have taken the risk of freedom, asking to be given a place in social, political and economic life which is commensurate with their dignity as free human beings. This universal longing for freedom is truly one of the distinguishing marks of our time.*” (no. 2).

³⁹ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 6 January 2001, no. 28.

“*Start afresh from Christ*”, which eloquently confirms the choice of the general theme of this important World Conference on the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees. Since Pentecost 1999, the Pontifical Council for Culture has wished to publish a document that responds – slightly in advance! – to the Holy Father’s request for a sincere and determined consideration of culture in the field of evangelisation. I have entitled this document: *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*.

3. “Taking account of the times and cultures” is not only a requirement of the *New Evangelisation*, but also one of the most outstanding characteristics of the Pontificate of Pope John Paul II, and a totally original contribution from the philosopher pope about whom Solzhenitsyn said the day after his election: “*This pope is a gift from God*”⁴⁰. Indeed, an explicit consideration of culture in the work of evangelisation is presented in the texts of the Second Vatican Council – indeed, it is one of the most remarkable characteristics of the originality of the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* – in the memorable encyclical of the Blessed Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, whose fortieth anniversary we celebrated last 11 April, and in the teaching of the Servant of God, Pope Paul VI, notably in *Ecclesiam Suam* and *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. But Pope John Paul II has brought a remarkable personal touch to this dimension of pastoral care, starting with the inaugural speech of his Pontificate, with these famous words: “*Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors to Christ! Open up national borders, economic and political systems, and the vast areas of culture, civilisation and development to his redeeming power. Do not be afraid! Christ knows what lies within humankind*”⁴¹. The creation of the Pontifical Council for Culture on 20 May 1982 is undoubtedly one of the most significant elements of this Wojtylian vision of the new evangelisation: “*Since the beginning of my Pontificate,*” wrote the Holy Father in the *Original Foundation Letter of the Pontifical Council for Culture*, “*I have considered the Church’s dialogue with the cultures of our times to be a vital area in which the destiny of the world at the end of the 20th century is at stake. There is a fundamental dimension, capable of consolidating or transforming the foundations of systems that structure the whole of humanity, and of freeing human existence – individual and collective – from the threats that loom over it. This fundamental dimension, is the wholeness of humankind. We live our lives fully thanks to culture*”.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his Pontificate, the Pontifical Council for Culture wished to offer the Holy Father an anthology of teaching ranging from Pope Leo XIII to Pope John Paul II. The figures speak for themselves: of 1,263 references, only 140 concern the texts of Popes Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII and Paul VI, while 1,123 refer to the speeches, encyclicals, apostolic exhortations, etc., of John Paul II. I suggest that you obtain a copy as the half an hour allotted to me allows me to make only a brief mention! However, I would like to mention the excellent summary of the vision of the Church’s teaching on the subject that concerns us which the Holy Father magnificently presented in his *Message for World Day of Peace* on 1 January 2001: “*Dialogue between cultures for a civilisation of love and peace*”.

4. As I said earlier, the transformation of living conditions linked to advances in science and technology calls for the taking up of certain challenges that characterise the cultural changes of our times. The third millennium is already marked by multiculturalism. People brought up in another culture, members of another religion, who are obviously different in their dress and ways of speaking, feeling and seeing the world and its events have become our neighbours, colleagues and friends. The evangelical ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity – so dear to the lay French republic – are now confronted with a very concrete

⁴⁰ See the title of my book: Cardinal Poupard, *Ce pape est un don de Dieu (This Pope is a Gift from God)*, Plon/Mame, 2001.

⁴¹ Pope John Paul II, *Homily at the beginning of his ministry as Supreme Pontiff of the Church*, 22 October 1978.

embodiment in human solidarity that goes beyond the borders of culture to the very heart of our societies. This, I am convinced, is one of the greatest challenges of the new millennium. A new, irreversible situation obliges today's men and women to enter into genuine dialogue with cultures and religions. I well know that it is an issue that is especially dear to you, because the migrants and refugees who you specifically take care of throughout the world are in a particularly uncomfortable situation. Almost always they have a rich cultural identity inherited from their country of origin, but they are often isolated amidst foreign cultures, which are sometimes strange for them, where they cannot find "reference points of humanity", which are natural for them. What I mean are all those almost unconscious behaviours that stem from cultures which give rise to concepts and beliefs that are particularly apt for ennobling people. This accounts for the cry of alarm sent out in the document *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*: "*Cultural uprooting, which has many causes, highlights in contrast the vital role of cultural roots. People broken by wounds or loss of identity become a fertile soil for dehumanising practices*"⁴².

5. Mentioning multiculturalism and interculturalism obliges me to raise the question of this highly complex phenomenon to which the identity of a people refers.

While the identity of a people comes from its culture, the latter is rooted in people's creative capacities and ability to adapt to their fellow human beings and their natural environment. Since each person is unique, peoples are different because people are capable of creating a society with their fellow human beings. The cultural dimension takes shape in specific conditions of historical and geographical development, and calls for a certain stability regarding time and place, at least for a large part of the members of this society. The multiplicity and complexity of these conditions lead societies to give concrete expression to their human heritage through a diversity of cultural identities.

6. In the Pastoral Constitution, *Gaudium et Spes*, the **Second Vatican Council** strongly emphasised the link between culture and humanity: "*Man comes to a true and full humanity only through culture*" (no. 53). Given our historical condition, because our existence takes place within time, we are both the children and the creators of our own culture, and consequently of our identity. This therefore takes account of the heritage of the past and its history; so it is rooted in memory, but it also implies a future and progress, which makes it a dynamic reality. But humankind is more than its culture.

While it is a dynamic reality, because it is alive, culture does not allow itself to be imprisoned within definitions and models, which are always simplistic. Like a living being, it is nourished by what each person brings to it, and its developments are unpredictable as it is subject to choices made by people. As the Holy Father underlined in his *Message for the World Day of Peace* on 1 January 2001: "*On the question of cultural integration..., it is not easy to specify in detail how best to guarantee, in a balanced and equitable way, the rights and duties of those who welcome and those who are welcomed. Historically, migrations have occurred in all sorts of ways and with very different results. In the case of many civilisations, immigration has brought new growth and enrichment. In other cases, the local people and immigrants have remained culturally separate but have shown that they are able to live together, respecting each other and accepting or tolerating the diversity of customs. Regrettably, situations still exist in which the difficulties involved in the encounter of different cultures have never been resolved, and the consequent tensions have become the cause of periodic outbreaks of conflict.*"

How should we react to these worrying situations? A number of questions arise immediately. Are migrants and refugees called on to give up their original cultural identity and melt into the culture of the host country? If, as we believe, they should enter into fruitful

⁴² Pontifical Council for Culture, *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, 23 May 1999, no. 8.

dialogue with the surrounding culture, should it be on a basis of equality? Or should be like the blind man of Jericho who cries out his wretchedness and destitution?

7. In his Message, *Dialogue between cultures for a civilisation of love and peace*, the Holy Father highlights some fundamental ethical principles that provide a framework for these questions:

Immigrants must always be treated with the respect due to the dignity of every human person, and the consideration which should rightly be given to the common good should not ignore this principle.

To combine the welcome due to every human being, especially when in need, with a reckoning of what is necessary for both the local inhabitants and the new arrivals to live a dignified and peaceful life.

*The cultural practices which immigrants bring with them should be respected and accepted, as long as they do not contravene either the universal ethical values inherent in the natural law or fundamental human rights.*⁴³

For Pope John Paul II, determining to what extent immigrants have the right to public legal recognition of their specific cultural expressions poses a real difficulty. He suggests that the solution to this problem is linked to *a realistic evaluation of the common good* at a precise historical moment and in a given local and social situation. The common good of a people calls for a certain “cultural equilibrium”, which encourages fair development of those who have been settled in a place since they were born. This equilibrium, while welcoming minorities and respecting their basic rights, allows for “*the continued existence and development of a particular ‘cultural profile’, by which I mean that basic heritage of language, traditions and values which are inextricably part of a nation’s history and its national identity*”.⁴⁴ Pope John Paul II points out: “*Clearly, though, the need to ensure the equilibrium in a region’s cultural profile cannot be met by legislative measures alone, since these would prove ineffectual unless they were grounded in the ethos of the population. They would also be inevitably destined to change should a culture lose its ability to inspire a people and a region, becoming no more than a legacy preserved in museums or in artistic and literary monuments. In effect, as long as a culture is truly alive, it need have no fear of being displaced. And no law could keep it alive if it were already dead in people’s hearts*”.⁴⁵

As we can see, the Church stresses the importance of a dialogue between cultures in which one proposes to the other values that are its own. However, in its wisdom it points out that this dialogue should take place within the exacting framework of respect for people’s freedom and conscience, and the necessary “cultural equilibrium” required by the common good of people. The Church has this conscience through its trust in the strength of truth, as was magnificently expressed by the Second Vatican II in its introduction to the Declaration on Religious Freedom, *Dignitatis Humanae*: “*The truth cannot impose itself except by virtue of its own truth, as it makes its entrance into the mind at once quietly and with power*”.⁴⁶ I believe that only a country where a culture of welcome is developed will be able to reconcile - without giving in to indifference towards the values offered to it – the requirements of legitimate protection of its own identity with those of a fruitful intercultural dialogue. Otherwise, there is a risk that those coming in from outside will be forced to retreat into their identity, which is always dangerous.

8. In a speech at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, at an international conference jointly organised by the Pontifical Council for Culture and the International Catholic Centre for UNESCO, on the theme: *A new humanism for the third millennium*, it fell to me to recall the

⁴³ See Pope John Paul II, Message for the World Day of Peace: “Dialogue between cultures for a civilisation of love and peace”, 1 January 2001, nos. 13-15.

⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, no. 14.

⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, no. 15.

⁴⁶ Second Vatican Council, *Declaration on religious freedom, Dignitatis Humanae*, no. 1.

special mission of the Church called on to bring together men and women from all nations (see *Mark* 11:17). And I pointed out: “*The originality of a culture, far from identifying itself by closing in on itself, implies opening up to the universal. The Church’s cultural pluralism is not a juxtaposition of opposing worlds, but rather the complementarity of many-faceted riches*”.⁴⁷ Indeed, it is because cultures bring humanity, and as such are open to the universal, that dialogue between them is possible. Countless examples, notably in the arts, bear witness to this. It may be seen, for example, in leading orchestras in such places as that temple of Italian music, the National Academy of Saint Cecilia, where a Korean conductor brilliantly interprets the great composers of German, Italian or French classical music.

People grow by wishing to discover in their fellow human beings another way of seeing, feeling and understanding the world, one’s neighbour and God himself. This, in any case, is my profound belief, which has guided my life of service at the Holy See for the last twenty years, since, on 20 June 1980 the Holy Father asked me to leave the Catholic Institute in Paris of which I was Rector, to found the Pontifical Council for Culture at the Roman Curia and participate closely as a member in the activities of the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue.

9. The beginning of the new millennium has been deeply and sadly marked by significant events: the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, armed intervention in Iraq and continuing violence in the Middle East. Whatever differences there may be in interpretations of them, these events highlight the danger of retreat into identity and the seriousness of the situations they are likely to engender. In many cases, tension centred on identity aims to seek justification in religion, namely in its unwarranted and immoral use to legitimise a strategy based on the use of violence. Indeed, religious power can exercise true fascination when it presents itself as an absolute power that will tolerate no dissent and aims to seek justification in a higher reason held to be revealed. This deviation of religion calls for unequivocal reprobation, as Pope John Paul II goes on stating forcefully. Many politicians and media, together with international organisations are justifiably intimidated by conflicts that mix God with political ambitions, revolutionary violence, fundamentalism and destructive hatred. And the same goes for arrogant attempts to dominate the world in accordance with simplistic models whose error primarily lies in the lack of any serious and fair consideration of the culture *of other people*.

This shows to what extent our theme for today’s work is pressingly topical. Indeed, its relevance, which particularly affects migrants and refugees, concerns not only all humankind, because *there is no culture without humankind*, but also God himself, because his image is falsified and misrepresented by the ideologues of self-adulation and contempt for others in the name of God, who is scandalously usurped and wrongly invoked.

10. While the identity of a people manifests its particularity, at the same time it aspires towards the universal through the best it has to offer, due to its roots in human nature. A culture is not truly human until it contains openness towards other cultures, to the universal. The requirements of particularity establish the rights of cultural identities; those of universality establish the duties that stem from it, towards other cultures and the whole of humanity.⁴⁸ And the first of these duties in a multicultural society is intercultural dialogue, in respect of otherness - and not imposition of economic, political or legal regulations which

⁴⁷ International conference, *A new humanism for the third millennium*, jointly organised by the Pontifical Council for Culture and the International Catholic Centre for UNESCO, 3 and 4 May 1999, p. 16.

⁴⁸ See Pontifical Council for Culture, *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, no. 10, 23 May 1999: “*While the rights of a nation express particular requirements, it is no less important to emphasise universal requirements, with the duties they imply for each nation regarding other nations and humankind as a whole. The primary duty is undoubtedly to live in a spirit of peace, respect and solidarity with others... While nationalism implies contempt or even hatred for other nations or cultures, patriotism is an appropriate particular – but not exclusive – love of and service to one’s country and people, as remote from cosmopolitanism as it is from cultural nationalism. Each culture aspires to the universal through the best it has to offer.*”

would tend to create a living space of illusory neutrality - where men and women losing their identities would be called on to coexist in harmony and peace.

Since the dawn of time, numerous societies have formed in which history, customs, language, artistic expression, technologies, philosophy and religion differ. Even within nations, some minority communities aspire to live differently from the majority, according to their own characteristics, whether relating to language, ethnic origin, religion or customs, without seeking to separate themselves from the political organisation of which the state is the legal expression. Therefore, care must be taken not to reduce the identity of a country or a continent to the terms of political identity – whether existing or still only desired. Just as all people have the right to recognition and respect for their identity, which in no way subtracts from their duties toward the community, so any cultural minority has the right to recognition of its own identity. This right is inherent to its own nature, which enhances it in the eyes of society as a whole and facilitates its integration within peoples as a whole. On the contrary, its non-respect is a source of humiliation for a group of people, leads to substantial claims being lodged, and often takes the form of extreme violence.

My dear friends, the tragic current events of the beginning of the third millennium amply demonstrate, in many regions of the world, not only the relevance of this thorny issue, but above all the sad situations that may arise. Fear generally causes rejection of others, and history teaches us that rejections, deportations and radical exclusion engender destabilisation and violence. Fear is born out of weakness and often explodes into violence. We must contribute toward the **education** of peoples for a *culture of intercultural dialogue*, to do our utmost to so that the fundamental values of civilisation remain as the stable foundation of our modern, changing societies. This is to say to what extent a reflection on interculturality in a multicultural society should profoundly understand human beings and their culture, admirable expressions, recurrent temptations and possible transgressions. The Church is striving with love in the light of Christ. Only he can reveal who we truly are, and he gives us the Gospel and the Beatitudes to help us live in his grace for a more just life, which is more welcoming to others, a life of love and peace. Yes, it is from Christ that we must start afresh, because *He alone knows what lies within humankind!*

**STARTING AFRESH FROM CHRIST.
THE VISION AND THE GUIDELINES OF THE CHURCH FOR
ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE**

Card. Walter *KASPER*
President, Pontifical Council for
Promoting Christian Unity

In his message for the 89th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2003, Pope John Paul II says that migration has become widespread in the modern world, and that it represents a challenge for the Catholic Church. The Holy Father speaks of the various causes of migration and the serious problems connected with it, but in the same document he also states: “It hardly needs to be said that mixed cultural communities offer unique opportunities to deepen the gift of unity with other Christian Churches and ecclesial communities”.

This interweaving between migration and ecumenism, and this opportunity for enrichment through migration, also correspond to my personal experience. I am referring to what happened in my country. After the Second World War, the arrival of many German refugees in West Germany from the former regions of East Germany was one of the factors that gave rise to ecumenism. The Allies had moved Catholics to Protestant regions and Protestants to Catholic regions. From then on, exclusively Catholic and exclusively Protestant regions ceased to exist. The two communities living side by side became more or less the norm. In the post-war period of great hardship, when everyone was poor and there wasn't much to share together, Catholics were often the guests of Protestant Churches and vice versa. This led to the development of mutual friendship. Later on, during the 1960s and 1970s, economic migration brought many workers to Germany, the so-called *Gastarbeiter*, who came mainly from Southern Europe. In the 1990s, during the period of war in the Balkans, many refugees came from Bosnia. At first, we looked on their religious customs as something unknown, foreign to our culture, but later we felt enriched and now these people are often an integral part of our ecclesial life.

I would like to thank the Scalabrinian Sisters for their invaluable work devoted to the social and religious integration of thousands of people in our diocese. The encounter with so many migrants and refugees has raised a new awareness among us of the universality of our Church and our catholicity.

Having said this, I have to admit that from an ecumenical point of view migration also entails serious problems and dangers, such as relativism and indifferentism. These exist mainly where immigrants are not well received and integrated within Catholic communities. The danger of tensions and xenophobia is particularly acute where a climate of closed parochialism prevails, a parochialism that is exclusivist and anti-ecumenical.

Migration therefore provides an opportunity and a challenge to reflect on the urgency, foundations, nature, methods and purposes of an ecumenism within the meaning of what was proclaimed by the Second Vatican Council. This is no ordinary ecumenism. It is an ecumenism in accordance with Catholic principles, as illustrated in the Council Decree “*Unitatis Redintegratio*” (1964), which was specifically explained in the *Directory for the Application of Ecumenical Principles and Rules* (1993) and further illustrated in the encyclical on ecumenical commitment “*Ut Unum Sint*” (1995) and in many other documents by the Holy Father and responsible dicasteries of the Holy See.

1. The foundations of ecumenism: The Second Vatican Council regarded ecumenism as a response to the signs of the times, a period marked by ambiguous globalisation where

different cultures and religions, and different creeds, are very close to one another. Given this world situation, we are more deeply aware that the division between Christ's disciples is against the wishes of Christ himself, who, on the eve of his death, prayed that "all of them may be one" (*John 17:21*). "Believing in Christ means wanting unity" (*UUS 9*). Consequently, ecumenism is not a secondary attribute or an appendage to pastoral care, but rather belongs to the Church's very being (*UUS 8; 20*).

Therefore, ecumenism is not a consequence of humanism or liberal philanthropy, or of a vague sense of family, but derives from starting afresh from Christ and is rooted in recognition of a single Baptism. Ecumenism starts afresh from Christ, whose redeeming work goes beyond any race or nation and is truly universal. Ecumenism goes far beyond an act of ecumenical courtesy and constitutes a fundamental ecclesiological statement (*UUS 42*).

What is this ecclesiological statement? The Council deems that the Church of Christ exists in the Catholic Church, and only fully exists in the Catholic Church (*Dominus Jesus, 16*), but this does not preclude that beyond its visible being there are many elements of sanctification and truth which, as gifts of the Church of Christ, move towards Catholic unity (*LG 8; UR 3 s*). The decree on ecumenism speaks of many announced elements including: the written Word of God, the life of grace, faith, hope and charity, and other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit and visible elements (*UR 3*). The Council even says: Though the separated Churches and ecclesial communities are deficient in some respects, the Spirit of Christ has not refrained from using them as means of salvation (*UR 3*). Therefore, beyond the Catholic Church there is not an ecclesial vacuum (*UUS 13*).

2. The nature of ecumenical dialogue: Like anything else, ecumenical dialogue is also subject to misunderstanding and abuse. Such dialogue has sometimes become a slogan that conceals a spirit of relativism, indifferentism and pluralism as a matter of principle, which nowadays largely prevails in our civilisation. Ecumenical dialogue is sometimes also mistaken for false irenics which may lead to sham solutions, with compromises reduced to the lowest common denominator, or to an opportunistic and pragmatic indifference that loses sight of the question of truth.

The Declaration "*Dominus Jesus*" rightly rejected such attitudes which contradict the need for the truth of the Gospel. Ecumenical dialogue should be dialogue based on love and truth. This is because truth without love is cold and often repugnant, while love without truth is insincere and empty. It is a question of living truth in love (*Ephesians 4:15*).

Properly understood, ecumenical dialogue is not at odds with the need for truth; on the contrary, it is at the service of a full awareness of truth. As such dialogue is completely different from uncommitted small talk, it penetrates the depths of human existence and its orientation towards truth. Therefore, for Pope John Paul II, dialogue is an obligatory stage on the way towards human self-fulfilment, of each individual as well as each community (*UUS 28*).

No human mind, culture or theological formulation, however profound, can exhaust the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (*Ephesians 3:8*). However, we have the promise of Christ's Spirit that guides us into all truth (*John 16:13*). By means of the Holy Spirit, God continuously speaks with the Church and introduces believers to the whole truth (*DV 8*).

Ecumenical dialogue is a way in which the Spirit of God leads us deeper into the truth entrusted to the Church. Indeed, ecumenical dialogue is much more than an exchange of ideas, which is interesting but uncommitted, or than a debate on ecclesial policy. This isn't even a purely academic matter or a meeting between experts. It is an "exchange of gifts" (*UUS 28*). Therefore, the dialogue doesn't intend to take anything away from the truth; it doesn't intend to abandon any of the richness that is given us by our faith. On the contrary, it may enrich us with greater insight and with new aspects that until now have been less

contemplated by the one faith that is Jesus Christ himself (*John 14:6*). Ecumenical dialogue may thus concretely help us to more fully realise the Church's own catholicity (*LG 13; UR 4*).

For example, as Catholics we have learnt a great deal from our Evangelical brothers and sisters about the importance of the Bible and the proclamation of the Word of God. They have learnt from us the importance of liturgical symbols and above all the Eucharist; and from Orthodox Christians we can rediscover the sense of mystery of the liturgy.

Understood in this light, the ecumenical dialogue is a profoundly spiritual dialogue. This is not possible without personal conversion and institutional renovation (*UR 4*). The spirit of prayer should be the essence of any ecumenical dialogue (*UUS 21-27*). Indeed, in the final analysis, we are not able to "make" full unity; we may only request it as a gift from the Holy Spirit. This is why the Week of Prayer for the unity of all Christians is so important.

3. Ecumenical dialogue in practice: It is not possible in this context and with such limited time to present all the possibilities that are open to ecumenical dialogue. The above-mentioned *Ecumenical Directory* refers to many. For the pastoral care of migrants and refugees, the attitude and practice of hospitality according to the Rule of Saint Benedict are appropriate: to receive a guest like Christ himself (*Chapter 53*). In practice this means willingness to open our churches for liturgical use, our community centres, our shelters, our Catholic schools, etc.

All of this should be done with no sign of proselytising. Proselytism is the expression of a closed and exclusivist ecclesiology, which explains the "extra ecclesiam nulla salus" in the narrow sense, goes against the interpretation given by the Second Vatican Council and practically denies that the Holy Spirit may also operate beyond the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church. The decree on ecumenism states that the preparation and reconciliation of individuals who wish to have full Catholic communion is by nature different from the ecumenical initiative, but, on the other hand, there is no opposition between the two initiatives (*UR 4*).

Normally a distinction is made between the dialogue of love, namely the dialogue of life and collaboration in social, political and charity fields – especially in refugee camps – and the dialogue of truth, namely an exchange on what we have in common in our faith, what elements of it divide us and on the differences in our faith. The theological dialogue is the head; the spiritual dialogue is the heart; and ecumenical collaboration represents the hands of ecumenism. Therefore, it is a mistake to concentrate everything on the problem of Eucharistic communion, which for the Catholic Church is normally linked to ecclesial communion. The rules may be found in the decree on ecumenism (*UR 8*), the *Ecumenical Directory* (*nos. 122-136*) and once again in the encyclical "Ecclesia de Eucharistia" (2003) (*nos. 44-46*), and do not need to be repeated here.

4. The ecumenical purpose: The ultimate purpose of any dialogue is, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, to expand existing partial communion towards full communion in truth and love (*UUS 14*). Full communion, on the model of the primitive community of Jerusalem, is not a pluralism of Churches that live amicably alongside each other, but rather a communion of faith, sacraments, especially the Eucharist, and apostolic teaching (*Acts 2:42*) (*LG 14*).

In this sense, unity does not mean uniformity. The Church is modelled on the Holy Trinity: one God in the diversity of three persons (*LG 4; UR 2*). Therefore, within this unity there should be room for the diversity of the liturgy, theology, spirituality and discipline. Such diversity is not deficiency or weakness, but rather the expression of the abundant richness and beauty of the Church. Via the encounter and exchange with the cultures and religious customs of migrants, our Catholic communities lose their character, which is often too national, ethnic

or limited by a sense of social belonging, and become more catholic. Migrants do not only receive; they also have a great deal to offer.

Overcoming the scandal of separation and re-establishing full unity in diversity are in no way ends in themselves. They should make the face of the Church shine in a new way, in all its beauty, and make it attractive so that it can carry out its task of evangelising the world, a task that becomes increasingly urgent as migration brings the believers of other religions among us. Therefore, we must do our best to make the new millennium an ecumenical one, so that the world may believe (*John 17:21*).

**STARTING AFRESH FROM CHRIST.
THE VISION AND GUIDELINES OF THE CHURCH
FOR INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE**

Archbishop Pier Luigi *CELATA*
Secretary, Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue

One of the effects of the growing phenomenon of migration and refugees is unquestionably that of creating, at least in some regions, a pluralism of ethnicity, culture and belief over a very short span of time.

Faced with such a situation, frequently associated with poverty and marginalisation, we and the whole of society, are clearly called to action; and as Christians we must answer above all in terms of solidarity, acceptance, and charity. We are mindful, moreover, that we must take up the challenge of considering migrants and refugees with attention to their most profound identity, in other words to the cultural traditions and religious beliefs which are their soul. This is what the Holy Father indicated last year in his Message for the 88th World Day of Migrants and Refugees the theme of which was, in fact, “Migration and Inter-religious Dialogue”.

From this perspective, as the Message itself says, the phenomenon of migration may be favourably viewed as an opportunity ripe for the development of inter-religious dialogue, a dialogue which is “one of the most important challenges of our age”.

The meaning of the term “inter-religious dialogue” is well known: it refers “not only to discussion but also to all positive and constructive inter-religious exchanges with people and communities of other faiths, with the aim of mutual knowledge and reciprocal enrichment” (1).

This is a relatively recent development in the Church; in its proper sense, it dates back to the period and climate of Vatican Council II.

In 1964 Pope Paul VI, by establishing the Secretariat for non-Christians and with his first Encyclical *Ecclesiam suam*, clearly demonstrated a new sensitivity and a new attitude towards other religious traditions.

The Vatican declaration, *Nostra aetate*, on “the Church’s dealings with non-Christian religions”, approved on 28th October 1965 (in other words almost at the end of the Council), marks the point the Council Fathers’ reflections had reached and represents a milestone on the road of inter-religious dialogue.

Other documents of Vatican II also cast light on important elements for a profound reflection on such dialogue: *Lumen gentium*, *Gaudium et spes* and *Dignitatis humanae*.

The Council’s Magisterium has subsequently been taken up and developed in important works of Pope John Paul II, especially his first Encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*; as well as in documents published by the then Secretariat for non-Christians (*The Attitude of the Catholic Church towards the Followers of Other Religious Traditions: reflections on Dialogue and Mission*, 1984), and by the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue together with the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples (*Dialogue and Proclamation*, 1991).

We must also remember a powerfully symbolic event which expressed a new awareness of the value of dialogue: the *World Day of Prayer for Peace* celebrated by the Holy Father at Assisi on 27th October 1986, and also attended by exponents of the world’s greatest religious traditions. Since that “Day” inter-religious sensitivity and initiatives have arisen at

the local level which draw inspiration from the “spirit of Assisi”. In the same perspective, an Inter-religious Assembly was held in the Vatican from 25-28 October 1999 on the eve of the Great Jubilee, and a Day of Prayer took place on 24th January 2002 in Assisi, when, in the climate following the attacks of 11th September 2001, religious leaders sought to express before the world their commitment to building peace, in keeping with the most authentic religious consciousness.

A rapid glance at the Council documents, the subsequent Magisterium, and contributions from the various Dicasteries of the Roman Curia, enables us to identify: (A) the theological foundations of inter-religious dialogue, (B) the various forms that dialogue takes, (C) certain conditions necessary for that dialogue.

A. Theological foundations.

At the source of “dialogue” we find the very mystery of the One and Triune God, the love that unites the Father to the Son in the communion of the Holy Spirit.

The Father creates each person in his image in such a way that “all humanity forms a single family with a common origin”. Moreover, God wants all men to be saved and thus, “all are called to a common destiny which is the fullness of life in God” (2). However, he respects the dignity of human beings whom he made free and responsible (3).

This universal love of salvation is communicated to men in Christ, the one Mediator and Redeemer, in whom is the fullness of truth and grace. He is the Word who illuminates through his sacrifice and is the reason for the salvation of all men and women.

Gaudium et spes defines Christ’s redeeming mission in these terms: “by his incarnation the Son of God has united himself in some fashion with every man”. Salvation is offered not only to Christians but also to “all men of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way. For, ... Christ died for all men, and ... the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine” (4).

Echoing that conciliar Declaration, in his *Redemptor Hominis* the Holy Father stresses with force that: “man – every man without any exception whatever – has been redeemed by Christ, and because with man – with each man without any exception whatever – Christ is in a way united, even when man is unaware of it, Christ, who died and was raised up for all, provides man – each man and every man – with the light and the strength to measure up to his supreme calling” (5).

In *Gaudium et spes* it is also written that “we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit, in a manner known only to God, offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery” (6). Preparing to proclaim the Gospel, and with reference to Christ and the Church, the Holy Spirit “acts not only in the depths of consciences”, accompanying “the secret path of hearts towards the Truth” (7), but also in the “history of peoples, in culture and in religions” (8), “beyond the confines of the Mystical Body” (9), anticipating and accompanying their journey (10).

The Church, then, “feels committed to discerning the signs” of the presence of the Spirit, to “following it” and to “serving it” (11).

“The Kingdom of God is the final goal for all men. The Church, which is its ‘seed and origin’, is called ... to bring the rest of humanity to advance towards that Kingdom” (12).

In keeping with the salvific wishes of the Fathers, during Vatican Council II the Church (which contains in herself all her Lord’s richness of grace) became more clearly aware of being, in Christ, a “universal sacrament of salvation” (13); in other words “a sign and instrument of intimate union with God and of the unity of the entire human race” (14). As such she is “at the service of the truth of the Kingdom of God, in the union of all men with God and in the unity of men among themselves”.

This brief biblical-theological overview has presented some of the principal elements that form the basis of a “positive approach” (15) to non-Christian religious traditions and to

the practice of inter-religious dialogue. The Council Fathers recognised that “true and good things” (16) exist in different religions, “rays of truth that illuminate all mankind” (17), “elements of truth and grace” (18), “seeds of the Word” (19) which, if scattered, not only “in the hearts and minds of men, but also in the rites and cultures of peoples” (20), enable dialogue to be opened between followers of different religious traditions.

The Council’s fundamental teaching on the value of different religions and on the Church’s approach towards them is clearly expressed in the Declaration, *Nostra aetate*: “The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men”. Such an approach, however, does not cloud the evangelical imperative to proclaim Christ incessantly, “‘the way, the truth, and the life’ (John 14, 6), in whom men may find the fullness of religious life, and in whom God has reconciled all things to himself”.

“The Church, therefore, exhorts her sons, that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognise, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among these men” (21).

B. At a practical level, this conciliar exhortation represents a clear point of reference for those dealing with the phenomenon of religious pluralism.

The experience acquired and the perspectives opened in the course of dialogue have enabled – as indicated in the 1984 document published by the then Secretariat for non-Christians (and repeated in the document of 1991) – four forms of dialogue to be distinguished:

1) The dialogue of life. This is a particular style in our dealings with others, a style animated by a “spirit of openness and good neighbourliness” in sharing their joys and sorrows, their problems and concerns (22). It implies respect, attention, interest towards others, accepting them in their individual identities, their values and their modes of expression, even if different from our own.

At heart, this is all fairly simple and could almost be taken for granted, because it may be applied to our relationships with all people if we are to live together in a civilised way. Yet it is precisely at this level that – overcoming the temptation to give exclusive attention to personal and community interests – we can open an authentically evangelical dialogue with those who hold religious beliefs different from our own. Moreover, this element of dialogue has even more importance, because it is fundamental in order to approach (in the spirit of the Parable of the Good Samaritan) those who, like many migrants and refugees, live in poverty, or even in utter misery and marginalisation. In this approach, we must be particularly attentive to their religious diversity, to certain forms of devotion, to certain customs.

In this field, and especially concerning Muslims, problems sometimes arise as regards prayer and places of worship. Our sense of respect and charity towards them stimulate us to make efforts to help find a solution. Of course, as *Nostra aetate* also recommends, prudence would suggest that we do not present our own faithful with contrasting messages. For example, churches should never be conceded to followers of other religions for their prayer and worship, so as to avoid the risk of confusion in the ordinary Catholic faithful.

2) Apart from “good neighbourliness” – which remains the foundation of respectful, united and harmonious coexistence – we must also consider the “dialogue of works”. The Holy Father has repeatedly invited religious leaders to collaborate in promoting and defending the dignity and fundamental rights of all mankind and of each individual. This can and, indeed, does happen at local, national and international level, with clear benefits for the common service of man.

It is in this context that particular consideration must be given to the Pope's call to respect the right of religious freedom. On this matter, his words in the interest of all religions – pronounced to the Interior Ministers of the European Union on 31st October this year – are most significant: “The guarantee and promotion of religious freedom represent a ‘test’ of the respect for other rights, and are accomplished by providing adequate juridical discipline for the various religious confessions as a guarantee of their respective identities and their freedom”.

Active collaboration also finds a wide scope of expression in aid and solidarity initiatives as, for example, following natural disasters.

3) In a religiously pluralist society it is important that the followers of the various religions do not feel threatened in their respective traditions. Confusion concerning one's own religious doctrine, theology, precepts and practice creates fear which, in its turn, opens the way to prejudice, hostility and violence.

For this reason dialogue between experts and specialists is also important, the aim being to achieve greater clarity with regard to one's own religious doctrine and that of others. Such dialogue, on the one hand, helps the followers of a religion to remain faithful to their identity and, on the other, opens them to a more accurate knowledge concerning the religions of others.

4) Finally, between people of profound spiritual life, a dialogue of religious experience may arise through the exchange of experiences of meditation, prayer and the search for the Absolute.

On exceptional occasions, meetings for meditation and prayer may take place during which participants, while avoiding any kind of syncretism, pray according to their own traditions, perhaps for some shared goal.

C. Inter-religious dialogue, when practised according to the directives of the Church, can become a source of hope and an opportunity for reconciliation within the human family.

It is unfortunate that religions are sometimes held to be one of the causes behind many of problems in the world today. It is undoubtedly the case that religions are often exploited by certain people. However, rather than letting these problems grow, religions can certainly contribute to solving them.

It is, then, necessary to make increased efforts to promote inter-religious dialogue.

Those people committed to forging relations and building bridges between conflicting religious groups, well know just how difficult the road of dialogue is.

On this matter, the Holy Father has said: “Dialogue is not always easy or free from suffering. Misunderstandings may arise, prejudices may block the way to common agreement and the hand offered in sign of friendship may be rejected. Great patience is always necessary because the fruits will arrive, but in due time” (Sai 1, 3)” (23).

Those who sow in tears will reap with joy (24). Contact with the followers of other religions is often a source of great happiness and encouragement. Starting afresh from Christ, we discover how the Father works, through the power of the Spirit, in the minds and hearts of all people of good will, at times also through their rites and customs, in order to accomplish his design of love for all mankind.

THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

His Grace Ian *GEORGE*
Archbishop of Adelaide
(Australia)

The Anglican Communion, which includes some 77 million persons around the globe, is divided into 38 autonomous provinces, each of which includes a significant number of independent dioceses gathered into a kind of federated relationship. The Mispersed authority" of this Communion has made it difficult to develop an effective international response to refugee and migrant issues.

As a result, Anglican provinces have worked ecumenically as well as through local or national missionary agencies responding to Third World poverty and associated issues and generating overseas aid programs. In the United States, for example, the Episcopal Church is very active in the work of the national Council of Churches of the United States. In Great Britain the Church of England is much involved in the work of Christin Aid as associated with the British Council of Churches. In Australasia and Canada the same pattern is observed.

Each national or regional province tends to have its own overseas aid body as an official organ. A great deal of work is done in raising funds for overseas aid and development projects, for education programs and for the care of refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers overseas and also upon resettlement in that particular province.

The provinces of the Anglican Communion have been active in advocacy for refugees and migrants. In the late 20th century the Anglican Communion Migrant and Refugee Network was created which at one stage had representatives from more than 25 separate provinces. This network has held infrequent global gatherings as a result of a lack of funds, but work has been done through the office of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the office of the Anglican Observer to the United Nations in appropriate advocacy.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Since September 11th, 2001, refugees around the world have been losing ground, especially in the United States where the word "security " has expressed an insular concern for national safety against the depredations of terrorists. Terrorism is understood to come from "outside" and thus all refugees and asylum-seekers are invariably stereotyped as potential terrorists. Hence the burden of proof has fallen to victims to establish that they are victims, thus increasing their experience of trauma. In a variety of ways, the fear about "outsiders" emanating from the events of September 11th has resulted in more restrictive policies toward refugees by virtually all nations, leaving the victims more victimized and desperate. This more nationalistic view of security neglects consideration of the profound insecurity inherent in the lives of refugees and asylum seekers.

The same xenophobia, racism, and fear have been experienced in Canada, Europe, Africa and Australia. Scarce government resources have been applied to "security" issues and immigration staff cut at home and abroad. Applications for refugee status and asylum have been much delayed as a result.

The development of detention policies has been widely used as a means of discouraging prospective asylum seekers from seeking asylum as well as a way of isolating "outsiders" from civil society until an overworked and highly suspicious bureaucracy can

assess their claims. It is estimated that in the course of a year, 200,000 persons coming to the US will experience some form of detention.

The churches in many countries have sought to be advocates for refugees, but conservative governments have been less and less inclined to listen to the churches and rather respond to segments of the community where a sense of fear and insecurity has allowed the restrictive policies of governments to be accepted. In Australia, the Minister for Foreign Affairs has attacked the churches for speaking out on these and other issues.

The churches need to show a greater sense of moral urgency and speak out against these insular and sinful attitudes and embrace educational programs to inform the public, especially church members, about these serious violations of civil liberties and the human consequences of adopting more restrictive policies in the treatment of refugees and immigrants. We need to join forces with human rights organizations, encouraging our governments to sign an faithful to the international conventions relating to refugees and asylum seekers and to their own democratic principles.

We need to encourage UN member nations to give more generously to the UNHCR which has the international mandate for the care and protection of refugees worldwide. At present, this agency is woefully under funded. With a significant slowdown in the resettlement of refugees in countries which have traditionally welcomed refugees, UNHCR 's role is even more important in caring for millions of refugees around the world. As hospitality for those fleeing persecution becomes more scarce, the UNHCR's mandate is severely challenged and thus needs to be bolstered by greater generosity from donor nations.

The volatility of so many parts of the world and the fear and anxiety which these volatile situations breed invariably produces refugees. At the same time, a less generous attitude prevails in extending hospitality to these vulnerable persons. Churches must play an assertive leadership role in calling attention to this grave humanitarian crisis and give voice to those whose cries for safety and justice are otherwise not heard.

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Ms Doris *Peschke*,
General Secretary of the Churches' Commission
for Migrants in Europe (CCME)

Your Eminence, Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I have the privilege to convey to you the greetings of Rev Dr Konrad Raiser, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches who regrets not to be able to attend himself due to other commitments. The World Council of Churches attaches great importance to the themes tackled by this V World Congress of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People and thus highly appreciate the invitation extended to the World Council of Churches to participate in this event.

Since its foundation in 1948, and based on previous ecumenical co-operation, the WCC has been involved in refugee assistance. 40 years ago, the World Council of Churches initiated the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe, at that time to address the then new challenges related to the pastoral care for migrant workers in Western Europe. Today, CCME is an ecumenical agency on migration and integration, refugees and asylum and against racism and discrimination in Europe based in Brussels, Belgium. It serves Anglican, Orthodox and Protestant Churches and Councils of Churches in Europe to coordinate their advocacy for migrants and refugees at the level of the European institutions. CCME closely cooperates with the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches.

CCME is the European member of Global Ecumenical Network on uprooted people coordinated by the World Council of Churches, which meets annually to exchange on challenges and trends, to strengthen each other in the common commitment to assist displaced persons.

As the President of the Pontifical Council, H.E. Cardinal Hamao has stressed yesterday, ecumenical cooperation in the churches' work with and for migrants and refugees is fortunately more established than in other areas. We are very pleased that e.g. we were able to establish a Christian Network against Trafficking in Women in Europe together with Caritas Europa, which is also supported and recognised by the European Commission. In two weeks, first results of this new network will be published. It would be important to extend this collaboration further.

The ecumenical cooperation in these fields is rooted in our common Christian tradition and belief. To love the stranger is one of the essential teachings of Jesus Christ, as is to aid those in distress, those excluded from society, the sick, the elderly, the disabled, the prisoners, today we would probably add, those who do not have documents authorising their stay.

At the European level, our Commission closely cooperates with the Secretariat of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the EU, with the International Catholic Migration Commission, Caritas Europe and Jesuit Refugee Service Europe as well as with Eurodiaconia and the Quaker Council for European Affairs. We are convinced that this cooperation not only makes our efforts more effective, but that it strengthens also the Christian witness in society today.

Challenges today

This Congress seeks to renew pastoral care of migrants and refugees. We regard this as very important as we are facing tough challenges today. In Europe, e.g. asylum for refugees is put in question by governments by establishing ever higher hurdles for access to the territory. Those refugees who do manage to come are often rejected simply on the ground that they could have remained in a third country on their way. The debate on asylum is still focussing on false asylum claims rather than on the root causes for displacement of people.

In addition to the problems refugees face, this debate has created the image of asylum seekers being criminals, thus societies are less prepared to extend solidarity. As a consequence, churches do not only have to assist and care for refugees, but they also have to counter the increasing hostility towards refugees and asylum seekers. We hope that we can ecumenically embark on common action geared towards what Prof Zamagni named yesterday: efficient and fair asylum procedures.

Not only, but increasingly throughout Europe, asylum seekers and irregular migrants are detained for long periods. Often their detention conditions are worse than those of convicted criminals. They have less access to facilities of recreation, training, and sometimes even movement outside the cells while they need special attention and assistance. This is an additional – and often new – task for prison chaplains, who should be offered training and supervision.

The UN Rapporteur for the Human Rights of Migrants, Gabriella Rodriguez has pointed out that migrants who are neglected and denied assistance are extremely vulnerable to falling victim to criminal networks of traffickers and smugglers. Abused minors and raped women, as well as exploitation and horrendous prices for a journey – supposedly towards a better life, too often resulting in death – are reality today. We are facing new forms of slavery, where people are regarded as mere property. As churches, we have to speak out against this as it denies the dignity of the person who is first and foremost God's creation.

Migration and globalisation

Indeed, economic globalisation has changed patterns of migration. As in many cases our Christian services are facing problems of persons in distress, we sometimes forget that in principle migration is a rather old phenomenon, it is normal and it is beneficial. The Bible is full of stories of migration, where God called on persons to leave their home and follow him. In the mission of the churches, a global approach has always been present. Therefore, the challenge today may lie in developing practical migration schemes and ensuring the rights of migrants and their family members. The International Convention for the Rights of All Migrants and their Family Members is an important part of a truly international concept of migrants rights. The Assembly of the Conference of European Churches at its meeting this summer in Trondheim has thus called on European governments to ratify this Convention. We would hope that we can jointly work in this direction, as rights for every person, without exclusion, are essential to counter exploitation and new forms of slavery.

Of course, migration will always pose challenges to societies, and to churches. How do we live the diversity, how do we respect different religions and cultures, how do we develop cohesion and sustainable bonds between communities of different denominations and traditions? How do we contribute to creating “welcoming societies” which we regard as essential when we talk about integration of migrants? How can we foster bonds of migrants with their country of origin which are beneficial for the individual, the society in the new and old home country?

Our Commission attempts to address some of these issues with acknowledging the role of black and migrant churches and congregations. In March next year, a conference will be organised jointly by our Commission and the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy at Ciampino to tackle the question of “Being Church Together”.

In conclusion, may I express my gratitude for the privilege to attend this congress. The World Council of Churches and the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe sincerely hope that we will find adequate ways of making the common views and existing cooperation on migration more visible in societies in Europe and the world at large, in order to give in this world where divisions are creating violence and suffering, a common testimony.

Thank you for your attention.

THE GERMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH'S EXPERIENCE OF ECUMENICAL COLLABORATION IN ITS WORK WITH MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Dr. Josef *VOSS*
Weihbischof von Münster/Germany

1. Historical information and events

The history of open ecumenical collaboration in Germany has been strongly influenced by the shared suffering under the National Socialist dictatorship. In opposing this violence, Christians of the Catholic Church, as those of the Evangelical Church, gave common witness of their faith and surrendered their lives as martyrs. In the course of a moving liturgical celebration held during the Great Jubilee 2000, Pope John Paul II made mention of all the martyrs of the twentieth century with no distinction for their religious confession.

Following the war, priority was given to the ecumenical collaboration between the Catholic Church and the Evangelical Church (EKD). This is because Germany is the country in which the Reform originated and the population is divided in almost equal parts between the Catholic and Evangelical Churches. Their distribution is, however, most uneven and Catholics represent a minority in the north and in the länder (regions) of the east (the territory of the former German Democratic Republic), being only some 4–5%, concentrated in the big cities.

With economic progress a new phase began involving the recruitment of “guest workers”. From 1955 workers, accompanied by their families, began to immigrate for economic reasons. They came from the Mediterranean countries, from the Balkans and from Turkey. Until recruitment stopped in 1973, 14 million guest workers entered Germany, of whom some 11 million have returned to their countries of origin. Since then, our country has been home to a large number of Christians from various Reformed communities and, especially, to members of Orthodox Churches from different countries, as well as to followers of other religions, mostly Muslims.

2. The structures of ecumenical collaboration

Following the Second World War, work with migrants and refugees developed in the context of growing ecumenical collaboration between the Catholic Church and the German Evangelical Church.

This ecumenical collaboration attained new levels when, with the arrival of migrant workers and their families and with the acceptance of refugees and those seeking political asylum, members of various Christian Churches and Communities arrived in our country and created their own ecclesiastical structures. All these Christian Churches and Communities have come together in the Working Community of Christian Churches in Germany (ACK).

2.1 When, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Iron Curtain, the numbers of people seeking asylum in Germany reached record levels (438,191 in 1992), a lively and widespread discussion of foreign policy began in our country, culminating in the modification of arrangements concerning the right to asylum. On that occasion, in 1993, the German Episcopal Conference and the Council of Evangelical Churches, in collaboration with the Working Community of Christian Churches, instituted a joint work group. The presidents

of the new body were the president of the Episcopal Commission for Migration and the president of the Commission for Foreign Affairs of the German Evangelical Church.

This work group's task was to prepare a joint message for the Churches on the history and causes of migration and displacement, on the ethical principles for working with foreigners and refugees, and on the prospects for a practicable future policy concerning foreigners. This common message of the Churches was published in 1997 with the title: "... and the stranger who is at your door – Churches' Joint Message on the Challenges of Migration and Displacement". The document is the basis for the conjoint activities of the Christian Churches and Communities.

2.2 When, in the year 2000, the federal government established the independent commission "Immigration" with the task of preparing the ground for a new law on immigration, the German Episcopal Conference and the German Evangelical Church were represented thereon by the presidents of their own respective commissions. It was notable that, by tacit consensus, the Churches' joint message with its ethical principles and its political perspectives, became the foundation for the discussions of the independent commission.

2.3 In order to continue and to reinforce this activity which has proven to be so effective, the representatives of the Episcopal Commission, of the Commission for Foreign Affairs of the Evangelical Church, of the Working Community of Christian Churches in Germany, of German Caritas, and of Protestant charity associations, meet twice a year to exchange information, to co-ordinate their activities and to plan their shared duties.

2.4 The German Episcopal Conference and the German Evangelical Church Council have representatives, both at the federal government in Berlin and at the individual authorities of the länder, in order to maintain contacts with the various administrations and parties.

On problems regarding the policy towards foreigners, the two ecclesiastical representatives reach agreement and together represent the position of the Church.

2.5 In Germany, in place of an annual Sunday for refugees and migrants, a week for foreign workers and refugees has been celebrated for many years. It is held in the last week of September. This week for foreign workers is always covered by the mass media and begins each year with an ecumenical celebration for which invitations are issued together by both the president of the German Episcopal Conference and the president of the German Evangelical Church Council.

The week for foreign workers is always arranged by a preparatory committee organised by the German Episcopal Conference and the Evangelical Church Council. All Christian Churches and communities are represented on the committee, while trade union representatives and members of the Muslim community collaborate as guests.

2.6 In order to promote dialogue with non-Christian religions, chiefly Islam, both the German Episcopal Conference and the German Evangelical Church have arranged for aid and subsidies, working in collaboration with Muslim representatives. The subsidies are intended to promote dialogue at the local level.

2.7 Aid for refugees at the local level is normally undertaken by members of the Catholic and Evangelical communities working together.

3. Experiences and consequences

Ecumenical collaboration in Germany has a long tradition, especially as regards work with refugees and migrants; such collaboration has been successful and remains necessary.

It represents the practical realisation of what Pope John Paul II says in his Encyclical *Ut unum sint*: "It happens more and more often that the leaders of Christian Communities join together in taking a stand in the name of Christ on important problems concerning man's calling and on freedom, justice, peace, and the future of the world. In this way they 'communicate' in one of the tasks which constitutes the mission of Christians: that of

reminding society of God's will in a realistic manner. ... It is clear, as experience shows, that in some circumstances the united voice of Christians has more impact than any one isolated voice" (43).

Our own experience has demonstrated the truth of this declaration. As regards the policy towards foreigners in our country, the voices of the Christian Churches and Communities have weight only if they sound out together.

Pope John Paul II continually reminds us that those things that bind and bring together must always have priority over those that divide

And it is precisely in the field of Christian charity, in representing humanitarian requests, and in exercising an influence over the policy towards foreigners, that the Gospel shows itself to be the common foundation for Christian Churches and Communities.

In working to support migrants and refugees, through ecumenical collaboration, great opening and great trust have been created, strengthening the road towards ecumenism.

INTER-RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF THE ITALIAN CATHOLIC MISSION IN FRANCE

Sr. Valeria RUBIN

Coordinator

“Enfants d’Aujourd’hui, Monde de Demain” Association

Presentation

My name is Sis. Valeria RUBIN. I am a member of the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles (Scalabrinians) and I have been living in Marseilles for 18 years now.

Marseilles is located along the Mediterranean coast, at the mouth of the Rhone River. It is the second most important city of France (next to Paris) for the number of its inhabitants (800,000). The city has a rich history: it was a colony founded by the Greeks of Asia Minor in the VI century B.C.; it became an important commercial crossroad and port. Its commercial exchanges with the Middle East, and then with the French colonies still constitute its strong asset (notwithstanding the precarious political situations). Within this context, the migrant movements of people from Northern Africa have become very important. The Maghrebian migration constitutes the vastest (70%) and is very visible.

Today Marseilles has lost many strong points in its commerce and has begun to diversify its activities. This transformation has modified not only the commercial and industrial, but also the human situations. The statistics indicate an unemployment rate of 15% in Marseilles – twice that of the national French rate. In 1999, alien residents in Marseilles reached the number of 54,355, but it is estimated that there are about 150,000 Muslims (from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Comoros). Many of them come from “black Africa” (Senegal, Congo), from the East (Kurdistan, Mongolia, Serbia, former Russian Republic), from South-East Asia and from China. The majority of the adults have a regular Permit of Stay, but many (especially women) do not have documents (clandestines). Right now one finds more cases of people who request for political asylum and are waiting for a response.

In the area of Belle de Mai (where I work and live) we have a population composed mainly of unemployed and unqualified migrant workers.

In October of 1985, I arrived at the Italian Catholic Mission in Marseilles. Faced with the reality of migration on the one hand and trying to be faithful to the mission of my Congregation on the other hand (“Gospel and missionary service to the migrants, with preference for the poor and the needy ...” – *Constitution* 4), I began my work among the poorest of the migrants living in Marseilles: the Arabs. In order to guarantee my service to them, together with some volunteers I founded in September 1987 the Association **E.A.M.D.** (“Children of Today, World of Tomorrow”).⁴⁹ I created this lay Association also because I realised that it was very much easier to encounter Muslims in a certain way, rather than staying with the M.C.I. (a Catholic religious institution).

⁴⁹ « The association “*Enfants d’Aujourd’hui, Monde de Demain*” (E.A.M.D.) is a non-profit association that educates people. The aims of the association are : (a) to attend to the physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual formation of children and of the youth through the creation, the support and the development of all the means deemed necessary and especially through information and formation of those who have particular responsibilities, tutors and parents; (b) to lead actions in order to help children having difficulties at school and in their families; and (c) to develop all the means necessary in order to help the poor families » (*Statutes* of the Association).

The majority of the people I meet are Muslims. Their religion is a popular and traditional one, handed down orally by families, where the cultural elements are oftentimes synthesized in the form of religious precepts. There are very few adults who go to the mosques and children receive but basic elements of their religion.

The culture of the grown-ups is essentially that of the popular Arabic culture present for years now in the Western world. Kids learn this only from school or within French districts and from Arab families.

Most of such a population are unemployed and live by makeshift. Men who work are usually unskilled labourers in building- and road constructions, or they work at odd jobs, or illegally. Some women have started working as domestic helpers. Their dwelling places are usually unhealthy condominium units and apartments, with a high rent.

Presence of the Scalabrinians

I am a member of the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles Borromeo (Scalabrinians) – a Congregation founded in 1897 by Blessed Giovanni Battista Scalabrini (bishop of Piacenza), by Fr. Marchetti and Sis. Assunta.

“The proper mission of our Congregation consists in Gospel and missionary service to the migrants, with preference for the poor and the needy, and which is concretized through Catechism, Christian education, Health pastoral care and Social work” (*Constitution 4*).

I try to live the mission of the Scalabrinian Congregation in my daily work by serving the Association. I was able to begin this new presence thanks to my being part of the *Azione Cattolica* (Catholic Movement) in the diocese of Marseilles, and thanks to the support of my community. I am also a member of the Administrative Council of the E.A.M.D. and I am responsible for its animation and coordination of the various activities, which are as follows:

ACE/MO Clubs

The Association has adopted the method of the apostolic movement ACE/MO because it wants to reach out to all the poor children, no matter what their age, culture, faith ... may be.

In order to realise this project, the E.A.M.D. allows 100 children to meet in 14 clubs (under the responsibility of an adult) every Wednesday afternoon (from 2:00-4:00). In such clubs, children learn to become responsible for their lives; they learn to respect one another, others and the environment; to participate in the social life of their districts and city.

Academic assistance

Academic assistance is assured by more than 60 volunteers, who help 170 kids: 90 in the elementary level (lessons are every Wednesday, from 9:00-11:00 a.m., and every Saturday, from 2:00-4:00 p.m.), 60 in the intermediate school and 20 in the lyceum (with daily lessons from 5:00-7:00 p.m.). Every person in charge has a small group of children, helping them to do their work well. In some districts we were forced not to admit some children due to lack of teachers. The students help themselves with their lessons in French, Mathematics, foreign languages, Physics, Chemistry, Philosophy, etc. Those in charge intervene at school in order to accompany the parents to meetings with professors or to discuss some difficult cases (like those of expulsion). At the same time, we try to make them become aware of the importance of a good academic performance on the part of their kids – something which parents do not always understand. Through our help we were able to verify that children are capable of working well at school if one knows how to motivate them and to avail themselves of useful means. I am convinced that, if kids perform well at school, it would be easier for them to be integrated into the society and it would be harder for them to turn to drugs, commit crimes or practise prostitution.

Alphabetization

Oftentimes the academic problem of children is easily explained by the fact that their parents do not help them even just to read and to write (being they themselves illiterate). The Association has promoted an awareness campaign addressed to parents. There are many who have become aware of their limitations and who desire to overcome them. They have been referred to various competent organizations in the field of alphabetization. However, some fail to meet the necessary conditions in order to regularly follow the courses, for various reasons (like lack of time, presence of small kids, geographical distance, hostile reaction of their spouses, etc.). The Association, therefore, has stressed the need to launch alphabetization courses. Right now 50 adults are individually guided by 10 volunteers.

Help to poor families

In our activities with children, we became aware of problems their families have: many depend exclusively on the money we give them in order to live; many are unemployed; they live in small unhealthy apartments, with a high rent. Some families do not have documents (clandestines). Every Thursday I (along with a group of volunteers) see to it that some poor families receive a package of foods. On the average, 20 families a week receive such a package. Thus we try to be attentive to the problems of those persons who turn to us, in order to refer them to competent groups, or to provide them with immediate help. Foods are offered by the food suppliers (*Banca alimentare*) and our friends in Italy. The group in charge of helping families guarantees their clothing and other articles every Monday and Tuesday afternoon. Some women (who are part of the group) attend to such an activity. They live in very difficult situations, but they have learned how to overcome them in order to become attentive to others' needs and to carry out their responsibilities.

Some personal convictions

Through my work I get in touch with Muslim people, families, and youth. While respecting their religious convictions, I try to live according to the Gospel precepts. I find myself involved in an authentic intercultural and interreligious dialogue (in which the seeds of the Kingdom are sown).

I often hear questions like, "*What type of a missionary are you? Which Christ do you proclaim? How many people have you converted so far?*" I do not have the answers to these questions, but I believe that God addresses himself to men and women in many ways. The apparent "dryness" of my work has led me to perceive an ever-increasing need for a strong faith: it is this which I ask from God, through a trusting and insistent prayer. The faith I live out everyday, the simple and open life-style of my community, the attention toward the needy and the poor ... all these represent a challenge for the people I encounter. I do not speak of Jesus, but he is always present in everything I do. It is he who guides me by the hand and who puts me into this non-Christian culture and environment. This *immersion* into Islam has opened up for me a vast field of cultural and spiritual experiences in dialogue with life itself.

Notwithstanding all the difficulties I have encountered and which I continue to encounter everyday, I would like to go on with my way of living the Christian faith. I think that, in order for the Gospel to become credible, our encounter with Christ and the salvation he offers us must be lived out together in a single liberating and humanizing action or dynamics (cfr. Puebla 1305). For me, "mission" means "silent presence", solidarity with the poor, to fight for justice and the complete development of man, to be a witness of mercy and of hope.

The attention we give to persons and our love for the poor and the least, for those who suffer ... raises questions that lead us to God and to the Gospel. To proclaim the Gospel, for me, means "presence, solidarity, justice, brotherly love, mercy, hope". For me, to work with Muslims is not primarily a question of evangelizing them, but of allowing myself to be evangelised by them. This reminds me that to evangelise others consists not only in uttering

words; it also consists in helping others experience the Good News announced to them. The Gospel is one's encounter with Jesus Christ, who communicates his life and not a series of beautiful texts (which I have tried to follow in my reflection). It is not us who convert others; it is rather our personal conversion which gives witness to the Gospel we live out in our daily lives.

In my relations with Muslims, I continuously face this question: While respecting every person I meet, in what way does my encounter with Muslims form part of the mission of my Congregation and, therefore, of the mission of the Church? Personally, I think that, through my pastoral social actions, I am concretizing the mission proper to my Congregation, but the response to my question requires my being truthful to myself and to others:

- first, being truthful to myself, because I live out of my *adherence to Jesus Christ and, following the examples of Mons. Scalabrini, out of discovering the presence of Christ in the migrant people* (Letter of the Fourth Assembly 8.1, Rome, 25 March 1986).

- second, being truthful to others, because they have the right to know the plans behind my encounters and to know how I demand respect for my conviction that, in Jesus Christ, the Good News has been offered to me, and that it is meaningful for all men (cfr. H. Teissier, *op. cit.*)

Does Jesus unite or divide us? For 22 years I have been living out the paradox of division "*because of him*". I believe that Christ has come to unite all men into one body, but humanity has never had so much divisions, in God's name, than today. Herein lies the mystery before which I cannot do nothing but be silent and continue to silently give witness and to believe that Jesus does unite us. I leave all the rest to him. Being in contact with Islam, my faith has become stronger and deeper. I think religion does not constitute an obstacle in itself if we consider, first and foremost, the person, his culture, his educational upbringing and also his religion. On the contrary, however, we are tempted to put religion in the first place. My Christian faith in the one and triune God invites me to go further. If God is, in himself, an exchange of love, then communication and union amidst differences of Persons invite me to recognise and to respect the existing differences among men, religions and, therefore, among different ways of welcoming God's word (cfr. Roger Michel, *Islam and the Jewish-Christian Revelation*, ISTR, Marseilles 1992).

In my daily life I experience the Kingdom of God. It is a radically new world of justice, peace, love offered by God. One of the ways of welcoming God's Kingdom is by fighting anything oppose to it. In a society where there is a need for the best in order to succeed, giving priority to the children of the poor social stratum of the migrants means choosing, and this in relation to the Kingdom.

**THE CENTRE FOR MULTICULTURAL PASTORAL CARE
ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA**

Mr. José ZEPEDA
Director of the Centre

Dear Members of the Fifth World Congress,

Greetings!

First of all, I would like to introduce the Organisation that I represent, within the context of the Archdiocese of Brisbane, in the State of Queensland, Australia. The Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care is the Catholic Church Agency which is responsible for assisting in the coordination of pastoral care for migrants, refugees and Ethnic Communities throughout the Archdiocese.

Let me share with you our historical perspective.

In 1949, Catholic Immigration was established at the request of the Vatican authorities to assist with the Pastoral Care Ministry to migrants and refugees (the displaced people at that time) and to meet the needs of the post-war movement of people.

In 1994, the Archdiocese separated the Catholic Immigration Office (which was part of the Pontifical Mission Societies) from the Catholic Mission Office and assumed full financial responsibility for the new Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care (known as CMPC). The objectives of the new Centre were to widen the scope of the activities previously undertaken, to be more inclusive of migrants and refugees in the Archdiocese and to ensure their full participation in the life of the Local Church.

A significant development in recent times has been the preparation and implementation of "*We are one body*", a document which provides Multicultural Pastoral Care Guidelines for the Archdiocese. Our role, therefore, is evolving from the provision of direct service delivery to focusing on promoting the implementation of the Multicultural Pastoral Care Guidelines, building networks, providing coordination and leadership, providing support to Ethnic Communities and Chaplains and participating in archdiocesan projects.

The "how" and "who does what" in our Archdiocese is described in our policy document. *Some copies are available in English if anyone of you is interested.*

Within the Archdiocese, under the Archbishop, at the present time we have thirteen Chaplains who celebrate Masses each week in their own language. They are called Migrant Chaplains and have equal status to Parish Priests. Whereas geographically they move around the archdiocese, they do have a base from where they minister to their Catholic Ethnic Communities and, as well, simultaneously in every parish in our archdiocese in one form or another. One of the Migrant Chaplains, Fr Albert Chan, Chaplain to the Catholic Chinese Community said: "Thanks to CMPC's role over the last ten years there has been an increased acknowledgment of the key role of the Migrant Chaplain." He said "We are not poaching people out of parishes but are exercising a bridging role in multicultural pastoral care. Also there are an increasing number of people becoming Catholics because the language, culture and customs are better understood by those of us who are in special ministry."

There are a few small emerging Catholic Ethnic Communities who do not have priests from their own culture and who are ministered to by a number of diocesan priests. These Communities are cared for and supported pastorally through CMPC.

Most of the parishes within the Archdiocese are culturally diverse and there are many groups and individuals who assist in different ways the migrants and refugees in their local areas. The same happens within the Catholic Education system which has a multicultural policy in place which translates into being as practical as possible in assisting migrants and refugees and ensuring that they are part of the Catholic Community.

Parishes raise funds for the sponsorship of refugees as well as to assist in their settlement locally. Through our Catholic School system scholarships are offered and other financial contributions are made to assist the most vulnerable migrant and refugee children with their schooling. The contribution made by Catholic Education in our Archdiocese amounts to millions rather than thousands of dollars. The Religious Congregations, through resources and personnel, contribute financially to assist migrants and refugees in areas such as employment, health, accommodation and pastoral care.

We work in partnership with a number of organisations. An example of this is our close partnership with the Society of St Vincent de Paul working with them in both an advisory and culturally appropriate educational capacity. CMPC, having recently moved out of direct service delivery more into a leadership and directive role, has encouraged and supported the Society to become more involved in service delivery.

In 2000 CMPC opened the Romero Community Centre with the intention of providing a drop in centre and quiet space of spirituality. However, with the arrival in Brisbane, during the next two years, of over 1,500 Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) Holders released from the Detention Centres, the Romero Centre became the place where CMPC, one of the only organisations not government funded, assisted these arrivals (mostly Muslims from Afghanistan, Iraqi and Iran) offering friendship, guidance, support, clothing, accommodation, English language Classes and, in some cases, assisting in finding employment. In the two years we were directly involved in this area we worked both ecumenically and across all Faiths confident in our Catholic Faith and challenged by the Faith of these vulnerable people.

I would like to move on now to share with you some of the contributions that our Archdiocese is providing to our wider society in Australia. The universality of the Catholic Church is translated into the representation and composition of Australia which is one of the most multicultural Countries on earth and which has managed this diversity well.

The most important element for which the Church may take credit is that there is little social conflict. We enjoy and live in harmony within the Australian society despite it's origins being embedded in racism and the overriding of the indigenous populations.

Our Archdiocese, through our Centre, contributes with advice and consultation on policies. Therefore, all States and Federally in Australia there are policies in relation to respecting and accepting cultural diversity within their institutions.

Our Archdiocese is a strong advocate for ensuring that there is implementation of practices within our legislation prohibiting racism and vilification on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion and culture both in our own State and nationally. I can proudly say that our Archbishop, Most Rev John Bathersby and his two Auxiliary Bishops, Bishop Brian Finnigan and Bishop Joseph Oudeman and other key Archdiocesan Leaders wholly fund CMPC to support Multicultural Pastoral Care and to promote diversity in an inclusive way. This gives us, as Church, autonomy and independence when it comes to defending the rights of migrants and refugees. There are other institutions within society (Government Departments and funded Community Agencies) which also support and promote diversity in our society.

One of our roles at CMPC, as a Pastoral Care Ministry, is to maintain constructive criticism of the gaps in assisting migrants and refugees and to encourage our Local Church to respond to the challenges we face in improving the well being of our society.

Some examples:

The policies while established, often do not have sufficient resources or impact. They are not based in legislation or in the Constitution.

Monocultural frameworks still dominate in society and English is the official language.

There are major cuts to the programs for community languages to be taught in schools and languages are the key to culture.

Ethnic affairs are not seen as the core of business and in some cases are added on and in others not.

Issues of racism and discrimination greatly prevail. There are insufficient resources to support people who suffer racism.

Racism affects the life chances and opportunities in employment, education, housing, practices of Faith etc and minorities (the most visible, recently arrived refugees) are still vulnerable.

Immigration issues are still used as political tools with Politicians using immigration as a platform for their election - often racist and anti-immigrant stands.

The issue of Asylum Seekers (*persons referred to by the Commonwealth as queue jumpers, illegals and Boat People*) has done much damage to the progress of multiculturalism. The war in Iraq, the September 11 and Bali bombings have done much damage to inter-Faith relations and the dominance of views within the community that Muslims are terrorists. The media has also had a very negative role to play. The curtailment of rights for certain groups of immigrants such as older migrants and Temporary Protection Visa Holders has led to double standards in terms of citizenship rights in Australian society and has set us back more than 50 years.

These are some of the challenges we, as Church, face in our own Archdiocese. We have the full pro-active engagement of our Archbishop and his two Auxiliary Bishops in the promotion of respect, the treatment with dignity of the human persons and the acceptance of cultural diversity as an integral part of the Life and Mission of our Local Church in order to transform the world in which we live. And through our practise of the Faith and our attitudes of welcoming the stranger we offer the presence of Jesus Christ to the world.

Having said all this we need to ensure that the Church of Brisbane continues to be a guiding force in this most important ministry of pastoral care to all people on the move.

In regard to my own introduction, I am a Salvadorean by birth who arrived in Australia as a refugee in 1984. I have worked since the late sixties with the Church in Pastoral Care, Human Rights, Peace, Mission and Spirituality in the cross-cultural context in several regions and continents. Since 1987 I have worked in the Archdiocese of Brisbane in areas of mission and the pastoral care of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Therefore, I have found myself in a position of sacredness which provides me with opportunities and challenges to reach out of my Faith practices to those who are often on the margin of society or who are completely invisible to the point that they are non-human persons to others. Because of the time limit, I invite you to collect a copy of my personal sharing of "Faith Journey" later.

The importance of this week's gathering is for us to unite our wisdom, experiences and skills. To unite these, not as social resources only, but instead to collect the treasure of universality to encourage our Local Churches to engage increasingly in providing welcoming, hospitality, respect, acceptance, friendship and trust to those human persons who, before their arrival in the receiving country, regardless of race, political affiliation, religion, language or status, were persons with a history, talents, skills, families, relatives and Faith. These cannot be ignored. It is imperative then, out of our discipleship, to ensure their gifts and talents are assets for their new countries in order that they find a new home.

**OUR LADY OF HOPE MULTI-ETHNIC PARISH
AND MIGRANT COMMUNITY, MOSCOW**

Fr. Michael *RYAN*
Parish Priest

My brothers and sisters in Christ.

Permit me to introduce myself. Father Michael Ryan. A Marist priest, a Londoner, a missionary for ten years in the Philippines. I am a migrant, happy to be already ten years in Moscow.

I bring the best wishes of my Bishop, Archbishop Thaddeus Kondrusiewicz.

Greetings too from the Catholics of forty nationalities that make up the small parish of Our Lady of Hope.

This November 2003, our remarkable community of faith begins its seventieth anniversary celebration. We have survived Stalin, Beria, Khrushchev, Brezhnev and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

“The Almighty has worked marvels for me. Holy is His name.”

We owe our parish, also, to the protection written into the Roosevelt-Litvinov “Agreement” of November 16 1933. This established diplomatic relations between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The agreement provided for the presence in Moscow of clergy and a minimum of religious practice under the diplomatic protection of the US Embassy in Moscow and the US Department of State.

On 1st March 1934, the first priest of the community, Father Leopold Braun AA of New Bedford, Massachusetts, arrived in Moscow. From the beginning Father Braun worked not only with diplomats and Catholic foreigners in the capital but also with Catholic Muscovites, now without priests or churches, and even with Catholics from other cities; Vladimir, Kursk, Tver and Smolensk.

By 1934 the soviet state had begun the cruelest persecution of believers in the history of the Church. When by human reckoning there was no reason to hope, the Parish took Our Lady of Hope as our patron.

Today in 2003 we feel ourselves to be under powerful protection.

“The Lord shows the power of his arm and scatters the proud-hearted. He casts the mighty from their thrones and raises the lowly.”

The shadows of the past fall upon us but we live in joyful hope.

We are we?

Let me introduce Margarite Sharova. She is 83 and comes to the vigil Mass in my apartment chapel. Margarite was born of atheist Polish parents in Moscow. She was granted the gift of faith as a young woman. In 1942 she found the only Catholic priest in Moscow, Fr Leopold Braun. He baptized her. She was arrested and sentenced to exile in Siberia. Her crime? Being a Catholic. In the 1950's she was rehabilitated. She returned to Moscow and spent all her working life in the Library for Foreign Literature. In 1998 the parish had to reregister under the new religion law of 1997. We needed a legal address. Margarite said “You can use my private apartment address.” She told me “I am not afraid. They can do nothing to me.” The parish was able to reregister and survive because of that faith-filled woman.

Also Andy Afadapa. Andy is a Catholic. Born in Nigeria, forty years ago, he's a Russian citizen. He finished his studies in Russia and fell in love with Maria. Maria was born in Russia, the daughter a Congolese father and Russian mother. She is a Catholic from birth.

They have two children whom we have baptized, Maria and Arnold. Their father Andy is a manager in a Russian company.

Here is Olga. She was born into an atheist Jewish family. She was granted the gift of faith in the soviet times. A priest baptized her secretly on a business trip to Poland. Until 1993 she used to worship with a catacomb group of Jewish Catholics, converts from atheism like her.

And Monsieur Jérôme Détunga. He is in his sixties and a widow. He too is a Russian citizen. Born in the Congo he studied in Moscow in the 1960's. He married a Russian wife. His two daughters were baptized in Our Lady of Hope Parish in the 1960's. Last year we baptized his granddaughter, Marie-Antoinette.

We are proud of all these parishioners. They give you a fair idea of our parish. It is mixed, cosmopolitan, multi-ethnic.

Our Lady of Hope Parish has no church. We celebrate Mass in borrowed spaces, in a gymnasium, in a small concert hall, in my apartment in a diplomatic compound.

We own nothing but our Mass is joyful for we pray with confidence to Him who “ has saved us from the hands of our foes, that we might serve him in holiness and justice, all the days of our life in his presence.”

An official once told us. “You’re not a parish!” We told him; “But, we have been registered with the Moscow Department of Justice.” “We have two choirs, English and French.” –“You’re not a parish!” - “We catechize and baptize children and adults and administer the sacraments”. “We have catechists and altar servers, and lectors and Extraordinary Ministers to help distribute Holy Communion.” We asked him why he persisted. “Because you don’t have a church building.”

On average 300 parishioners attend Mass on Sundays at three different locations in the city. More are present for Easter and Christmas. Forty nationalities are represented with nearly 40 % being Africans, some are second and third generation Afro-Russians.

The parish’s mission is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to enable Catholics to live their faith in a hostile environment. The parish helps foreigners integrate into Russian society, to found families and educate their children in their faith as Russian Catholics.

Prejudice in Russia also speaks thus; “To be Catholic is to be Polish. To be Polish is to be Catholic.” So, to be English and Catholic, or black African and Catholic, or Arab and Catholic; that is surprising. In our Moscow parish we are called to witness to the universality of the Catholic Church.

Besides being a place in the heart to worship God, the parish is a bridge and a place of learning. The Children of Israel wandered in the desert, worshipping in a tent. We too are on the move, from school to gymnasium, and from a concert hall to another gymnasium. In these difficult circumstances each parishioner invests energy and faith to gather for worship.

We, Russians and foreigners, children of Africa and Asia and Europe, naturalized Russian citizens, we greet you. Migrants and children of migrants, we love the Church and love Russia. Parishioners of Our Lady of Hope, Moscow, we are your brothers and sisters in Christ.

**STARTING AFRESH FROM
CHRIST FOR A MORE CHRISTIAN WORLD
(IN THE LIGHT OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES)**

Rev. Fr. Albert *VANHOYE*, S.J.
Professor Em., Biblicum Pontifical Institute
Rome, Italy

On this third day of Congress, the general theme of “beginning with Christ” is further specified under the title of “to bet on love”. One could not choose something more adapted since beginning with Christ means above all beginning with his love – his superabundant love, seeing in him the source of divine love that wants to transform the world by establishing in it the so-called “civilisation of love”. For a new pastoral care of the migrants and refugees, there is no other point of departure that is more adequate and a richer orientation [than love]. “To begin with Christ for a more Christian world” means to draw from the Heart of Christ the dynamics of love that makes us capable of overcoming barriers, all the obstacles to unity, and to establish relationships of brotherly solidarity everywhere. In fact, “a more Christian world” is a world where Christ’s love is more present and operating.

It is my task right now to treat this theme “in the light of the Scriptures”, which really offer us a very clear and inspiring teaching on the subject.

As starting point, it is convenient to take a fundamental episode from the Gospel, where Jesus was questioned by a scribe, saying: “What is the first of all the commandments?” (Mk 12:28 – cfr. Mt 22:36). The reply to such a question was not self-evident. In fact, the Mosaic Law contained hundreds of precepts and prohibitions. Among such a multitude of choices, how can one discern which is the most important? It is true that the Law does not put everything on the same level. Some commandments are presented as more important than others. This is the case especially of the Ten commandments of the Decalogue. According to the Book of Deuteronomy, these ten commandments were the only ones pronounced by God himself on Mount Sinai in the presence of all the people. Moses declared: “These words – the Lord has uttered them to the entire assembly up the mountain, in the midst of fire, clouds and dark night, with a powerful voice, and adding nothing more to them” (Dt 5:22). The other precepts and prohibitions were communicated indirectly to the people through Moses. From this point of view, it would have been natural for Jesus to respond to the scribe that the first of all the commandments was the first commandment in the Decalogue: God commands, “You shall have no other gods before me” (Ex 20:3; Dt 5:7). The fundamental importance of this prohibition is beyond any doubt. Nevertheless Jesus did not give such a reply, but he went on to look for something else in the Mosaic Law – not only for one commandment (as his interlocutor asked), but for two commandments, both of which begin with the same words: “You shall love”: “You shall love the Lord your God” (Dt 6:5) and “You shall love your neighbor” (Lev 19:18.34). This response of Jesus is extremely meaningful and worthy of consideration.

In the first place, Jesus clearly affirms the primacy of love and invites us, therefore, to “bet on love” above any other attitude or tendency. Why is it convenient to “bet on love” rather than on the observance, let us say, of certain wise practical rules? How come Jesus did not refer himself to the Decalogue? Why did he prefer the two-fold commandment of love? Certainly he would have a number of motivations to justify such a choice.

The first possible motivation is that the Decalogue is usually expressed in negative terms: “You shall have no other gods ... You shall not make an idol ... You shall not use the name of the Lord in vain ... You shall not do this ... You shall not commit adultery ... You shall not ... etc.” (cfr. Ex 20:3-17). All of these are but prohibitions; they indicate where one should not go, but they do not say where one should go. They do not express positive dynamics. The fourth commandment, however, seems positive; it demands the observance of the Sabbath, but such an observance is immediately determined in an exclusively negative way: “You shall not perform any work” (Ex 20:10). Another commandment seems positive: it prescribes us to honour our father and mother (Ex 20:12). It is, yes, important, but it has to do only with the relationship between two persons; its scope, therefore, is very limited. Jesus did not choose any prohibition, nor did he limit himself to some commandment with a very limited scope. He rather chose two dynamic formulae which, instead of prohibiting, lead one to go ahead in a positive direction – that of love. They open unlimited perspectives, which invite us to progress continuously, because they deal with loving “with one’s whole heart, with one’s entire soul, with all of one’s force”, according to the Book of Deuteronomy (6:5), and the Gospel adds: “with all of one’s mind” (Mt 22:37; Mk 12:30; Lk 10:27).

There is, therefore, a space for “betting on love”, because love is a powerful dynamic. “The strong waters cannot extinguish the love, nor the flood quench it” (Sg 8:7). The pastoral care of migrants and of refugees needs, above all, such a dynamic. Its entire organization must be inspired by love, imbued with Christian charity. It must aim at communicating such a love, because the migrants and the refugees need, above all, to be welcomed as persons worthy of love. They do not only need to be helped; they need to feel respected and loved. They also need to be encouraged to live in such a love. In fact, in order to be complete, the pastoral care – it seems to me – must have for its objective that of helping the migrants and the refugees to live in love. Oftentimes their situation points instead toward the opposite direction, because it arouses in them feelings of frustration, dissatisfaction and resistance. We must do everything in order to improve and to restore in them the positive dynamics of Christian love. “To bet on love” also implies this aspect: to bet not only on love which the Holy Spirit pours into our hearts in order to come generously to the aid of migrants and of refugees, or to bet on loving other people whom we help through our ecclesial mission, but also to bet on that love which the Holy Spirit wants to pour into the hearts of migrants and of refugees who consider us as instruments of its action.

Another motivation behind Jesus’ choice was suggested by the situation of the episode we read in the Gospel. The question concerning “the first of all the commandments” can be seen in the light of the Passion episode and inserted visibly in clarifying the meaning of the Passion as complete fulfilment of the two-fold commandment of love. The situation becomes particularly clear in the Gospel of Mark; it is less evident in the Gospel of Matthew, who altered the section. In chapter 12 of Mark’s Gospel, all the episodes are related to the Paschal mystery of Jesus, except the last verses (Mk 12:38-44). The chapter begins with the Parable of the Homicide Workers of the Vineyard – a clear pre-announcement of the Passion, following the announcement of the glorification evoked by the quotation of Psalm 118:22-23 about the stone rejected by the builders, but which becomes the corner stone (Mk 12:1-11). An attempt to arrest Jesus later shows the imminent danger (Mk 12:12). Thus we have the motivation behind the insidious question raised by the Pharisees concerning paying a tribute to Caesar (Mk 12:13-17). Before Pilate, Jesus will be accused of having refused to pay such a tribute (Lk 23:2). The next episode has the Sadducees as main protagonists, expressing their objections to the doctrine of the resurrection – objections successfully refuted by Jesus (Mk 12:18-27). Our account follows next: the interrogation concerning “the first of all the commandments” (Mk 12:28-34). According to the first Evangelist, it was an insidious question similar to that one concerning the paying of tribute to Caesar (cfr. Mt 22:35). After having responded, Jesus himself assumes a defensive position, raising the question about the

sonship of the Messiah, citing Psalm 110: “The Lord says to my Lord, <Sit at my right hand ...>” (Mk 12:35-37). During the Passion, the same text would be used to respond to the High Priest and to affirm his divine sonship (Mk 14:61-62). Therefore, one cannot fail to notice here a relationship between the response given by Jesus to the question concerning the “first of all the commandments” on the one hand, and his emotional state during the Passion on the other hand.

Before his Passion, his attitude was revealed during the institution of the Eucharist. Jesus anticipates his Passion, makes himself present in the breaking of the bread and in pouring the wine (respectively becoming his body and blood), and he presents it as a gift of extreme love. Jesus’ love toward the Father was expressed in the two-fold blessing he pronounced: love towards his sisters and brothers expresses itself in the gift of his body and blood – a gift offered to his disciples, but does not limit itself to the small group present then: it was for the “many” (Mk 14:22-24). At first it was expressed in the form of a grateful love – Jesus’ love toward the Father expressed itself in all its generosity in his prayer in Gethsemane (like an expression of perfect filial obedience, a heroic union of wills): “Not what I desire, but what you desire” (Mk 14:36).

The two-fold dimension of Jesus’ love, which we can perceive in the Synoptic Gospels, becomes even more explicit in the Fourth Gospel. Heading towards his Passion, Jesus clearly declares: “the world must recognise that *I love the Father* and that I act just as the Father commanded” (Jn 14:31). His love for the Father leads Jesus, at the same time, to love his brothers. The Evangelist introduces the discourse during the Last Supper affirming that Jesus, “having loved those who were his in the world, loved them *to the end*” (Jn 13:1) – that is to say, up to the total giving of himself. “No love is greater than this: giving one’s life for those he loves” (Jn 15:13). Jesus has indeed “fulfilled” the two-fold commandment of love. He has truly loved “with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his strength”. He loved until death.

One can say that Jesus really “bet on love”. To save the world he did not bet on his divine power, he did not bet on the light of his teaching; he rather bet on love to the extreme, on the inspiring power of love that came to him from the Father, filling up his heart and overflowing from all sides. A love capable of the more complete self-negation and of the more audacious innovations (in particular, of the Eucharistic mystery, which puts at the believers’ disposal the conquering force of such a love). If it is possible for us “to bet on love”, it is so precisely because Jesus puts at our disposal (in the Eucharist) the force of his love, which he renders present as it was at the Last Supper – that is, at the greatest moment of his utmost generosity – moment of complete victory of love over evil and death.

Going back now to the question raised by the scribe concerning “the first among all the commandments”, we can point out the two-fold originality of Jesus’ response. We have already marked the first originality, which consists in the fact that Jesus did not choose any commandment from the Decalogue. A second originality can be added: Jesus went beyond the scribe’s question. The question was not only about one commandment – the first of all. Jesus, taking the initiative, also defined the second commandment. To the commandment of loving God he closely added that of loving one’s neighbour. In the Old Testament, these two commandments are very distant one from the other. They are not found in the same book. The first one is found in the Book of Deuteronomy (Dt 6:5); the second one in the Book of Leviticus, where it is repeated twice (Lev 19:18.34). Jesus joins one to the other, and declares that “there is no other commandment greater than this” (Mk 12:31). He even had the same audacity – according to the first Gospel – in saying that the second commandment is “similar” to the first and that “the entire Law and the Prophets depend on these two commandments” (Mt 22:40). Whenever one wants “to bet on love”, he should be aware of the union stressed by Jesus between the two dimensions of love. Charity is not a simple human love, a simple act of philanthropy. It is divine love, a love which is both divine and human at the same time,

a participation in the divine and human love of Jesus' Heart. Charity is divine in many senses. First, because of its origin: it is a love whose source is in God, a love poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (cfr. Rom 5:5). It is, by nature, divine because it is a participation in the life itself of God. It is divine in virtue of its orientation, because it makes us love God and love other persons with God. It is, at the same time, human because it involves our human feelings, is expressed through human gestures, human words, is dedicated to the service of human persons. Your pastoral service to the migrants and to the refugees has full value – as you all know very well – insofar as it comes from a heart united with God. It is, first and foremost, a work of Christ himself, with which you are associated and which you can realise with him only if you are united to his Heart. “To bet on love” is, above all, to bet on the charity of Christ's Heart.

In closely uniting the second commandment to the first, Jesus has revealed the authentic way of understanding one and the other. Such a union was already prepared in the Old Testament, because a number of texts already expressed a connection between the respect for God and one's relationship with human persons. Such a connection appeared forcefully in chapter 19 of the Book of Leviticus, which contains precisely the commandment concerning the love of neighbour. The precepts concerning human relations are based on a declaration about our relationship with God. On various occasions, God said: “I am the Lord” (Lev 19:3.10.12.14.16.18.31.32.34.36.37). It is prescribed, for example, that “You will not curse the dumb or put an obstacle in the way of the blind, but will fear your God, I am the Lord” (Lev 19:14). These texts, however, do not speak about the *love* of God and, therefore, they do not have the same implication of Jesus' response to the scribe.

As to the Old Testament, one observation is of particular interest concerning our theme. The commandment of loving one's neighbour is applied explicitly to the migrants. This often slips our attention. One usually says that Jesus' response referred to the text of Lev 19:18. One forgets verse 34, which repeats the same precept, applying it to the case of the migrants.

At first glance, the commandment of love of neighbour has but a limited extension and is explained in negative terms: “You shall not nourish any feeling of hatred toward your brother” (Lev 19:17) – that is, against another Israelite; “You shall not exact vengeance on, or bear any sort of grudge against, the members of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself” (Lev 19:18).

The second passage extends the perspective and is expressed in a positive way: it applies the commandment to persons who are not Israelites and it positively prescribes to treat them as Israelites. Thus the text reads: “If there are resident aliens in your country, you will not molest them. You will treat resident aliens as though they were native-born and *love them as yourself* – for you yourselves were once aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord, your God” (Lev 19:33-34). The extension of the precept is easily noticed. This corresponds to one frequent orientation in the Old Testament, which deals with giving a positive status to alien residents (which, in Hebrew, is called *gher*). The Mosaic Law many times recommends the good treatment of others (cfr. Ex 22:20; 23:9); the Book of Deuteronomy invites us to love (Dt 10:19) because God himself “loves the migrants and gives them food and clothing” (Dt 10:18). The migrants are mentioned many times along with the widows and the orphans – other marginalised categories – to whom the law guarantees special protection (cfr. Dt 10:18; 14:29; 24:17.19.20-21).

However, it must be noted that the extension of the precept to the migrants is not a universal one. The Old Testament has a limited idea of “neighbours”. Its legislation does not consider the case of refugees. It does not have such a category of people in mind, but only thinks of the strangers who live, in a permanent way, in the land. Some narrative texts, however, provide some additions in this case, showing some examples of generous hospitality (cfr. Gen 18:1-8; Ruth 2:8-9.14.16).

In the Gospel, Jesus has fully highlighted the importance of the commandment of loving one's neighbour and he himself has given it a universal extension. This is definitely against the mentality of the Pharisees who, in fact, separate the first commandment from the second, because they pretend to love God by separating themselves from other men. A unilateral concern for religious ritual purity led the Pharisees to lack of solidarity. The prayer of the Pharisee has much to say in this matter: "The Pharisee stood there and said this prayer to himself, <I Thank you, God, that I am not gasping, unjust, adulterous like everyone else ...>" (Lk 18:11). On the contrary, Jesus declared that, without the love of neighbour, the love of God is not authentic. One cannot separate one from the other. The First Letter of John clearly states: "If somebody says, <I love God>, but hates his brother, he is a liar" (1Jn 4:20). To please God, Christians must welcome the love of God in their hearts and extend this to other persons. To the Pharisees who were criticizing him, Jesus replied: "Go, therefore, and learn what these words mean: <Mercy is what pleases me, not sacrifice>" (Hos 6:6; Mt 9:13; cfr. Lk 12:7). The best way to love God does not consist in an external cult, but in welcoming his mercy and spreading it to all the poor. Jesus himself has continuously observed this way of loving God. He completely put himself at the service of the mercy of his Father towards the poor and the least, the sick, oppressed people and marginalised, towards those who hunger for bread and truth, towards sinners; in the end, he gave "his life as a ransom for many" (Mk 10:45; Mt 20:28).

The love of God for men is a universal love. It embraces all those who believe. In Christ, it offers them salvation (cfr. Rom 5:18; 1Tim 2:5-6). It follows that uniting the second commandment to the first requires that the love of one's neighbour must be universal. My neighbour refers to the human person whom the circumstances place along my way. I am called to love him, even if he is poor, or rather precisely because he is poor! I am called to help him if he needs my help. More than anything else, the migrants and the refugees need help and love. The Lord invites us, therefore, to respond to their needs and, in order to do it, he puts at our disposal that inexhaustible love of his Heart. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus points out the universal meaning of the precept of loving one's neighbour. His interlocutor asks him: "Who is my neighbour?" (Lk 10:29); he wanted to know the limits of what the precepts required of him. Is my "neighbour" simply those who live in my neighborhood, my family, my friends? Or must it include all the people of my town and my city?, or all the citizens of my country? Or must it go yet further – as far as it could? And who are those people whom I can exclude? Such was the question of a legislator. Jesus did not answer, and this is very meaningful. Jesus has refused to set the limits to loving one's neighbour. He then presents the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:30-35), which speaks about a man who does not raise a legalistic question. The Good Samaritan did not ask if the injured man, whom the bandits abandoned half-dead along the road, was to be considered as his neighbour or not. He simply noticed his distress and, full of compassion, came generously to his aid. Rather, he turns himself into a neighbour of the unknown. Through this Parable, Jesus invites us not to set any limit to our idea of a "neighbour", but rather to overcome any barrier and to believe, above all, in relationships which are effective and efficient – relationships of love and solidarity.

Jesus has always refused to separate the two dimensions of love. The mystery of his Incarnation strengthened their union to the highest point. He, the Son of God, did not hesitate to identify himself with all the persons who find themselves in situations of difficulty and destitution – persons who are hungry and thirsty, who have nothing to wear nor a place to stay in, persons who are imprisoned. He identifies himself especially with strangers who are far from their countries and need to be welcomed (Mt 25:35.43). He demands us to recognise him in every person, to love him and to help him.

Jesus has taught us a universal and unselfish love. The pastoral care of migrants and refugees corresponds totally to such an orientation, expressed very concretely in what Jesus

advises according to Luke: “When you have a party, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, then you will be blessed, for they have no means to repay you” (Lk 14:13-14). Jesus wants for us the divine joy of loving generously, without any ulterior selfish motivation. To dedicate oneself to the migrants and to the refugees, therefore, transforms itself into a profound joy, because such persons do not have the possibility to give us any material good in exchange. Our joy becomes even greater because our dedication solicits a response of a grateful love and, therefore, creates that union in love. Thus the world becomes more “christian”.

To stop putting your patience to listen to the test any further, my conclusion will be very short: the Holy Scriptures clearly show us that one cannot but “begin with Christ for a more Christian world” and this requires, first and foremost, “betting on love”, in receiving grace from that divine source – the Heart of Christ, and in communicating it generously to all persons entrusted to us. The pastoral care of migrants and of refugees finds its more inspiring and richest guideline right there.

STARTING AFRESH FROM CHRIST FOR A MORE FRATERNAL AND WELCOMING WORLD IN SOLIDARITY

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Introduction

0. 1. “*Start afresh from Christ towards a more fraternal, solidarity-based and welcoming world*” is the subject we were given for today’s agenda, whose general theme is: “*Stake everything on charity*”.

0. 2. “Start afresh from Christ”, is in fact the instruction that the Holy Father gave to priests and the faithful in the Apostolic Letter, *Tertio Millennio Ineunte (TMI)*, at the time when the Catholic Church passed from one century to another, and from one millennium to the next. Not that we “will be saved by a magic formula” in the face of the great challenges of our times, “but by a **Person**, and the assurance which he gives us: I am with you”⁵⁰. With this instruction the Holy Father wishes to affirm that any pastoral programme should, ultimately, “have at its centre *Christ himself*, who is to be known, loved and imitated, so that *in him we may live* the life of the Trinity, and *with him transform* history until its fulfilment in the heavenly Jerusalem”⁵¹. In other words, it is a programme which little by little aims to bring all things in heaven and earth together under one head, even Christ (*anakephalaiôsasthai*) (Ephesians 1:10).

0. 3. The Holy Father therefore wishes that the entry of the Church into the new millennium should have the same starting point, the same foundation and the same source of inspiration as the early Church, namely: **Jesus Christ** and the fundamental events of his life, death and resurrection. The new millennium should *start* from Christ, “the same yesterday and today and for ever” (Hebrews 13:8), *refocus* everything on him and *lead* everything to him, alpha and omega (Revelation 1:8 ; 22:13).

0. 4. How can we go back to the fundamental events of the life of Jesus without immediately finding the “*Our Father*” and the *universal fraternity* in Christ on the one hand, and on the other, the total gift of Christ for the salvation of the world and the *new commandment*: “As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (see John 13:34; 13:1). Consequently, “starting afresh from Christ” leads *towards a more fraternal, solidarity-based and welcoming world*.

0. 5. Here we come straight to the point of today’s agenda with the central idea: “*Stake everything on charity*”. Isn’t this what the programme of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees, which is totally dedicated to charity, fraternity, solidarity and welcoming migrants and refugees, is all about?

0. 6. We will divide our argument into two sections to develop the two elements included in our title: 1) – *Starting afresh from Christ*; 2) – *Towards a more fraternal,*

⁵⁰ POPE JOHN PAUL II, *TMI*, no. 29.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

solidarity-based and welcoming world. We will deal with the implications, and then conclude with some practical considerations.

1. Start afresh from Christ

1.1 Starting afresh from Christ means returning to the origins and sources of our faith; it is to “fix our eyes on **Jesus**, the *author* and *perfecter* of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2). It is to contemplate the “essential” moments of his life, *verba et facta*, and to assess their permanent and immutable impact on the life of the Church. The approach is like the author of Revelation who, from the outset, puts **Jesus Christ** in first place, the *faithful witness*, who comes with the clouds (1:7) or the Son of Man among the seven lampstands which are the seven churches (1:13,20). This is what the Church at the beginning of this millennium should have before the eyes of Christ who stands *among the Church* (see Matthew 28:20) and who will come *on the clouds of Heaven* (see Matthew 26:64 ; 25:31). “Starting from Christ” is in fact a *digest of eschatology*: present, final and future, which simultaneously highlights the Church as a “universal sacrament of salvation in time and space”⁵².

1.2. But this “time of the Church” or “time of Christ among Churches” (Revelation 1:13) and the Parousia are historically – *historisch* and *geschichtlich* – preceded by two key stages: *incarnation* and *redemption*, crowned by *resurrection*.

1.3. Jesus, “le go’el”

1.3.1. By **incarnating itself**, the Word of God made itself the “go’el” of humankind, and, as such, **brought about the redemption** of humanity, due to its dual nature: divine and human. It accomplished the redemption of humankind because they - its *close relatives* out of a common nature - had *fallen into slavery* (see Leviticus 25:47-53 ; Hebrews 2:14-15). But, as is affirmed in the Epistle to the Ephesians, redemption is a work for which “Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25): redemption, a consequence of the condition of “go’el”, is a *work of love*. The Gospel affirms the same: “Ayant **aimé** les siens qui étaient dans le monde, **il les aima** jusqu’au bout” (John 15:1). Starting afresh from Christ Incarnate, the Saviour and Redeemer, *is committing oneself to a current of love* that flows from him and lives in the Church to be reflected throughout the world. Thus Jesus can say: “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends” (John 15,13). The Lord has not only taught it, but above all has given an example; he has been its model and *Archetype* (*verba et facta*).

The Church is the **place**, the **sacrament** and the **guardian** of this current of love (charity) by means of the economy of the sacrament, notably the **Eucharist**, whose solidarity and sharing are the social consequences. As Pope John Paul II said in his recent encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*: “The Apostle Paul, for his part, says that it is “unworthy” of a Christian community to partake in the Lord’s Supper amid *division* and *indifference* towards the poor (see 1 Corinthians 11:17-22,27-34). Proclaiming the death of the Lord “until he comes” (1 Corinthians 11:20) entails that all those who take part in the Eucharist be *committed to changing their lives* and making them in a certain way completely “Eucharistic”. It is this fruit of a transfigured existence and a commitment to transforming the world in accordance with the Gospel which splendidly illustrates the eschatological tension inherent in the celebration of the Eucharist and in the Christian life as a whole: Come, Lord Jesus! (Revelation 22:20)”⁵³.

“Beginning with intra-ecclesial communion, charity of its nature opens out into a **service that is universal**; it inspires in us a commitment to practical and concrete love for every human being. (...) Certainly we need to remember that no one can be excluded from our

⁵² SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, *LG* 48.

⁵³ POPE JOHN PAUL II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, no. 20.

love, since ‘through his Incarnation the Son of God has united himself in some fashion with every person’⁵⁴.

2. “For a more fraternal, solidarity-based and welcoming world”

2. 1. Starting afresh from Christ, from his incarnation and from his redeeming work on the Cross as meant by the sacrament of the Eucharist, is aiming at a thirsty humanity that is seeking total salvation. In a globalised world, governed by ever growing marginalisation of the poor, the vulnerable and the outcast, the Eucharist, through the poverty of sacramental signs, recalls, on the one hand, *kenosis*, the extreme abasement of Christ who, for our sakes, “though he was rich, became poor, so that we through his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). Moreover, *it symbolises and highlights all the poverty and destitution in the world*, calling on the disciples of Christ to follow him and imitate his generosity (see 2 Corinthians 8:9). This “poverty” of the Eucharist defies all selfishness and greed with regard to the poverty and destitution of the world.

2. 2. “Indeed, (.....) our world is entering the new millennium burdened by the contradictions of an economic, cultural and technological progress which offers immense possibilities to a fortunate few, while leaving millions of others not only on the margins of progress but in living conditions far below the minimum demanded by human dignity”⁵⁵.

3. In addition to these socio-economic gaps between rich and poor are what the Holy Father calls “newer patterns of poverty, which often affect financially affluent sectors and groups which are nevertheless threatened by despair at the lack of meaning in their lives, by drug addiction, by fear of abandonment in old age or sickness, by marginalisation or social discrimination”⁵⁶.

2. 4. Moreover, in a world torn apart by violence, war, the tensions of terrorism and all kinds of conflict that engender hatred, aggression, a thirst for vengeance, migration and a multitude of refugees, the Eucharistic assembly timely recalls *universal fraternity* in Christ, in order to *encourage the impetus of growing solidarity and the globalisation of charity*. How can we not think about “the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age”⁵⁷ in a world that has become a “global village” and where we learn about them in real time? We cannot in all reason follow the troubled course of current affairs without being moved and engaging in a surge of active generosity, effective solidarity and sharing (see 1 John 3:17-18).

2. 5. St Matthew’s Gospel states the belief (25:31-46) that the Lord will judge us according to our sensitiveness to the poverty and destitution of our neighbour and to our sense of hospitality. Starting afresh from Christ, therefore means reminding ourselves of the *identification of Christ with the poor* who are hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick or in prison – a situation that is very close to the one experienced today by migrants, displaced persons and refugees. Starting afresh from Christ, means remembering the words of the Lord: “Whatever you did (or did not) do for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did (or did not do) for me” (Matthew 25:39,40). Christ once again strongly affirmed his identification with the members of his Body, which is the Church, when he said to Paul: “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?... I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting” (Acts 9:4,5). Starting afresh from Christ truly implies building a world that is always more fraternal, marked by the “imagination of **charity, solidarity and sharing**”⁵⁸.

⁵⁴ POPE JOHN PAUL II, *TMI*, no. 49.

⁵⁵ POPE JOHN PAUL II, *TMI*, no. 50.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 1.

⁵⁸ POPE JOHN PAUL II, *TMI*, 5, no. 50.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3. 1. Migrations, movements of people and the refugee phenomenon are generally caused by armed conflict and wars: race wars, proxy wars, wars which are relocated and privatised – in short, what the African bishops have called “structural violence”⁵⁹.

3. 2. But one of the most subtle forms of this structural violence has turned out to be the *globalised socio-economic and political order*, which leads to pauperisation of developing countries and the flight of their sons and daughters to more liveable social spaces, where they are obliged to go in the undercarriages of aircraft. But the *gaps* in economic development of peoples which, contrary to the teachings of the Supreme Pontiffs⁶⁰ is neither comprehensive nor solidarity-based, is a time bomb for international order and, as such, a potential cause of conflict, migration, massive exodus of people and the ever increasing phenomenon of refugees. The violation of human rights by autocratic regimes produces the same effects.

3. 3. To ward off the harmful effects of this state of affairs, downstream we must “**stake everything on charity**”, because we must take care of the innocent victims of inhuman systems. Consequently, a chain of **growing solidarity** and “**globalised charity**” (Pope John Paul II) must be organised, in order to *take charge of and welcome in a dignified way displaced persons and refugees*.

3. 4. Upstream, there is a pressing need to discourage the “*refugee makers*” and the warlords by mobilising ourselves in peaceful combat “to establish political and socio-economic systems that respect human dignity, the imperatives of social justice, and the rights of individuals, groups and nations. *Conflict, even if latent, usually begins when a right is disparaged or violated*”⁶¹, say the African bishops.

May the Lord give rise to more and more peace makers, who respect justice and rights, to move “towards a more fraternal, solidarity-based and welcoming world”.

“*Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum
Habitare fratres in unum*” (Psalm 133/132:1).

“How good and pleasant it is when brothers
live together in unity!”

⁵⁹ See SECAM, Pastoral Letter *Christ is our Peace (Ephesians 2:14)*, Accra, October 2001, nos. 17-20.

⁶⁰ POPE PAUL VI, *Populorum Progressio* (AAS, 59, 1967, pp. 257-299) ; POPE JOHN PAUL II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (AAS, 80, 1988, pp. 513-586) ; ID., *Centesimus Annus* (AAS, 83, 1991, pp. 793-867).

⁶¹ SECAM, *Ibid.*, no. 109.

**STARTING AFRESH FROM CHRIST
FOR A MORE JUST, FREE AND PEACEFUL WORLD**

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I have been given a theme which – I would like to think – is one of hope: *Starting afresh from Christ*. Starting afresh with renewed strength in order to show this world where, and above all in Whom, to find the hope to build “a more just, free and peaceful world”.

Over the last 13 years I have had the honour and joy to lend my services to the Holy Father as Secretary for the Holy See’s Relations with States.

Over all these years, I have constantly admired the Holy Father for making the most important decisions concerning the relations of the Holy See with various governments and international organisations, especially at particularly difficult moments, in the presence of the Eucharist.

This starting anew from Christ which the Holy Father himself practices in such a complete and categorical fashion, has, in a certain way, always been a source of fresh wonder to me, and it has given deep significance to my work in the Secretariat of State.

What contribution does the Holy See make in order that civil society and our contemporaries may find in Christ the way, the truth and the life to build the civilisation of love?

Over the centuries, the Roman Catholic Church has exercised an active presence in the field of international relations – especially in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy – thanks to the integral subjectivity which the Holy See is recognised as holding.

This activity of the Holy See takes place in the context of the modern world which is undergoing rapid change, especially in western countries and the more economically advanced nations.

This is a world which at times makes tolerance its secular flagship and which may refuse the values of Christian culture in the name of an asserted equality of all beliefs; a world where communication and information technology daily propose new approaches, new experiences and new ways of thought, more or less “pre-packaged” and aimed at precise goals, all enticingly presented.

At the same time, scientific research has achieved results unthinkable just a few years ago, making important contributions to improving the living conditions of the human environment, and opening new ethical questions and challenges as it risks destroying what it was called to defend.

This, however, is the world that entices so many people who search for a future more economically secure, or one more respectful of human dignity, in countries other than their own.

Over these days consideration has already been given, from various points of view, to the challenges facing migrants of various kinds in the current world situation.

The presence of the Holy See, also in the context of diplomacy and international meetings, aims to accompany people and nations on their journey and to act, in the words of Pope Paul VI speaking with reference to the UN in 1965, “evaluating human beings in their individual, social and transcendent dimensions; ... encouraging peoples and their leaders

always to give precedence to dialogue and negotiation; ... recalling the value of the law: the law that serves freedom, the law that protects the weak, the law that establishes justice, the law that safeguards peace”.

The international community

If we examine the international community over the last few decades – the fall of ideological barriers and of economic and political confrontation with the countries of eastern Europe, we see that there followed a period of great hope.

Testimony of this may be found in the great conferences organised by the UN, such as the UN Conference on Development and the Environment (Rio de Janeiro, 1992); the World Human Rights Conference (Vienna, 1993); the World Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994); the World Summit on Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995); the Fourth World Women’s Conference (Peking, 1996), in which it was sought to find a new consensus for policies concerning the needs and prospects of humanity, guiding the world towards sustainable development and a form of well-being attainable by all countries.

On the other hand, at these conferences and in other international gatherings, powerful ideological, economic and political pressures developed in parallel, contrasting strongly with the affirmed intention of “placing people at the centre of development” and directing “economies in such a way as meet man’s needs more effectively” (ICDP, *Platform for Action*, 8.25).

Groups guided by specific ideologies and powerful economic interests were able to exercise a strong influence on the political choices of economically weaker nations and of governments culturally reluctant to accept certain ethical criteria, especially regarding demographic questions (catastrophic predictions of population growth beyond the planet’s capacity for survival have proved unreliable), and regarding the unlimited freedom of women and of individuals in general (including children and adolescents) to decide matters concerning their own bodies, including the right to conception.

Although the edicts of these international conferences were not obligatory, but served only as guidelines (soft law) for the policies of individual nations, the principles they contained nonetheless confirmed general lines of policy and affected multilateral and, at times, bilateral aid to the poorest countries.

Over the last few years, however, the approach to these questions has been changing.

The theme of development has been accompanied by that of globalisation and access to equal opportunities; the question of demographic growth is contrasted by that of the ageing population. And more continuous and decisive moves are being made (also in international documents under the guise of new rights) to encourage the acceptance of abortion, liberalisation of euthanasia, experiments on embryos, recognition of the definition and rights of matrimony for same-sex unions, and so on.

Nevertheless, if the spread of practical relativism appears today to weaken those ethical forces that gave rise to so many international bodies, it is precisely an awareness of the interdependence between different individuals and societies – a result, also, of communications and the dissemination of information – that forces the main actors in international relations to consider elements other than those of power and force.

At a multilateral level, the evolution of international law provides testimony of this growing awareness of the reciprocal responsibility and interdependence of States. Relations between them are now a necessity in fields far more numerous and diverse than those imaginable immediately after the Second World War when the UN came into being with its various agencies and programmes.

In the area of international humanitarian law, the 1990s witnessed the outbreak of many conflicts, the majority of them apparently local though not without external impulses

and support, where ethnic or religious difference at times constituted a pretext for contrasts of quite different origins.

While huge economic interests provided a constant backdrop to conflicts and institutional disturbances, humanitarian organisations did not go uncriticised for their contradictions, by which they sometimes connived and collaborated with the very State organs to which they should have appealed on behalf of the people they were supposed to be helping.

Yet the international climate seemed to reveal the glimpse of an opportunity for finding new solutions to the contrast between respect for national sovereignty on the one hand, and, on the other, the need to intervene when a State could no longer ensure the safety of its own citizens, or itself became their persecutor.

Following the tragic events of 11th September 2001 and its consequences, the principle of respect for human rights and assistance for displaced or endangered people has become heavily mortgaged, with prime importance being given to nations' right to self-defence against external intervention.

There is growing interest in the question of security but diminishing attention, including financial attention, to humanitarian problems (for some years now, there has been talk of "humanitarian crisis"), and international organisations are forced to reduce their activities in the field, dependent on the political choices of donor countries rather than on people's needs.

Security and legality tend to become synonymous.

Public opinion was greatly concerned over the recent war in Iraq, when the United Nations Security Council was unable to find a common voice to defend security and the role of the UN, precisely at a time when the need for an international authority was felt more than ever before, an authority with sufficient power to ensure agreements be respected and peace guaranteed.

The respect of human rights and humanitarian law

All sides – this Dicastery included – have decried the danger that the fight against terrorism and illegality may impair the defence of human rights.

As Sergio Vieira de Mello, High Commissioner for Human Rights, affirmed last May (cf. *La Repubblica*, 7th May 2003, p. 16): "in the crisis that has afflicted the world, the dysfunction in the very definition of security has highlighted its own futility"; the concept of security should be rethought, not only in terms of the power of weapons of mass destruction, but above all in terms of human rights, the violations of which often represent the core of internal and international security.

Indeed, it is the continual violation of human rights that constitutes a threat to the security and stability of the international community which, nonetheless, has often shown itself to be incapable of adequately responding to the cry for help arising from those who are victims of abuse.

On 9th January 1995, during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Holy Father told the Diplomatic Corps that humanitarian law and international law were being violated, he said: "may the law never sanction results achieved by force alone! It would be the defeat of civilisation!".

Unfortunately, protracted violations of life and of human dignity continue to be perpetrated, creating a fertile soil for all forms of violence, poverty, abuse and exploitation. The extent to which this affects migration has already been noted, with movements of peoples that cannot be explained only in terms of the grim trade run by organised crime.

It should also be noted that those fleeing misery and persecution often have to face forms of violence and humiliation quite unimagined when they set out..

Among human rights, particular attention must be given to the right to freedom of belief and religion, including the right to change one's religion or creed, and the freedom to teach, observe and worship, both in public and in private.

The theme of religious freedom is a particularly delicate area, an area that also concerns migrants, both in their own countries where they may have been persecuted for their faith, and in the country of transit or destination. Recent cases of disrespect for religious roots, both of the migrants themselves and of the host peoples, show us just how the failure to fulfil these inalienable principles leads to misunderstanding, discrimination, unjustified aggression and profound humiliation.

Moreover, some political leaders would like to suppress any religious reference in the normative principles that regulate civil society, this in the name of tolerance which, poorly understood, must reflect no religious value in order to be impartial.

In the prayer vigil for World Youth Day (27.7.2002), Pope John Paul II affirmed that "God cannot be refused or marginalised without running the risk of humiliating man".

Speaking to representatives from the worlds of culture, art and science, he recalled how, in a situation such as the present, it is important that everyone should recognise "that religion is not the root of the problem, but a vital part of the solution". (Vatican, 11.4.2002).

As history proves, democracy without values can easily become an open or covert form of totalitarianism (*Centesimus Annus*, 46).

The activity of the Holy See

In this context the Holy See, defined by Paul VI as an "expert in humanity", has always demonstrated its faith in the international community and has made its own contribution in defence of human rights, first among them the right to life which is the foundation for all the others such as the right to freedom of belief and religion, to education, to work, to human development, to health, etc. These rights arise from human nature itself and, consequently, are not conceded but must be recognised as universal, inviolable, indivisible and inalienable.

Pontifical diplomacy has maintained a presence and often intervened in multilateral gatherings, both to encourage and support measures favouring the respect of human rights and the progress of nations and individuals, and to remind political leaders of their responsibilities when it was clear that human beings were in peril (especially the weak and vulnerable) in any or all phases of their lives, from conception to natural death.

The tireless activity of the representatives of the Holy See has never ceased to refer to the dictates of natural law, written in the hearts of men and women and – in a certain way and at various levels – inscribed in the societies they form.

A law that calls for fraternity, justice, freedom and peace. Race, religion and political parties must not become "sacramentalised" in the system of civil legislation, establishing the law of the strongest to the detriment of minority rights. This is quite different from giving just recognition to the religious roots and values that have contributed to building civilisations, and that constitute the prerequisite to constructive and peaceful relations between them.

As a sign of encouragement to the international community in its commitment to respect human rights, the Holy See has ratified numerous Conventions on the subject. Thus, it recently ratified the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Punishments (2002), and is already party to the Convention on the Rights of Children (1989), to its two additional Protocols and to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969).

On the subject of humanitarian law, the Holy See is party to the Geneva Convention of 1949 and to the two additional Protocols on the protection of the victims of war. Furthermore, it was among the first States to ratify the Convention on the Status of Refugees (1951) and its 1967 Protocol, as I will have occasion to mention later.

It has ratified numerous disarmament Conventions, encouraging efforts that go well beyond mere dissuasion based on the equilibrium of terror. It is in the light of such encouragement that we must consider the Holy See's adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1971; to that against the production, development and use of biological weapons, of 1972; of chemical weapons, of 1993; and of banning anti-personnel mines, of 1997.

And on this subject, we must remember the firm conviction with which Popes have rejected war as a solution for the disputes between peoples.

Even during the recent crisis in Iraq, the Holy See recalled that all States have the right to defend their own existence and freedom against an unjust aggressor, using proportionate means. Beyond the case of legitimate defence, which may justify an armed response, dialogue and mediation should always be preferred, because "experience shows that violence generates violence and that war solves nothing, bringing only greater suffering and death..." (cf. John Paul II, *Urbi et Orbi* Message, 31st March 2002).

Numerous conflicts arise in situations of great poverty.

The Millennium Declaration of the United Nations confirmed the commitment to reduce extreme poverty by 50% by the year 2015. The reduction of poverty is, above all, a moral imperative for the international community, which has now attained sufficient scientific and social progress to eliminate this sore which drives so many people to migrate illegally, often finding new forms of discrimination and violence in the societies to which they move.

The numerous appeals – such as for the cancellation of the debt of the poorest countries and calls for justice and equality in commercial dealings and the administration of goods – launched by the Holy Father during the recent Jubilee Year and echoed by pontifical representatives, have also been widely taken up by public opinion and have met with some favourable responses from governments.

In this area, the Holy See continues to insist on the need to favour development, teaching collective responsibility, and involving the poor (the recipients of aid and of the various economic assistance programmes) in deciding the projects that concern them, in order to build social communities that guarantee equal opportunities of progress for everyone.

Migrants

Questions involving migrants and refugees are given in-depth treatment at international gatherings. With reference to the defence of the human rights of migrants, Holy See delegates have often interceded with the Human Rights Commission in order to remind government representatives of the need to intensify and co-ordinate reflections concerning migration at an international level, dealing with this matter, and that of security, in the framework of respect for human rights.

As I indicated earlier, the Holy See was one of the 26 States (and 2 observers: Cuba and Iran) to participate in the 1951 Geneva Conference which approved the Convention on the Status of Refugees, signing it on 21st May 1952 at the UN building in New York. It is significant that the first visit by a representative of the Holy See to the United Nations should have had the aim of promoting the well-being of refugees and displaced persons.

On 28th February 1958, the Convention on the Status of Refugees was ratified by the Holy See which, thereafter, was the first to adhere, on 8th June 1967, to the Protocol of the preceding January which eliminated the temporal and geographical restrictions contained in the original Convention.

Nonetheless, international agreements concerning refugees have originated in a fairly limited context and no longer respond to the needs of the growing number of people who, for various reasons, leave their own countries ("de facto" refugees: victims of armed conflict, of erroneous economic policies or of economic disasters).

A more organic approach to the problem, a more complete protection of refugees, is now necessary, as so-called “illegal immigrants” are mixed in among them, rendering it difficult to identify their reasons for expatriation and their rights to international protection.

States have a right/duty to regulate this phenomenon with clear migratory policies. However it is now universally acknowledged that migration is an unstoppable force, and that it cannot be controlled just by building walls, the only result of which would be to increase irregular migration.

In his Message for the World Day of Migrants 1992, the Holy Father noted that the condition of migrants in situations considered as illegal represents an appeal to social sensitivity to give legitimacy, purpose and dignity to such people, through the adoption of appropriate measures.

In the international community there has been no lack of attempts to promote more favourable approaches to the question of migration (such as the “Bern Initiative”) which seek to consider it as a positive factor for the host society and for the migrants themselves; nor of consultations which, in examining the current dimensions of the phenomenon, aim to study the possibility of controlling the flows, overcoming the narrow parameters of national or regional interests in a framework of renewed co-operation and mutual trust.

Many Catholic organisations work at an international level alongside refugees and migrants of various kinds; and pontifical representatives often hear expressions of appreciation for these organisations from numerous representatives of international institutions.

A few years after the Second World War, at the wishes of the Holy Father Pius XII, the Catholic International Commission for Migration was founded as an institution of information, co-ordination and representation to respond to the urgent problem of migration.

This body, along with other charity organisations, has attended some of the saddest moments in the lives of thousands of refugees, and of migrants of various kinds and all ages and social conditions. It often has to face problems associated with narrow interpretations of the principle of “non refoulement” of refugees, episodes of racism and xenophobia, and the inadequacy of existing structures and norms to deal with the at times uncheckable flows of immigrants, and the ramified and powerful criminal networks.

Problems of security and of the spread of disease; the exploitation of men, women and children for criminal or immoral ends; the kidnapping of children and the reduction of women and minors to slavery; physical mutilations; violence; unreported deaths; the theft of documents; the use of migrants as informal labour; the lack of integration, especially of women and the elderly; the break-up of family units and the rupture of marriage ties; as well as discriminatory measures against immigrants under the pretext of the fight against terrorism, represent the daily context with which these Catholic organisations are faced. You well know how much work and how much incomprehension even the Good Samaritan had to endure...

Yet the most specific characteristics of these organisations are their pastoral activities: their insistence and defence of the right of migrants and refugees to spiritual and religious assistance. At the same time, in collaborating with other organisations at an ecumenical and inter-religious level, they find themselves bearing witness on the front line that, as children of the one Father, encounter in diversity is possible, human coexistence is possible, and dialogue between people with different cultural and historical roots is possible.

The family of nations

In addressing the Italian parliament at Montecitorio last year (cf. *L'Osservatore Romano*, 15th November 2002), the Holy Father reflected upon how the new century is bringing a growing need for harmony, solidarity and peace between nations; an unavoidable necessity in a world that is ever more interdependent, held together by a global network of exchange and communications but in which appalling inequalities continue nonetheless to

exist. The Pope recalled certain chronic conflicts, especially that in the Holy Land, as well as the terrorism that has taken on a new dimension and that, in a completely distorted manner, seeks justification even in the great religions; and he affirmed that just such a situation requires religions to bring out all their potential for peace, orienting the cultures and civilisations from which they draw inspiration and “converting” them towards reciprocal understanding.

In this, Christianity holds a special position and responsibility because, in announcing the God of love, it presents itself as the religion of mutual respect, of forgiveness and of reconciliation.

Let us also recall the Pope’s speech at Assisi on 24th January 2002: “There can be no peace without justice, there can be no justice without forgiveness. ... Peace! Humanity has need of peace, always, ... in God we find the pre-eminent union of justice and mercy, ...

Shadows cannot be dissipated with arms; shadows are dissipated by igniting beacons of light. ... Hatred can be beaten only with love...”.

Remember the Apostolic Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (76); that the Church, founded on the love of the Redeemer, helps to extend the range of action of justice and love within each nation and to all nations.

Thus, the Holy See supports nations in their respect for customary law and international law, which today comprehend a series of reciprocal rights and duties that humanity has painstakingly drawn up and that constitute its heritage and the foundation of harmony, freedom and peace between peoples. The Holy See itself has often collaborated in drafting Conventions and, as we said earlier, adhered to them in support of an international order founded on justice and law.

As Pope John XXIII proclaimed in *Pacem in terris* (51): “Relations between States must furthermore be regulated by justice. This necessitates both the recognition of their mutual rights, and, at the same time, the fulfilment of their respective duties. [States have the right to existence, to self development, and to the means necessary to achieve this. They have the right to play the leading part in the process of their own development, and the right to their good name and due honours...].

And just as individual men may not pursue their own private interests in a way that is unfair and detrimental to others, so too it would be criminal in a State to aim at improving itself by the use of methods which involve other nations in injury and unjust oppression”.

We all, perhaps, have before our eyes the image of Pope Paul VI and of the present Pope, speaking from the tribune of the United Nations building. In the forums of multilateral diplomacy, Popes and their supporters have faced the international community with a truth not often remembered: that the same relations of mutual respect and solidarity should exist between nations as are necessary between persons. All nations have equal dignity and must remain united because what the world needs today in the face of its great problems is a “globalisation of solidarity”.

John Paul II sees the UN as a “family of nations, ... where there is no domination of the strong, but the weakest members are, by reason of their weakness, loved and served”. It is for this reason that the Holy See maintains a presence at the UN as “observer”, thus remaining outside party conflict while still exercising the right to express its opinion.

In a certain way, the Holy See finds itself playing a prophetic role within the international community, indicating to the various actors on the international stage “the constituent link between humanity and truth, and the primacy of ethics over politics, economics and technology” (cf. John Paul II: speech to the European Convention of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 20th June 1997).

It has been said that the Holy See is the voice of those who have no voice or, as the Holy Father told the Diplomatic Corps in 1995, “the Holy See’s *raison d’être* within the community of nations is to be the voice which the human conscience expects to hear, without

in this way diminishing the contribution of other religious traditions". We have had cause to notice this expectation on innumerable occasions, even in those who at times publicly opposed the message.

Pontifical representatives tirelessly attempt to convince those in positions of responsibility that if at times "the power of the shadows seems to prevail", evil, violence and death will not have the last word.

On this matter, I like to recall a phrase of the Holy Father John Paul II: "In the designs of Providence, there are no mere coincidences". The Pope reminds us that the faith of believers is not founded only on human resources, but also on the almighty and merciful God. He is the light that illuminates all men and women. All believers know that peace is a gift of God and that it has its true source in him. (cf. speech by H. H. John Paul II to participants in the Conference of Interior Ministries of the European Union, 31st October 2003).

With Christ, "who within himself defeated enmity" and death, we can believe that even the course of worldly events may be changed, that, with God's help, man's every effort may contribute to building a more fraternal, more just and more peaceful future.

In one of his poems, the young Karol Wojtyla wrote: "*I am a wayfarer on the narrow path of the world, and I do not take my mind from Your face which the world does not reveal to me*". In our service too, we come to understand that the world does not show us the face of Christ.

But it is on this journey that we must seek it; not only in all men and women, but also within human communities and peoples, in the dialogue of love and justice, until it is granted us to contemplate that face "not as strangers".

LOOKING AFTER IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN ROME: PAST AND PRESENT

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Introduction

On the occasion of the Holy Year in 1725, Pope Benedict XIII decided to have San Gallicano Hospital built to provide treatment and assistance to the poor and the outcast, and to all pilgrims coming to Rome who were affected by skin diseases, especially leprosy and scabies. Those who can read Latin are reminded of this by a marble tablet on a wall of the hospital:

*"BENEDICTUS XIII P.O.M. NEGLECTIS REJECTISQUE AB OMNIBUS
PRURIGINE LEPROA ET SCABIES...A FUNDAMENTIS EREXIT.
ANNO SALUTIS MDCCXXV"*

A few centuries later, at the beginning of the third millennium, the hospital, located in the popular and traditional district of Trastevere, is still there, although its name has been changed to the San Gallicano Scientific Institute for Hospitalisation and Treatment (IRCCS). The poor, the outcast, immigrants and refugees are still there too. Despite social and economic progress, the need for these people to receive social and medical treatment and assistance is still a current reality for the Italian National Health Service.

Poverty and health

In modern Italian society, the poor may be defined as persons living in particularly disadvantaged conditions who are obliged to be dependent in various ways. Access to the National Health Service and the network of social and health care is also difficult for people. The vulnerable and the needy, immigrants, refugees, itinerants and the homeless should be considered as groups with overlapping characteristics, but there are also elderly people who live on a disability or social allowance, or on an old-age pension, who struggle to make ends meet in a dignified way.

Article 3 of the Italian Constitution stipulates that: “All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, regardless of sex, race, language, religion, political opinions and personal and social conditions”; article 32 stipulates that: “The Republic safeguards health as a fundamental individual right in the interest of the community, and guarantees free treatment to the poor.”

Italy and immigration

In January 2002, according to official data on immigration, Italy had 2,400,000 immigrants with legal residence permits, accounting for 4% of the total population.

Taking care of people from different countries, and different social and cultural backgrounds is not easy. There are language barriers, and in many cases immigrants only seek the help of social and health services in emergencies or if a disease is in an advanced state, when diagnosis and treatment are much more expensive.

The San Gallicano Department of Preventive Medicine for Immigrants in Rome

In recognition of the needs of immigrants, a Department of Preventive Medicine for Immigrants was opened at the San Gallicano Institute in 1985. For many years, this department has been the only public reference point, not only for treatment and assistance, but also as a medical, epidemiological, social and anthropological research centre regarding immigrants, itinerants, refugees and the homeless.

The department has a medical and anthropological advice service, aimed especially at identifying and taking care of those who are disadvantaged from a cultural point of view and risk falling ill. There is also a free legal assistance service for those who need it, and a free ethno-psychiatric service, mainly for dealing with the problems of elderly immigrants, torture victims and women reduced to sexual slavery. All these people are assisted clinically, treated and helped to recover their dignity and faith in life.

Every year, in collaboration with the Municipal Council of Rome and the association, House of Social Rights, the department organises an International Course in Transcultural Medicine for social and healthcare workers, public administrators, teachers and volunteers with the aim of promoting interest, understanding and sharing of experiences regarding the complex world of healthcare.

From the outset, the department's activities have been open to all citizens, Italians and foreigners alike. The services are primarily aimed at legal and illegal immigrants, the homeless, refugees and asylum seekers, itinerants and people with health problems who do not have health insurance cover.

Every day, between 200 and 250 people currently receive assistance. On arrival a patient is first assessed by a group comprising a doctor, a nurse and a cultural mediator. As well as offering a daily service with free access to assistance, the department also acts as an observatory to study and keep under control the health conditions and risks of these particular groups. The data gathered are analysed and the statistics are assessed and compared on the basis of numerous factors. Between 1 January 1985 and 31 December 2002, over 60,000 people were assisted and treated. Almost all the people who come to the department have experienced war, poverty, marginalisation or loneliness. Since 1996, assistance has been supported by the work of linguistic and cultural mediators who welcome foreign patients and explain - in their own languages - the assistance services that are available to them. This also facilitates the cultural and interpretative understanding of diagnosis and treatment, so that the right approach may be adopted for each individual. Migration causes stress and health risk because it entails reorganisation of one's lifestyle and uprooting from the family environment.

This experience seems to be sound both economically and from an ethical standpoint. Taking care of the health of immigrants is extremely important and also has repercussions on protecting the health of Italian citizens – for example, containing the spread of contagious diseases.

Investing in the health and dignity of the poor

Immigrants, refugees, Roma, tramps, prisoners, drug addicts, prostitutes: all are people in distress. People who are rejected as “useless” by a globalised society in which those who do not produce instant wealth and consume seem to count for nothing and, above all, seem to have no rights.

In our experience at the hospital we are faced with the cry of the oppressed and the excluded on a daily basis. The immigrants who come to us and the poorest people from the South who would never be able to leave their countries cry out dramatically to our conscience as fellow human beings. What these people are looking for is fair distribution of the world's goods and resources. They are seeking solidarity and justice, not alms or charity.

We are convinced that investing now in the health and dignity of the most vulnerable – immigrants, asylum seekers, Roma and the homeless – is the only acceptable option. For us

there is no other course of action. If one day we wish to pass on to our children an alive and still thriving planet, which we have received as a gift from God, we must strive to safeguard it. The future of our children, and of our children's children, is linked to the future of the poorest, those who apparently are the most "useless".

There is nothing generous or altruistic about such action: we have no alternative if we wish to ensure that all people live together harmoniously and prosper.

We must begin by adopting a new paradigm: the ethics of caring and solidarity, of listening to and welcoming those who are apparently most "useless". Given our common origin and mutual ties, we all have a common destiny. And within this web of relations each person is unique and unrepeatable, and represents the culmination of millions of years of creation by the universe.

The vast complexity of the universe calls on us to respect and love all creatures, especially the most vulnerable. The emotion and the passion that we feel for the stars, and for dawn and dusk, should light up our commitment to such people: they are very precious.

The whole universe and our everyday lives consist of a vast web of relations, and we can only give meaning to our lives by developing them. Indeed, each person lives through, for and with other people. This is why medical and anthropological assistance to immigrants and refugees represents an opportunity, because by coming into contact with physical and psychological suffering we understand the hugeness of the gift that God has given us and we learn to share our lives. Only where there is welcoming, caring, solidarity and justice can there be health, dignity, love and peace.

So why not welcome tramps, immigrants, refugees, Roma, prisoners, drug addicts, prostitutes and all the other fragile creatures of the universe? Doesn't God have the same tender love for the song of the nightingale as for the croaking of a frog in a pond?

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MIGRANT RECEPTION CENTRES IN HONDURAS

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I. SUMMARY

Migrant reception centres are located in the cities of Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, and are coordinated by the Scalabrinian Sisters.

The main aims of the centres are to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to Hondurans returning - voluntarily and involuntarily - from the United States, with emphasis on vulnerable groups, and to strengthen the process of social, educational and economic reintegration of returning migrants.

The implementation strategy breaks down into two phases of assistance to the target population as follows:

The first phase aims to fulfil the most immediate needs of the target population regarding information, health, temporary accommodation and food, clothing, documentation, psycho-social counselling, contact with families and/or rehabilitation centres and transport facilities.

The second phase supports the reintegration of these people via creation of favourable conditions that enable them to play a part in social, economic and productive life, at national and local levels.

Both components are implemented via actions coordinated between the Church, the government and Honduran civil society organisations concerned with the issue, with a view to exploiting the established capacity of the three sectors to ensure the impact and sustainability of the project.

II. BACKGROUND

The political crisis in Central America at the end of the 1970s and during the 1980s and 1990s had serious economic consequences for the region. In addition, the political situation was compounded by natural phenomena, such as Hurricane Mitch in 1998, which severely affected the region, especially the most vulnerable sectors of the Honduran population.

During recent decades, this situation gave rise to considerable external and internal migration, which tended to increase as the region's economic crisis got worse. The serious damage caused in Honduras by Hurricane Mitch is reflected in economic losses estimated at around US\$ 5,000 million, which greatly affected the Honduran economy and provoked high rates of migration abroad and within the country, mainly from rural areas to the country's major cities.

Regarding external migration, the latest surveys and projections by CID-Gallup from Costa Rica, financed by USIA, report that 3.5% of the closest members of Honduran families left the country as a result of Hurricane Mitch. Of these people, 9 out of 10 went to the United States, with an estimated total of 100,000 during the first wave of migration, 80% of

whom were without papers. According to the study, a total of 213,000 Hondurans are planning to leave the country.

In the aftermath of the devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch in December 1998, the United States government initially applied a temporary measure to suspend deportation procedures, which was in force until 13 January 1999. Subsequently, it granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Hondurans and Nicaraguans who had lived in the country before 30 December 1998, with a period of six months for the application procedure and permission to remain in the United States for 18 months as of acceptance of the application. This policy was beneficial to many Hondurans settled in the United States.

The Problem

In September 1996, with a view to reducing illegal immigration, a new Immigration Law was enacted in the United States which increased the number of categories of people subject to deportation and also the number of rejected applications for permanent residence and temporary admission to the United States. Moreover, the number of grounds for deporting foreign residents was increased, among which the most common were use of false documents, illegal entry or residence subsequent to an authorised period and being considered as a public burden.

In this context, it is understandable that the number of migrants returning to Honduras started increasing in 1996, most of whom were illegal immigrants. The distribution of returning Hondurans, by department of origin, show that the first department is Francisco Morazán (21%), followed by Cortés (19%), Yoro (11%) and Atlántida (8%).

The Target Group

91% of the returnees are male, with an average age ranging from 21 to 40, which means that they are part of the economically active population. The profile of the returning population varies in terms of the reasons for return. The deportees are single men, without money and baggage, who are disoriented, frightened and have nowhere to stay. Some of them have psycho-social problems or a criminal record, and are in obvious need of immediate assistance on arrival and of support in undertaking their social and economic reintegration.

Justification

The most common problems faced by returning Hondurans that require immediate action include: lack of identity papers, and the need for temporary shelter, healthcare, food, clothing, accommodation and income-generating activities that enable economic subsistence.

Once the immediate needs of returnees have been covered, the challenges of the real process of social integration begin. This entails facing lack of acceptance by the community, overcoming problems of adaptation and grading relating to the formal education system, and finding suitable vocational guidance and opportunities to undertake productive activities.

The return - voluntary or compulsory, or a mixture of the two - of large numbers of migrants in a disorganised fashion and over a relatively short period of time, has a series of implications for individuals and the community, including: (a) psycho-social and economic instability of returnees; (b) increased unemployment rates; (c) increased levels of public insecurity; (d) a decrease in family remittances; (e) increased rates of poverty; (f) an unfulfilled demand for basic social services; and (g) the possibility of rejection and stigmatisation by host communities.

Against this backdrop, the migrant reception centres support a process of orderly, positive and constructive return which is not based on welfare. This aims to facilitate the organisation of a first phase of immediate assistance and the processes of socio-economic integration by promoting lasting solutions for the target population and raising general public

awareness of the solidarity that returning Hondurans need, and joint local development alternatives.

Established Capacity

A large part of the success of the project hinges on the existing local capacities of the Catholic Church to deal with the problem. While current efforts and initiatives being carried out by various sectors of society (including government, NGOs, the private sector and international organisations) are significant, the leadership that facilitates the coordination which enables existing experiences and information to be organised, systematised and benefited from comes from the Pastoral Care of Human Mobility Organisation of the Honduran Catholic Church.

III. THE PROJECT

The **first phase** of the project comprises four complementary components:

Information/initial orientation: This is provided to returnees on their arrival at international airports once immigration and customs procedures have been completed. Information on Honduras and the assistance they can count on from the project is given in verbal and written form. In addition, individual interviews are carried out to define the kind of support needed.

Temporary assistance: Provided according to needs: temporary accommodation and food, clothing, contact with families, transportation, psycho-social counselling and rehabilitation in specialised centres.

Emergency medical care: Voluntary medical consultation, medicines and treatment when required.

Documentation: To be issued by the Honduran government, according to returnees' needs.

This phase of assistance should be seen as a period that allows for creation of a set of minimum conditions without which full social integration of returning Hondurans could not be achieved. However, a project limited to providing humanitarian assistance, would not be able to guarantee effective integration of returnees. Consequently, a **second phase** is envisaged, with the following principal aims:

An integrated system for supporting the process of social reintegration for the project's beneficiaries, based on: mobilisation and organisation of existing capacities; promoting the sustainability of opportunities created to guarantee that those assisted stay in the country; and avoiding where possible any new emigration.

In order to achieve these strategic results, the second phase includes three components that comprise the core of overall activities. These are:

Social reintegration, in terms of recovery and reaffirmation of the personal values of the returnees, as well as active and constructive reincorporation within the context of their family and community relations.

Educational reintegration, in terms of continuity of a training process already begun, in terms of the age and aspirations, of the children, adolescents and young people who return.

Economic reintegration, in terms of economic, personal and family stability, in the context of the productive role that corresponds to them as members of society.

Operating Strategy

The project's strategy is based on the following criteria.

Linkage between the two phases of the project to ensure coordinated and seamless assistance to returnees.

Exploitation and mobilisation of national capacities, on behalf of which any initiatives from civil society institutions and government organisations will be supported and strengthened.

Civil society participation is considered as a decisive factor in economic reintegration.

Orientation of state participation towards tasks linked with inter-institutional coordination for provision of certain services to the target population and to monitoring the progress of the project. This means that state action will boost initiatives within the various government authorities, coordinating these efforts with those promoted by the civil society.

Sustainability of the project guaranteed from the outset by the impetus of a process of transfer of accompaniment and monitoring responsibilities to government and non-government organisations most suited to undertake these tasks.

Establishment of coordination mechanisms with other initiatives (programmes and projects) whose range and characteristics constitute a complement to it.

Another cross-cutting element of the project is gender focus. Each time women return they take on decisive roles during the process of social reintegration which should be reaffirmed. This means that the project guarantees equal treatment to men and women returnees, by promoting affirmative actions for women and their involvement and participation. This gives room and preferential treatment to women given their historical exclusion, subordination and vulnerability.

Promotion of the participation of the various actors concerned in accompanying and supporting the project, in accordance with their capacities, initiatives and the level of commitment they decide to undertake in its implementation, including the following sectors:

- Government organisations;
- Non-government organisations (NGOs);
- Churches;
- Universities;
- The private sector (companies, trade associations, etc.)
- International cooperation organisations (technical and financial)

The participation of these actors takes different forms, depending on the level of commitment they decide to undertake in supporting the social integration process of returning Hondurans. Namely, involvement should be apparent regarding formulation of initiatives and accompaniment, including contributions in terms of human resources, funding and logistics, or as implementers, for which agreements will be established.

The presence of returning Hondurans is a potential not only in terms of their knowledge, abilities and acquired experience that can favour development of the country, but also because they can contribute to the project as promoters (leaders, capacity builders, motivators, etc.) in the process of implementing the components.

Moreover, participation by civil society in general is relevant to the process of socially integrating returnees and the vulnerable who have undergone hardship. This should always help to eliminate any stigma with regard to their situation, and also be a right that assists them, as persons and citizens, to get back to normal. It is important that citizens who leave the country be informed about the main challenges and problems regarding migration in order to achieve greater awareness of society as a whole.

In addition, the project seeks to establish strategic alliances with other similar projects promoted by international cooperation organisations in support of programmes for social development, job creation, poverty reduction, public security, education, health, housing and the like.

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

Support Hondurans returning to the country and highly vulnerable elements of the population via actions aimed at dealing with their immediate needs and, in the medium- and long-term, those aimed at promoting social, educational and economic integration via the creation of favourable conditions for their participation in society.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Fulfil the immediate needs of the vulnerable returnee population in terms of information, accommodation, food, health, clothing, psycho-social counselling, location in their place of residence and documentation, via an integration assistance mechanism.

Promote and boost the process of social integration of returning Hondurans.

Promote and boost integration within the national educational system of returning children, adolescents and young people who have opted to enter primary, secondary or higher education.

Promote and boost integration of returning Hondurans within the country's production process.

Promote complementary support mechanisms for the process of integration of returning Hondurans, in terms of raising public awareness and managing the project.

Strengthen the local capacities of government and non-government organisations that are already studying the profile of the target population, in order to extend the degree of coverage of returning migrants.

IV RESULTS

IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE

From 15 March 2000 to 30 June 2003 we assisted a total of 16,129 Hondurans returning by air.

- 7,264 returnees received help with basic needs (transportation, accommodation and food).
- 27 returnees received medical rehabilitation assistance, artificial lower limbs, elimination of tattoos and wheelchairs.
- 150 returnees received help in recovering personal documents and goods.
- 29 people were provided with clothes due to their precarious situation on returning.
- 8 returnees receive help with legal advice.

7 returnees received special emotional and spiritual counselling for states of depression brought about by their travel experiences.

Assistance was given to the families of migrants who died in Mexico when they were run over by a train on their way to the United States.

A returnee's mother was given an air fare to the United States so that she could visit her son in prison in Texas.

Financial aid was given to family members to repatriate the ashes of a returnee who died in Mexico City.

THE REINTEGRATION PROCESS

As part of the reintegration phase of returning migrants, 2,224 people were placed and are being integrated within the country's production process.

- 174 people were helped to participate in technical and vocational education.
- 215 returnees were placed on courses for dressmaking, painting and repairs, upholstery, motor mechanics, cake-making, the hotel and catering trade, and small business management, among others.
- 106 returnees received economic assistance with transportation, family support and educational grants.

- 190 returnees were assisted with educational materials and tools for technical and vocational capacity building and formal education.

In coordination with the Department of Labour 220 people were enrolled at job centres.

111 people were returned to employment via job centres.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

Ensure that returning Hondurans play an important role in the development of Honduras.

Involve everyone in participation in the project.

Count on the solidarity of our Honduran brothers and sisters, and on the Latin American community and other support organisations.

AFRO-ASIAN MIGRANTS IN LEBANON

Rev. Martin J. *McDermott*, SJ
Coordinator, Pastoral Committee for the Afro-Asian Migrants,
Beirut, Lebanon

I live in Lebanon, a country which receives many domestic servants from Asia and Africa (about 200,000) who come to work for a few years and then return home, and also a considerable number (1000 or so) of South Sudanese refugees from the war and persecution of Christians, who seek to be resettled in other lands.

Some of us priests and sisters began offering Mass and pastoral care for these migrants in the mid-1980s. It was in 1992 that I had my first legal adventure, in a case that is unfortunately rather typical. A Christian employer raped his Filipino housemaid, and his son then brought her to an abortion clinic, whose ministrations she refused. The son put her in a taxi, but instead of returning home as he directed, she fled to me. And there began the first of my learning experiences about the Lebanese police and legal system with regard to migrants, especially since the employer was rich respected, and influential. Despite his efforts, the child that girl was carrying is born, baptized and now living with his mother in the Philippines. But a year later I learned that the next Filipino housemaid hired by the same man was raped, forced to abort, became depressed to a point nearly suicidal, and had to be repatriated to the Philippines. And I also learned from a neighbor that the same employer had previously attacked an earlier Filipino maid in the shower, that the girl ran naked out of the house up the street to take refuge in a home where she knew another Filipina worked.

My point is that this same man, a well-respected *coutourier*, could go, the next day, to one of the many agencies trafficking in foreign housemaids, pick another maid, bring her home, and start all over again. The three cases I know of happened 11 years ago, when the villain was already an old man, and I suppose by now he may be warming himself in hell. But the system goes on which gives any employer complete power over his or her domestic servant while she is in the house.

But I do not mean to complain. For in the course of these adventures with the law and the police I have met and come to know a small number of benevolent Lebanese lawyers who have willingly worked for nothing or practically nothing to defend these defenseless foreign housemaids. Six of these lawyers are in the process of forming themselves into what we call our Legal Research Group, which we expect will have the cooperation of a local Faculty of Law: that of the Université St-Joseph.

I am not a lawyer, but an interested observer of the law. The first lesson I learned is that domestic servants are not covered by the existing labor law of Lebanon. The second lesson is that the Lebanese laws covering foreign labor are inadequate and woefully out of date.

The main law was made in September, 1946, and the latest law to deal specifically with the entrance of foreigners in Lebanon was from 1962. At that time the number of foreign workers in Lebanon could practically be counted on the fingers of both hands, and since then conditions have totally changed. In the absence of up-to-date laws, the prevailing relationship between the employer and employee remains the very ancient one: the relation of master to slave. The result is that, within the home, the employer has virtually total control, and the police and justice system tend to work in the employer's favor, and also in favor the importing agencies who traffic in foreign domestic labor.

There are some very good Lebanese employers of housemaids, but these do not need the control of laws. But the majority of employees do need to be protected from their employers and employment agencies by good laws. The human race being what it has been ever since that famous conversation with a snake in a garden, it is very dangerous to give one human being total control over another.

Together we are forming a Legal Research Group, in order to pool the experience of these lawyers and to make available accounts of the cases they have won, in the hope that they will serve as precedents towards the formation of Lebanese jurisprudence in this hitherto much neglected field.

For example, one of our lawyers has won a case, on appeal, against an employer who did not pay his housemaid. Too often the employer is able to take his maid to the airport, say "Thank you and good-bye," without giving her the money he owes her. But in this case the girl escaped from the house, and our lawyer took her case. The first court judged it to be a civil matter, which would in practice have been a victory for the employer. We know this because more than 10 years ago another of our lawyers won a case against a non-paying employer, and we are still trying to collect the money that was awarded in a civil judgment. So far we have collected about half of it because the employer keeps pretending her inability to pay, and we are hesitating before the cost of initiating another lawsuit just to make her pay. But in this recent case, on our lawyer's appeal, the court reversed itself and judged it to be a penal case: holding that the employer violated the unwritten compact with his employee. In a penal judgment he either pays or goes straight to jail. So of course he paid right away. This sets a precedent.

Another lawyer of ours has initiated a case against an employer who does not let his Filipino housemaid out of the house. She has signed a document saying she does not want to go out for a day off, is perfectly happy in the house, and has no desire even to receive a visit from her sister, who, happily for us, works in the house of our lawyer who is bringing the suit. If we win this case, it will establish the domestic servant's right to a day off, and will also refute the comedy of accepting at face value a document signed by a household servant confined inside the house of her employment. We never know what a judge is going to decide, but we hope and pray.

Another lawyer of our group is finishing a book of about 400 pages treating how Lebanese law for migrants relates to international law and the migrant law of other countries and international conventions Lebanon has signed. He promises it will surprise many judges.

Our second concern is with Sudanese asylum seekers.

They may enter Syria from Sudan without a visa, but the Syrian security services often work closely with their Sudanese counterparts, which makes it dangerous for the Sudanese to stay there. So the Sudanese often enter illegally into Lebanon and there apply for recognition by the UNHCR. The HCR then decides, arbitrarily it seems, whether to pronounce them economic migrants or true refugees. Given the fact of the Khartoum government's actual persecution of Christians in South Sudan, it seems to us that all who have fled those parts deserve the status of refugee. Such recognition by the HCR makes them eligible to be resettled. Meanwhile, recognized as refugees or not, they earn their living as best they can in low-paying jobs which they consider themselves lucky to find.

But a Sudanese, whether carrying a Refugee Card from the HCR or not, can be arrested at any time, brought before a judge, who will sentence them to three months in prison for illegal entry to Lebanon. And after their sentence is finished, the General Security nonetheless often keeps them in prison, making it very hard for the wife and children to live, and in the constant fear of being sent back to Sudan.

In conclusion, I have two suggestions:

First, our Legal Research Group consists of an active nucleus of 6 Lebanese lawyers, would be very grateful for collaboration and help of those outside Lebanon who have similar interests.

Second, the Sudanese asylum seekers in Lebanon are now in limbo. Some are recognized by the UNHCR as refugees, and others not. Those recognized as refugees are on a long waiting list for resettlement, and meanwhile are subject to arrest for being illegal. On the other hand one can understand why the Lebanese state, already saddled with hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees, is unwilling to shelter these Sudanese.

I see Europe as a possible solution. No country in Europe is now replacing its own population, and the immigrants waiting to come in from North Africa and Turkey are mostly Muslim. There are now in Lebanon about a thousand asylum seekers, most of them bound together in solid Christian families, who would be delighted to get into Europe. And because of their Christian culture, Europe could easily assimilate them. Europe boasts to be, in theory if not in practice, color blind. The trouble is that in practice Europe is also culture-blind. And the social pain of trying to absorb people of cultures that do not assimilate is already being felt.

Thus in a practical way, Europe is asked to open its eyes and recognize the obvious: its Christian roots.

A JRS EXPERIENCE IN AFRICA

Sr. Anne Elizabeth VUYST, SSMN
JRS Lilongwe
Malawi

I am asked to speak about the experience of Jesuit Refugee Service in **Welcoming, Serving, and Championing** the rights of refugees. In fact, these are the three aims of Jesuit Refugee Service, also known as JRS.

My experiences with refugees in Africa draw from five years in Rwanda and Malawi. Both are very small, very poor countries who, nevertheless, have opened their borders and welcomed the poorest of the poor: Refugees.

My aim is to witness today about the current situation for forcibly displaced people from Rwanda, Congo, and Burundi, largely survivors of armed conflict in Central Africa and the Grand Lac Region.

In my years with these projects in Malawi and Rwanda, I have seen how JRS strives to live up to the three ideals of **Accompanying, Serving, and Advocating** the cause of refugees.

ACCOMPANYING WELCOMING

The refugee is a person who has lost everything--his culture, his social background--and is therefore extremely insecure. Very often when refugees arrive in a camp they have told their story hundreds of times to border patrols, camp administration, government officials, technical committees, and so forth. Often, they merely tell enough of the story to gain asylum and benefits. They speak frequently in clichés and euphemisms. Still, there are parts of their story they never fully express until they encounter a special kind of listener. It is when they sense that kind of accompanying spirit and presence that they fully share the whole depth of their feelings, their pain. We accompany them by embracing their stories of loss, and even the guilt they feel at being alive when so many of their family died.

One old man, who looked in his 80s, but probably was in his 60s, a Roman Catholic, a catechist, sat with us as we read and shared in preparation for the Holy Week liturgies. We began to read of Peter denying his friendship with the Lord when he broke down and told us, weeping, "I also did what Peter did. I had to save myself and I told them I was not a catechist. I only thought of my own safety. Ever since, I have felt nothing but this terrible guilt." We are convinced he would never have unburdened that heavy sorrow with us had we not been sitting, listening, and sharing in that spiritual preparation.

When we take the time to listen, they tell about the sadness of leaving, and their insecurity and helplessness in the face of the violence they have seen and experienced. We take time and let them linger after discussing their business because it is often then that they will speak of the real reason for their visit.

Being present there in the camp with them—present to listen with our heart-- is so important. Very often the refugees will simply say to me, "Thank you for listening."

What I want to impress upon you all is that we gain so much by accompanying these people. Despite all their immense loss and loneliness, they remind us to never lose hope. Though we may never be able to grant their first hopes---a life always secure with abundant food, shelter, and medicine for all their dependents--- I urge us all never to underestimate—as trite as it sounds—the power of reaching out to them with human warmth, with smiles, with

the touch of a hand or arm which may fulfil for the refugees their desperate need to maintain dignity, to feel important, to feel they can truly be alive and make a rich contribution to the world

SERVING

To serve the refugees is our next aim at JRS.

The first thing all refugees want is education for their children. This is why we attach a great emphasis on Education. It is not our only service to refugees, but it is one of our principle activities to keep their hope alive.

In both countries of Rwanda and Malawi JRS spends tremendous energy and spirit forming and strengthening not only Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Education, but also on developing the God-given potential of learners of all ages in a variety of ways. Sometimes our schools are started under trees, as in Rwanda, the only tool a slate as blackboard.

Most refugees are young people. In abandoning their countries, their homes, families and friends, they also lose that most important opportunity towards full human development: education.

We focus education on Gospel values: the value and dignity of the person whose capacities and gifts are to be respected, the whole person, mind, heart and body.

As JRS personnel, we are attentive to girls and women to assure that they have their rightful share.

In Malawi we were approached by a woman who had never learned to read because of traditional roles, lack of opportunity, and lack of desire. Then, when we helped send her daughter to secondary boarding school, the mother started to receive the girl's letters, but could not read them herself. She came to JRS and told us, "I want to learn to read. I am tired of not being able to know what my child says or to tell her what is in my heart." So we started a literacy program for women, which grew from there.

In the tradition of Jesuits and Ignatius, it is important to become a critical thinker, a "leader." That is why our service in education has often a training component, so that the refugees themselves may eventually take charge of the education of their own children.

Our JRS National Director Father Luis Magrino wrote recently that seeing a camp without a school is like comparing a person who can walk to one who is paralysed. This is why education is one of the greatest ways to serve displaced persons in Africa.

Being **present** and **servng** the refugees is not enough. A work of faith is a work of justice.

ADVOCATING THEIR CAUSE

Our third core value at JRS is to advocate for justice.

We have a responsibility not only to listen and to serve, but also to speak on behalf of refugees and to facilitate their communication with those who might protect their international rights.

Refugees themselves have contributions to offer, but their voices are often not heard. Therefore, they need others either to speak on their behalf, or to help them get their message to the right institutions. We have to let people know how refugees live and are treated. Often we have to champion their rights.

For example, refugee children have a right to education. At first, that right was blocked in Malawi. Government officials did not permit refugees to complete their primary education. JRS spoke out repeatedly in a lobbying effort that took years to win. Finally, the national law was changed. In 1998, the first students sat for their Primary Leaving Certificate, and we have been able to send them to Secondary School ever since. Even such a significant campaign for justice can be tedious work. The Minister of Education himself recognized that it was the perseverance of JRS which had worn him down.

Similarly, it is often in small ways that we can act as advocates. JRS opened their mailbox so that letters could reach the refugees, letters which enable them to stay in touch with relatives or friends, or to gain legal protection or resettlement. Opening communication is a vital way to advocate.

At other times, JRS made efforts to encourage aid agencies to speed up refugee processing, as delays deprive them for days of much needed food or blankets.

It takes many small steps to advance a mile. Yet even in the small steps we take to accompany, serve and advocate, we live out the words of Jesus:” What you do to the least of my brothers and sisters you do unto me.”

Thank you.

WORK AMONG TRAFFICKED WOMEN IN THAILAND

Sr. M. Supaporn *CHOTIPHOL*, RGS
Fountain of Life Centre
Pattaya City, Thailand

Witnesses given by multicultural pastoral centers and ecumenical and interreligious experiences in the world of migrants and refugees, speak on your work among trafficked women. How do you stay close to them and try to tackle the problem at its roots.

Trafficking

“Trafficking in human beings – mostly women and children – has become a global business that affects almost all countries and reaps enormous profits for traffickers and their intermediaries”¹ In this economic transaction the sending countries have to struggle with an ever increasing pool of unemployed people, while the rich receiving developed countries have to battle with the big problem of labour shortage. Most trafficked women find employment in the informal sector which is often not covered by labour laws. They end up doing work which is often referred to as the “3D” types of work, namely dirty, dangerous and difficult types of work.

“The most prevalent forms of trafficking are for prostitution, sex tourism and mail-order bride industries. Women and children are also trafficked for bonded labour and domestic work, and much of this trafficking concludes with their being sexually exploited.”²

From recent studies done on trafficking it is very obvious that the distinctions between trafficking and prostitution are very unclear. Very often the data on migration, trafficking and prostitution are indistinct and therefore it is hard to make a definite statement or give an opinion without taking facts from one issue and linking them with another. Writing on this issue Jean D’Cunha noted that “In the effort to decriminalize prostitution and endorse ‘migration for sex work’ the links between trafficking and prostitution are blurred by emphasizing the range of purposes for which trafficking occurs while down playing sex trafficking and de-linking trafficking from prostitution.”³

Because of the difficulties in differentiating trafficking for prostitution and for others reasons, in my sharing I will focus mainly on trafficking for prostitution. Tourism with its resultant revenue is next only to the export of rice in the economy of Thailand. This reality has given tourism a privileged status. No one wants to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. Nonetheless, serious questions have to be asked e.g. what are the results that emerge because of the connections between migration, trafficking, tourism and prostitution of both adults and children?

Given this reality I see a fourfold response by the Church:

- Direct services
- Advocacy
- Dialogue and cooperation with the existing Buddhist social service groups
- Co-operation with like-minded individuals and groups nationally and internationally especially for advocacy works

Direct services would be focussed on the trafficked women and children caught in the vice of poverty and prostitution

Shepherding by accompaniment would be an integral component of direct services.

Besides Shepherding the other services would include being with them and reminding them of their rights as human beings – often they feel they have been forgotten and betrayed by many groups such as those who put them in contact with the trafficker. They also feel betrayed by their government and their families.

Seeing that they receive health care

Providing other economic alternatives

Education formal and informal – teaching them marketable skills and

Assisting them to get their legal papers as many of them are undocumented workers

Advocacy would involve making the reality of the connection between trafficking, tourism and prostitution known to those in positions of power. It would entail challenging them to recognize the evils of poverty and powerlessness that forces some women to go abroad in search of employment and being forced into prostitution. It would mean also networking with economists, mass media, social workers, psychologists and health care workers so that the complete dimensions of the problem are studied and workable alternative solutions of this problem are proposed.

However it is important for us to understand that many of those who have been trafficked will refuse to testify against their abuser or even want any kind of legal action taken.

The problem associated with taking legal action against the traffickers

Therefore before taking legal action it is always important to remember that trafficked people have excellent reasons – reasons that we will never be able to comprehend – for not wanting to take legal action against their abusers. The paralyzing fear that they experience is something that we must always bear in mind.

Trafficked women are afraid of being deported. This fear stems from having no money when they return. They are also unable to meet the cost of migration. Often their family depends on them. There is also the problem of social discrimination if they had previously prostituted themselves.

Because of their painful experiences trafficked women generally do not trust police. They have encountered corrupt police and have seen how they have abused their victims. Some trafficked women are involved in the drug trade. This makes their situation very dangerous. They have seen the violence inflicted on other women who have tried to escape from drugs gangs. They are also aware of the powerful network that their abusers have and know that their activities can be easily detected in a short time.

Situations such as these can result in a fear that is paralyzing. It prevents many of them from taking any action against their offender. However very often their fear is interpreted by caregivers and social activists as non-cooperation or they are even suspected as accomplices in the crime.

The church of the poor - and the challenge of solidarity:

The heritage that Jesus our Good Shepherd bequeathed to us as Good Shepherd Sisters – is compassion and concern for the poor. This heritage is an integral aspect of our discipleship. We are the Church of the poor and it is an ongoing challenge. Our option for the poor affects our “being” in a fundamental way. The FABC tells us that we must work for the awakening of the poor to their dignity. We are called to move from kindness to solidarity with the poor. Option for the poor is a commitment to solidarity to the cause of the poor and their liberation. “The option for the poor is an act of evangelization”⁴

If we claim to be Jesus’s Followers, we cannot remove ourselves from the world in which we live. We cannot turn a blind eye, a deaf ear or a cold shoulder to the cries of our sisters and brothers who are being abused and exploited. We have to stand in solidarity with

them because they mediate God's presence for us. We have to do all in our power to bring an end to the poverty and oppression of millions of human beings. We cannot remain undisturbed at appalling violation of their rights as human beings. The desecration of the human being is also the desecration of God's temple and this is an insult to God. "We have to bear witness together to our common conviction concerning the dignity of people. When any person is oppressed, we are all diminished. When any part of creation is abused or destroyed, our lives are improvised"⁵

Dialogue and cooperation with the existing Buddhist social service groups

Since Buddhism is the dominant religion in Thailand and in the most of the countries in South East Asia it is imperative that the Church dialogue and cooperate with other organizations-so that the Church is not a minority voice speaking to this issue. Those who are engaged in advocacy work must also reach out and dialogue with those who may have no religious background but are deeply concerned with these issues.

Jesus and the prostitute

Early in the morning Jesus came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman, who had been caught in adultery, and making her stand before all of them, they said to him. "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. What do you say?" they said this to test him so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them.

(Decriminalizing the victim is an issue of justice and human rights).

"Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her:

(Release the captives, set the downtrodden free (Luke 4:18))

Woman where are they? Has not one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Sir."

Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and do not sin again (Jn.8:1-11)"

Beside using texts and stories from the Christian sources we also use stories from Buddhist literature which have similar implication as in the story of the Buddhist Master and a Prostitute.

The Buddhist master and prostitute⁶

Once a famous Buddhist master was invited for a lunch offering at a house of a well-known prostitute. Finishing his meal, the master began talking to her about Buddhist meditation. While the master was teaching, the woman broke into tears. Weeping she told him that she could no longer follow his teaching, as she realized how sinful she was through the nature of her occupation. The master then asked: "What made you decide to take up this profession in the first place?" "When I was twelve, my parents who were very poor sold me to a brothel and I have had to do this job ever since, I must beg for your forgiveness for my sin," she said:

(Decriminalizing the victim is an issue of justice and human rights.)

"Sincerely speaking my girl I see no sin in your life. It was no mistake of yours in taking this profession. Besides there is no use in begging forgiveness from me. It is I and the world that should beg for your forgiveness. For we have not done enough to protect you. Please forgive me and the world for having failed to protect you in the first place." Saying this the master rose to his feet and bowed to her. Then she said: "if I have not sinned, then were my parents sinful in selling me to the brothels?" "No. said the master." "Why not?"

Asked the prostitute. “Because you and your parents were the victims.” “Then who is to be blamed for the evil of my life?” She asked:

(Release the captives, set the downtrodden free)

“No one” said the Master. “Why” asked the prostitute again. “Because we are all victims,” said the master. The master apologized to the woman because he felt responsible for the suffering inflicted upon her. (Venerable Mettanando Bhikkhu)

¹Raymond, Janice, “A Comparative Study of Women Trafficked in Migration Process”(Introduction)

²Ibid.

³Jean D’Cunha, “Trafficked in the Migration Process” 125

⁴Vita Consecrata no 82

⁵Good Shepherd Mission Statement

⁶The Buddhist Master and the Prostitute, by the Venerable Mettanando Bhikkhu

**STARTING AFRESH FROM CHRIST,
BREAD AND WORD OF LIFE.
HE IS OUR HOPE**

H.E. Card. Geraldo Majella Agnelo
Archbishop of São Salvador da Bahia, Brazil

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of Vatican Council II tells us that “the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's supper” (SC 10). These words alone give us an idea of the central role played by the Eucharist in the life of the Church. Everything must be drawn to the Eucharist; and from the Eucharist, as from the centre, everything must grow. This is what gives meaning to our lives, what brings us close to the ultimate reason for our hope.

And, indeed, we have just celebrated the Most Holy Eucharist in which “we have seen the true Light, we have received the Celestial Spirit, we have found the true faith, we have worshipped the Trinity because that is what has saved us” (antiphon of the Byzantine communion).

There can be no doubt that celebrating the remembrance of the Lord is essentially an occasion to contemplate Christ who makes himself manifest, because it is in this celebration that Jesus shows and gives himself. And as he is the Light that illuminates all things, his Word sanctifies and his Spirit performs the miracle by which the cosmic substance – bread and wine – becomes the celestial matter of his glorious and transfigured body (*métabolé*).

In the course of our reflections we will offer certain ideas to help towards a more profound understanding of the theme: “Starting again from Christ, Bread and Word of Life”. Our initial premise is the Liturgy's focus on Christ. If the meaning of Christian life is, as St. Gregory Palamas says, “acquisition of the Holy Spirit” in the Liturgy, then all that life is an epiphany of Christ. He shows the faithful his person and his will in the proclaimed Word, encapsulated in the demands of the mission and in the certainty that the Lord walks with his people, at Emmaus.

On this Friday 21st November, we wish to recall the pilgrimage Mary made, while still very young, to the holy city of Jerusalem when, according to tradition, she was consecrated to the Lord by her saintly parents Joachim and Anne.

This is the third day of our participation in the World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees, which is being held in this city of Rome. We began the day before Christ, the creative Word (*Dabar*) who came from the mouth and heart of the Father to nourish life, because he himself, as it says in the book of Genesis, is life.

The Liturgy, an original language for celebrating the mystery

Through the evolution in semiotics and in the science of language, we may see that the Church uses a special and original idiom to celebrate her sacramentality, expressing her faith and its mysteries through a semantic, morphological, gestural and aesthetic language (Luis Maldonado). Our liturgical sensitivity enables us to understand how the act of community celebration is essentially a moment of education and dialogue. Jesus' presence in the Liturgy is made patent in the structure of the ritual itself: during the Liturgy of the Word, the book of the Evangelists sits at the centre of the altar, like the throne of Christ on earth; in the Eucharistic Liturgy, on the other hand, the gravitational centre of the Lord's table is in the chalice, memory of his Passion on the cross, and in the bread, food for nourishing pilgrims. It

becomes clear that the Word, full of the Holy Spirit, culminates in offering the gift of the Son to the Father, to the Church and to all humanity.

We know that the Word entered history not just to communicate but also to create men and women, encouraging them to impress their spirit on the entire universe.

The Word, icon of the invisible

Time and space collaborated in enabling the creative Word to be heard and, at the same time, contemplated with the eyes of the heart:

“We write to you about the Word of life, which has existed from the very beginning. We have heard it, and we have seen it with our eyes; yes, we have seen it, and our hands have touched it. When this life became visible, we saw it; so we speak of it and tell you about the eternal life which was with the Father and was made known to us. What we have seen and heard we announce to you also, so that you will join with us in the fellowship that we have with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 Jn 1, 1-4).

What a magnificent testimony to the sacramental nature of the Word! Its intelligibility is expressed in its visibility; the Word was communicated in an image, and was seen and heard among us. Christian theology uses the terms “*imago*” and “*eikòn*”, which in Greek – the language of the New Testament – have two meanings: reflection and likeness. All images reflect the invisible and, when contemplated profoundly, produce communication and a certain likeness. The Lord Jesus is “the visible likeness of the invisible God” (Col 1,15); for this reason he makes us like himself, he offers us divinisation and reflects in us that which he himself receives from his Father.

In the Hellenic world it was long believed that the visible held primacy over the audible. Hebrew culture, on the other hand, gave more importance to the audible. However, the theologian G. Kittel has shown that the “listen, Israel” of the messianic texts gave way to “raise your eyes and see”; and thus the eternal Word took human form, being seen, touched and heard. In the transfiguration of Mount Tabor, the Lord was accompanied by Moses and Elijah, the great seers of the chosen people: “Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God” (Mt 5,8). At the moment of his extreme sacrifice the Christian protomartyr, St Stephen the Deacon, saw the heavens open. Even the Revelation, so full of doctrinal words, culminates in an exaltation of forms and colours. Faced with John in the throes of a deep depression, God replied with myriad images that, at one and the same time, revealed and protected his mystery. John confesses: “In the past I knew only what others had told me, but now I have seen you with my own eyes” (Jb 42, 5). It is clear to us, then, that in Judeo-Christian Scripture word and image are complementary and together demonstrate the unity of the revelation.

Harmony between word and sacrament

While words tend towards demonstration and proof, images show and reveal. Israel fought against idols, false images, and resignedly awaited the true image. And so God showed his human face; the Word became an object of contemplation and adoration. “Then Jesus turned to the disciples and said to them privately, ‘how fortunate you are to see the things you see!’” (Lk 10,23).

Jesus cured the deaf and opened the eyes of the blind. The invisible became visible: “whoever sees me, sees the Father”. From that moment, the image became part of the essence of Christianity: the Word, in its effectiveness, became food: “Take and eat, ... this is my body” (Mt 26, 26). And as we take and absorb this food, we are nourished and vitalised. Then, on the day of Pentecost, all was lit with tongues of flame and thus the Word illuminated, informed, purified and warmed mankind.

In the Easter Triduum the cross represents the centre of gravity which, in its mystery of silence, causes us to listen to everything God has to say to us. Nonetheless, the Symbol of faith, or Credo, without ceasing to be a symbol, acknowledges the mysteries of our faith,

narrating the successive events of the history of salvation while avoiding purely doctrinal words.

It could be said that the celebration of the Eucharist is the sacramental way of putting the Bible into effect. The Eucharist presents the Word liturgically. God cancelled “the unfavourable record of our debts with its binding rules and did away with it completely by nailing it to the cross. And on that cross Christ freed himself from the power of the spiritual rulers and authorities; he made a public spectacle of them by leading them as captives in his victory procession” (Col 2, 14-15).

Sacramentality of the Word

Let us immerse ourselves in the mystery of the Word, being both the dialogue of the Covenant and the point of encounter between the partners of the Covenant. On 4th December this year we will celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* which wisely tells us:

“Sacred Scripture is of the greatest importance in the celebration of the Liturgy. For it is from scripture that lessons are read and explained in the homily, and psalms are sung; the prayers, collects, and liturgical songs are scriptural in their inspiration and their force, and it is from the scriptures that actions and signs derive their meaning. Thus to achieve the restoration, progress, and adaptation of the sacred Liturgy, it is essential to promote that warm and living love for scripture to which the venerable tradition of both eastern and western rites gives testimony” (SC 24).

The Liturgy of the Word in the Sacraments, and the Liturgy of the Hours, bring the living dialogue between God and humanity – the partners of the Covenant – up-to-date. The Lord tells us: “You will be my people, and I will be your God”. This Covenant has become new and definitive in Jesus; his “yes” is the proposal of the Father, and each generation is called to adhere to this definitive proposal. In listening to Jesus we, attentive and grateful, follow his will, and our response becomes an echo in which our voice is united to his: “yes, Father...”. Thus the Liturgy of the Word takes place in an atmosphere of prayer; the biblical texts are proclaimed by ministers who represent the Lord, who speak to his people with a human face and voice. Acclamation, psalms, prayers, movements of the body, vigils, incense and processions accompany the celebrations, not to convince or to inform but to create an encounter between the partners of the Covenant, forging links and establishing inter-communion.

Christ’s Easter in the Easter of the people: the mystery of Jesus reinterpreted from the perspective of the suffering

The poor are among the more privileged partners of the Covenant, the favoured recipients of the Word. This evangelical fact is accepted with gratitude, especially in numerous Christian communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, Churches of the poor full of emigrants and refugees. Then Jesus cried out for joy through the action of the Holy Spirit and said: “Father, Lord of heaven and earth! I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden from the wise and learned. Yes, Father, this was how you wanted it to happen” (Mt 11, 25-26). Those who suffer are the privileged recipients of the messages of the Kingdom, and their freedom is proof of the authenticity and effectiveness of the Word, in keeping with the testimony of Exodus 3, 7-10, of Luke 4, 16-21 and of Matthew 11, 2-6.

“When John the Baptist heard in prison about the things that Christ was doing, he sent some of his disciples to him. ‘Tell us’, they asked Jesus, ‘are you the one John said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?’ Jesus answered, ‘go back and tell John what you are hearing and seeing: the blind can see, the lame can walk, those who suffer from dreaded

skin diseases are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are brought back to life, and the Good News is preached to the poor. How happy are those who have no doubts about me!”.

When God is authentically announced with words and deeds, the excluded feel the presence of the Immanuel giving them the strength and courage to pick themselves up; indeed, according to Matthew Jesus had to face many obstacles, like the poor of the modern world who keep on going with nowhere “to lay their heads”. Christ suffered tiredness, hunger and thirst, he was the victim of violence; like so many migrants today he evaded the massacre of the first moments of his life and found refuge and hospitality outside his own national, religious and cultural home. This interpretation of Jesus’ story warrants attention and discernment in reading and interpreting today’s world – within and attentive to the criteria of the Word – in order that we may discover the loving and liberating presence of the Lord wherever he is: in the life of the individual, in the Church and in the history of humanity – “*Hospes venit, Christus venit*” (St Benedict).

Christ’s presence in Scripture, a source of nourishment for the Church, was vehemently defended by St Jerome in his commentary on the book of Ecclesiastes

“I believe that the body of Christ is the Gospel and that his teachings are the Sacred Scriptures. Thus, when Jesus says “he who does not eat my flesh or drink my blood has no life”, we may surely understand that he is speaking of the Eucharist. But it is equally certain that the Body of Christ and his Blood are the Word of Scripture, his divine teaching. When we participate in the celebration of the Eucharist, we take care that no crumb be lost. What, then, when we listen to the Word of God? When the Word of God is presented to our ears and we occupy ourselves with thoughts of other things? What attention are we then giving to the Word? Let us seek nourishment in Christ’s flesh, not just in communion, but also in reading the Scriptures”

Relationship between the “Supper of the Word” and the “Supper of the Eucharist”

Let us consider the intimate bond that exists between the two suppers that nourish the faith, hope and charity of Christians: the Supper of the Word and the Supper of the Eucharist. In the celebration of the Covenant as described in Exodus 24, 1-11 we can clearly distinguish two parts: Firstly, Moses presents the people with the tablets of the Law he received from the Lord with the proposal of celebrating the Covenant; the people gathered together in a liturgical assembly listen carefully then firmly declare their acceptance. Secondly, the ritual of the Covenant takes place both with the supper of communion when they “ate and drank together”, and with the sacrifice of animals when blood was scattered on the altar and on the people.

Our celebration of the Eucharist, as we know, follows this essential outline. The Liturgy of the Word is the moment when the community, brought together by the Spirit, accepts the Lord’s proposal as contained in the readings, the psalms, the Gospel and the homily. And in adhering to that proposal, the community professes its faith and offers prayers that give concrete form to its acceptance of the Trinitarian offer. The Eucharistic Liturgy represents the moment in which the Covenant is sealed in the ritual remembrance of Jesus’ sacrifice and in the communion of bread and wine “transfigured” by the Spirit into the reality of Christ. The two moments of the Supper form “one single act of worship” (SC 56), and thus the one bread of life is served in two suppers and the promise becomes reality.

The numerous Sacraments and Sacramentals have a similar nature. The ritual of the Word and sacramental ritual, forming a single act of worship, are essentially linked to one another. In the two liturgies the Lord “says” and “makes happen” today that which has been announced, revealing his person and his living proposal, bringing about our communion with him and our transformation in him. The ritual of the Word has a transforming and sacramental

effectiveness, like the Word of Jesus in curing the sick and the lame; thus in each Sacrament, the Word demonstrates its effectiveness

Characteristics of the Word of God in Christian Liturgy

The Word of God, in the celebration of the Liturgy, is like a constellation full of the multi-faceted presence and action of the Trinity. Being a prophecy, the Word announces God's promises, already realised in Jesus and in the diffusion of the Holy Spirit, at the same time it denounces all things that stand in the way of the coming of the Kingdom of God. The Risen Christ is present in the Liturgy and it is he himself who speaks when Holy Scripture is read and interpreted. He is also present in communities gathered in his name and presided by the Spirit. The Holy Spirit presides over all the actions of the Liturgy, it is the Spirit who helps the community of faith to hear and understand what the Lord has to say in the present moment, establishing a profound dialogue between the Bible and life in all its many forms. The "Word of the Lord", the "Word of Salvation", the Sacred Scriptures are rich in the active presence of Jesus and the Spirit

In recalling Jesus we share in his destiny and in his acts of salvation

At the heart of Eucharistic celebration, Jesus' words continue to sound out as recorded by Paul and Luke: "Do this in memory of me" (1 Co 11,23-26; Lk 22,19-20). This is the mystery of our faith. What is the mystery, what are the foundations, on which our mission and ecclesial identity are based? It is in acclamation, having recalled the institution of the Eucharist, that we find a response to the principal question. We call Jesus back to mind, celebrating his death and resurrection in the eschatological perspective of the existential fulfilment of his Kingdom. The Easter of Christ is interlinked with the Easter of pilgrims, in the great exodus of peoples. The Church, in a fervour of postconciliar renewal, is learning to experience and interpret events as part of a paschal process. What is the source of the wisdom, strength and joy that permeate our communities, communities harrowed by war, hunger and economic crises, even in rich countries?. The Church lives on her profound conviction of faith and never fails to feel and anticipate the presence of the Risen One in her Eucharist and in her Liturgy, as well as in signs and events as a whole. The great challenge is to discover that Jesus' presence is not static but dynamic. The Lord is the Spirit (2 Cor 3,17). Christ's presence in the Liturgy presupposes the active, dynamic and transforming presence of the Spirit. Christ and the Spirit plunge us ever more deeply into the mystery of the Father. And thus we experience continuous prayer, bringing Jesus' death into our body in order that his life also be made manifest in mortal flesh (SC 12; 2 Cor 4,10-11). The Spirit takes us and transforms our understanding, our affections and our behaviour in communion with Christ and with his Spirit. The struggle for existence, even death itself, are absorbed into the perspective of life; injustice is combated and borne in expectation of God's justice and love which were revealed in the "crucified love", Jesus Christ. All genuine human love thus comes to be understood as a communion with the Most High God, the epiphany of his hospitality which embraces the prostrate creature. In this paschal process, which includes suffering and passion and which must last until the fulfilment of the Kingdom, we pass from the pilgrims' supper to eternal beatitude, that everlasting repose in which God will be entirely within us.

May these thoughts help us to a better understanding of the dimension wherein Christ shows himself during liturgical celebrations, the moment in which the Word-Wisdom of the Father renews his incarnation and welcomes us to his pilgrim tent to feed us, as his brothers and sisters.

May this meditation be a glorification of the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit, because theirs is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever!

**STARTING AFRESH FROM CHRIST.
THE EUCHARIST, SIGN AND INSTRUMENT
OF THE UNITY OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY**

Bishop Renato *Ascencio LEÓN*
President, Episcopal Commission for Human Mobility,
Mexico

Greetings.

I am very grateful for having been invited to participate as a speaker at this Fifth World Conference for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees and I would like to extend my warmest greetings to all participants.

Migration is a phenomenon of our times.

Migration is one of the unmistakable aspects of modernisation. As a result of persistent efforts, awareness of migration and various mechanisms for addressing it has been raised.

Migration cannot be separated from development. Above all, it should not be considered as a problem but rather what it really is: a dynamic factor which, due to its social nature, is a significant element of globalisation processes. While it is a universal phenomenon, each case has specific manifestations.

Due to its universal nature, migration is associated with the conservation of human rights as an inherent condition of people, which accompanies them always, in any place and circumstance, and which the international community has recognised as the responsibility of nations.

Migrants do not lose their rights when they move from one place to another, and neither do they entrust them to the jurisdiction of a nation to be applied on their return. This is why it is imperative to guarantee the promotion and unrestricted respect of the human rights of migrants, whether or not they have necessary papers¹.

However, every day the mass media brings us closer to the situation of migrants with sad and terrible images. Pope John Paul II rightfully called this painful phenomenon a “shameful wound of our times”. In most cases it is generated by poverty, destitution in expelling countries or conflicts that are very often rooted in lack of understanding and intolerance.

Almost every day the international media show us the saddest and most terrible scenes we can possibly imagine: groups of migrants who die trying to reach a country where they can seek a living for themselves and their families; such groups often include women, some of them pregnant, and children. How often do they die in the attempt? In the same way, we get news of displacement of people caused by fratricidal violence in many countries. Thousands and thousands of people make up this population that lives in no man’s land, with no hope, no solution to their situation in sight, no rights and, sometimes, with nod help.

I come from a country, and also a diocese, which borders a country that attracts migrants from all over the world. Thousands of people pass through our diocese on the way to the United States, headed for the “American dream”. We live close to the tragedy of those from Central and South America, including some from far-off Asia and Europe, who make the long, dangerous and painful journey in search of better living conditions.

¹ Derbez Ernesto, Inauguration of the Regional Migration Conference in Cancún.

Pope John Paul II has been particularly sensitive to this issue and deployed his presence, via diplomatic means, in various international organisations with a view to raising awareness and goodwill so that the suffering of the millions of people who are struggling in this situation may be dealt with swiftly, thereby recognising their human rights.

How can we tackle this phenomenon of human mobility in its many variations, which is so often painful and tragic, from the standpoint of the originality of our faith? What should be the inspiration from our faith that moves us to respond to the challenge posed by human mobility?

“Migration”, said Pope John Paul II in his message on the World Day of Migrants this year, “has become a widespread phenomenon in the modern-day world and involves all nations, either as countries of departure, of transit or of arrival. It affects millions of human beings, and presents a challenge that the pilgrim Church, at the service of the whole human family, cannot fail to take up and meet in the Gospel spirit of universal charity”².

Where can we find the necessary strength and decisiveness to overcome the selfishness and indifference that form part of our current culture? Pope John Paul II says: “Being ever more deeply rooted in Christ, Christians must struggle to overcome any tendency to turn in on themselves, and learn to discern in people of other cultures the handiwork of God. Only genuine evangelical love will be strong enough to help communities pass from mere tolerance of others to real respect for their differences. Only Christ’s redeeming grace can make us victorious in the daily challenge of turning from egoism to altruism, from fear to openness, from rejection to solidarity”³.

The Eucharist inspires unity.

By its very nature, the Eucharist constitutes an infinite source of grace that drives us towards a loving commitment to our neighbour. The Eucharist is an unmatched school for loving one’s neighbour because it speaks of the love, respect and esteem that God has for every man and women, to the extent of giving oneself as nourishment. The Eucharist, experienced and shared, is the deepest inspiring motive for achieving longed-for unity and solidarity, which is indispensable in reaching out to our suffering brothers and sisters. The Eucharist binds us closely to Christ and it is by starting afresh from him that we are able to respond to the resounding phenomenon of migration.

Ecclesia de Eucharistia

Last Maundy Thursday (17 April 2003), the Holy Father gave us a beautiful encyclical on the Eucharist. The title expresses the intimate essence of the nature and relation between the Eucharist and the Church: “Ecclesia de Eucharistia”. Indeed, it is not the Church that makes the Eucharist, but rather the Eucharist that makes the Church. “The Church draws her life from the Eucharist. This truth does not simply express a daily experience of faith, but recapitulates the heart of the mystery of the Church. In a variety of ways she joyfully experiences the constant fulfilment of the promise: “Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age” (Matthew 28:20)⁴, but in the Holy Eucharist, through the changing of bread and wine into the body and blood of the Lord, she rejoices in this presence with unique intensity. Ever since Pentecost, when the Church, the People of the New Covenant, began her pilgrim journey towards her heavenly homeland, the Divine Sacrament has continued to mark the passing of her days, filling them with confident hope”⁴.

² *Pope John Paul II’s Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2003, no. 1.*

³ *Ibid.* no. 4.

⁴ *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, no. 1.

The Church as the Body of Christ

This expression, consecrated by the Apostle Paul, can give us a magnificent path of meditation for our theme. According to scholars, all the indications are that Paul came up with the idea of the Church as the Body of Christ starting from the Eucharist. The fundamental text for this idea appears in the First Letter to the Corinthians – the first great apostolic catechesis on the Eucharist – in the fragment in which Paul warns the community of the terrible danger of idolatry: “Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the same loaf”⁵.

The Apostle makes a profound theological reflection that hinges on the meaning of the communion and participation of Christians in the Lord’s Supper. The key word – *koinonia* – is the literary motif that refers to the religious and participatory commensality of the faithful at the Eucharist feast.

At the Lord’s Supper believers meet together and participate in the mystery of the Blood and Body of Christ, which is equivalent to saying that they participate in his death. At this point in his catechesis, the Apostle does not emphasise the miracle of the transformation of wine and bread into the Blood and Body of Jesus, but rather the participation of those who celebrate the Eucharistic ritual, which consists of drinking wine and eating bread, meaning that they participate in the mystery of Christ’s death. It is obvious that the Apostle Paul understands this to be a redeeming event. And the faithful take part through the sacrament.

Later, the Apostle moves on to the theme of the relation between the Eucharist and the community of the faithful: “Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the same loaf”. What the Eucharist of the Church does is to bring about unity, nourish charity and arouse the hope of the faithful so that they may be witnesses to the invincible love of God in the world that is manifested through the paschal mystery of Christ. The original Pauline theological contribution is in this beautiful sentence: There are many of us, we are a variety of believers spread throughout the *oikuméne*, but we are able to achieve a single unity because we all partake of the same loaf, the Bread of the Eucharist.

Eating the same loaf together, in peace and fraternal communion, is a gesture that creates such strong ties that are able, and do form, a very strong unity among the faithful. Participation in the Eucharist is the source and fulfilment of the unity that Christ asks of the Father for his own⁶.

“The Eucharist”, says Pope John Paul II, “creates communion and fosters communion”. Saint Paul wrote to the faithful of Corinth explaining how their divisions, reflected in Eucharistic gatherings, contradicted what they were celebrating, the Lord’s Supper⁷.

The Apostle then urged them to reflect on the true reality of the Eucharist in order to return to the spirit of fraternal communion⁸. Saint Augustine effectively echoed this call when, in recalling the Apostle’s words: “You are the body of Christ and individually members of it”⁸⁹, he went on to say: “If you are his body and members of him, then you will find set on the Lord’s table your own mystery. Yes, you receive your own mystery”⁹. And from this observation he concludes: “Christ the Lord (...) hallowed at his table the mystery of

⁵ 1 Corinthians 10:14-17.

⁶ See John 17:21.

⁷ See *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 40.

⁸ 1 Corinthians 12:27.

⁹ Sermon 272, PL 38, 1247.

our peace and unity. Whoever receives the mystery of unity without preserving the bonds of peace receives not a mystery for his benefit but evidence against himself”¹⁰.

On various occasions the Apostle Paul alludes to the theme of the “Body of Christ”¹¹. Maybe Paul took this idea from the culture of his time. The search underlines the unity and plurality of an eminence, as the Church is, which always remain a composite reality. There are many of us but we form a single body for the simple reason that we partake of a single loaf. Indeed, Eucharistic commensality is the basis on which believers achieve the “horizontal” unity of the Church’s community fabric. However, the reference to Christ, the “vertical relation”, is not eliminated. On the contrary, what is at stake is not any form of participatory commensality, or coexistence, but rather the Eucharistic commensality that is participation in the death of Christ: “Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?”¹².

Therefore, the basis of Christian unity, which establishes a very close solidarity that leads us to rejoice with those who rejoice, and mourn with those who mourn¹³, is not merely friendly coexistence, but rather the participation of believers in the same redeeming reality of the death of Christ, signified and caused by the Lord’s Supper.

How right G. Barbaglio was when he wrote in his commentary to 1 Corinthians: “There is no one who doesn’t see how this theological development, which is typically Pauline, poses an alternative to the individualistic sacramentalism of the Corinthians. The Eucharist doesn’t take place as a redeeming experience within the spiritual “I” of a particular believer, but rather places everything under the banner of committed ecclesial solidarity”¹⁴.

The theology of the holy fathers accepted the style of Pauline language without hesitation. Their unanimity is astounding: “through the medium of his own Body he sanctifies the faithful in mysterious communion, by making them one body with him and amongst themselves”¹⁵. Already in the Middle Ages, in a text attributed to Saint Albertus Magnus, we may read: ‘It is impossible to find any reason other than that the Church was called upon, and it was really the Body of Christ more than the fact that, by giving them his own body, Christ transformed it within himself, so that it should be made his and that everyone should be a member of it’¹⁶.

So we shouldn’t be surprised by the constant and unanimous teaching that calls upon us to value the Eucharist as a privileged place for brothers and sisters to meet with each other and with Christ, “because if the holy liturgy comes first in the life of the Church, the Eucharistic mystery is like its heart and centre, acting as the source of life that purifies and strengthens us, in such a way that we do not live for ourselves but for God, and we join together in the very close bond of charity”¹⁷.

In full, aware, and active participation in the Eucharist, we find the most precious motive for inspiration to go out and meet our brothers and sisters, and to seek for everyone the means to achieve unity and charity, which should be the sap that nourishes the ecclesial fabric. It is not in vain that the various documents that speak about the need to go out and meet “migrant Christs” who wander through the world carrying their pains and hopes,

10 Ibid, 1248.

11 See 1 Corinthians 12:12-26; 6:15-17.

12 1 Corinthians 12:16.

13 See Romans 12:15.

14 The Letters of Paul, Vol. I, p. 425, Rome 1980.

15 *Cyril of Alexandria. In Job. 11. PG 74, 560.*

16 *De euch. dist. 3, tract. 1. c. 5.5, published by Borgnet 38. 257.*

17 MF, 1.

emphasise the need for parishes to be turned into reception centres as a faithful reflection of the Eucharistic experience.

Participation in the Eucharist would not be real - something vital would be missing – if it didn't culminate in loving commitment to one's neighbour, especially to the poorest and most vulnerable.

The Holy Father has given us these beautiful words in the document *Dominicae Cenaе*: “The authentic sense of the Eucharist becomes of itself the school of active love for neighbour. We know that this is the true and full order of love that the Lord has taught us: ‘By this love that you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples’¹⁸. The Eucharist educates us to this love in a deeper way; it shows us, in fact, what value each person, our brother or our sister, has in God's eyes, if Christ offers himself equally to each one, under the species of bread and wine. If our Eucharistic worship is authentic, it must make us grow in awareness of the dignity of each person. The awareness of that dignity becomes the deepest motive of our relationship with our neighbour”¹⁹. Indeed, the celebration of a feast in company is by nature a creator of fraternal bonds - such is the way meals are in Mediterranean culture – above all the meaning that these had, according to Luke's Gospel, in the life of Jesus. The Eucharistic Feast has this virtue to the highest degree because it effectively brings about the unity that makes the mystery of the Church possible; because this bread is the Body of Christ in the power of the Spirit of the Resurrection, of the Spirit who unites the world with Christ.

We are one body because we partake of one loaf. The Eucharist is therefore a sign and instrument of the unity and the supreme motive of love in the Church. The Church is the one Body of Christ, a living place of redeeming dominion, known, welcomed and experienced by the fraternal community of the faithful.

The celebration and experience of the Eucharistic mystery should therefore be the source of inspiration for revealing through charity the suffering face of Christ in all our migrant, refugee and displaced brothers and sisters who around the world suffer the sad consequences of selfishness and fratricidal violence.

We can conclude with the words of John Paul II addressed to the UN High Commission for Refugees, “The Pastoral Care of Migrants, Itinerant People and Refugees. A Network of Solidarity”: “The responsibility to offer refugees and migrants hospitality, solidarity and assistance lies first of all with the local Church. She is called on to incarnate the demands of the Gospel, reaching out without distinction towards these people in their moment of need and solitude. Her task takes on various forms: personal contact; defence of the rights of individuals and groups; the denunciation of the injustices that are at the root of this evil; education against xenophobia; the creation of groups of volunteers and of emergency funds; and pastoral care. She also seeks to instil in refugees and migrants a respectful behaviour and an openness towards the host country”²⁰. The Eucharist, which makes one body of many people, is a powerful, driving, evangelical motive for tackling the challenge posed by human mobility from the standpoint of our faith.

May Our Lady, the Ark of the New Covenant, Mother of the Church, who experienced the hardships of forced migration, together with her dear Son, and in the company of the chaste Patriarch Saint Joseph. She, the model of hospitality and response, through her Son extends us the grace to know how to reach out to migrants so that, together, we may form one body and one spirit²¹.

¹⁸ John 13:35.

¹⁹ No. 6.

²⁰ o.c., 26-27.

²¹. Acts 4:32.

**STARTING AFRESH FROM CHRIST.
THE EUCHARIST, SEED OF NEW HEAVENS
AND NEW EARTH**

Cardinal Godfried *DANNEELS*
Archbishop of Malines-Brussels

Conspectus

1. The Eucharist is the central act of Christian faith, which sums up all of holy history and concentrates it in the hands of Christ in one moment, at the Last Supper. At the same time, it is the eschatological anticipation of the fulfilment of time. Therefore, it is also memory, actualisation and prophetic anticipation. It already heralds, under the veil of signs, the new heaven and the new earth.

2. The Eucharist is first of all a meal. Eating bread and drinking wine is first of all living. It is connecting one's life to the One who is the Creator of the universe, the Master of Creation, of rain and of growth. It means entering into the profound reality of creation. Via food and drink, humankind communes with the universe and the universe communes with humankind. Human beings are invited to the table of the cosmos.

3. During the Eucharist, creation reaches its definitive and breathtaking peak: by changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, God may truly say of these elements: "This is my body, this is my blood". He can also say it about the communicants and the whole congregation. Thus the whole of creation – individuals and the community – achieve their true destiny.

4. Therefore the Eucharistic bread and wine are truly creation brought to its perfection and fulfilment: in the Eucharistic species the new heaven and the new earth, where "God is all in everything", are already present, in advance but really so. In the "Eucharistised" bread and wine, a bridgehead to ultimate realities may already be recognised.

5. In the Eucharist, the essential activity of humankind, which is to bless God and give him grace, is taken to its highest expression. It is the Son of Man, together with his brothers and sisters and the whole of creation, who "bless" the common Father.

6. Sacrifice is the most natural act for humankind. Pagans spontaneously found their way to it. Any sacrifice is an act of love, an action of grace towards God and sharing with others. The Eucharistic sacrifice brings all of this to a state of perfection.

7. The life of humankind, as the Creator conceived it and the Redeemer made possible, is already heralded and anticipated in the Eucharist: praising God

individually or collectively is sharing love among everyone. But it is also an anticipation of the destiny of silent creation: it escapes corruption and is already glorified.

8. The Eucharist is the fulfilment of all the Covenants that God has concluded throughout the history of salvation. The Kingdom of God is established for ever in this “new and eternal Covenant”, a new heaven and a new earth. This is where Noah’s rainbow is built for ever.

9. The Eucharist is the sacrament that gives freely through Christ’s love for us which enables all of our giving to others. In this way, Eucharistic humankind is already living eternal life, which precisely consists of giving joyously and freely to others.

10. The Eucharist, the sacrament of passion and resurrection, heralds and anticipates the Easter of passing to the hereafter and an everlasting life. This is true for humankind and the whole of creation. In this sense it contains within it “the seeds of a new heaven and a new earth”.

RECONCILIATION IN THE BALKANS

Mr. Zenel *ELSHANI*
ICMC Project Director in the Balkans

Greetings

Your Excellencies, members of the clergy, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this, the 5th world congress.

Introduce Self

I am Zenel Elshani. I come from Prizren, in South West Kosovo. For the past four years I have worked with the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) in programs designed to reconcile inter-ethnic conflict and to foster tolerance.

Overview of presentation

Today I will talk as a witness of:

1. my years growing up in an intolerant and divided society,
2. my personal experience in 1999 after this intolerance had become a full-blown conflict,
- and 3. the work I have done with ICMC to build reconciliation.

A. Formative years

Removal of Human Rights and Demonstrations

My formative years were spent in a country rife with intolerance. When the big demonstrations took place in 1981 I was trying to study philosophy at Pristina University. Human Rights were being removed. I wasn't able to study in my own language. I didn't have a right to vote. I felt like I didn't have a name or an identity. I felt like I didn't exist.

Work as a director of pedagogy

In 1989 I found employment in a school as the Director of Pedagogy ensuring that lessons were appropriate. In 1990 the Serbian Government changed the school curriculum, they changed the history, geography and even the music we taught. It felt as if they were trying to erase us.

Refusal to adopt curriculum changes and the consequences

The ethnic Albanian teachers refused to adopt these curriculum changes so the high schools were closed. The Serbian Government were obliged to keep the primary schools open but they stopped paying the salaries of the Albanian teachers. Over time, the Albanians opened a parallel education system, opening schools in the community and volunteering in the primary schools. This resulted in confusion and a complicated systems, and, above all, it increased the conflict.

“Making ends meet”

I worked for two years on a voluntary basis, working 8 hours at the school subsidized by pupils' parents and then on the land, side-by-side with my wife. My eldest son was 6 then and understood that food was scarce, but it was harder to explain to my 2 year old that we did not have enough bread when he was hungry.

B. Deportation/ Flight

The political situation continued to deteriorate and in 1998 open warfare broke out. In 1999 the Serbian militia came to my village, burnt down our house then forced us from our refuge in a nearby village. The militia separated me from my wife and children. We were put in trucks and transported to the Albanian border. By luck, on the second day my wife's truck and my truck came to the same village and we were together again. When we came to cross the border the militia took all of our identification. At this point I really did feel like I had no identity, I was a zero. On the other side I had to keep introducing and explaining myself, as if I didn't exist.

In Albania

Over 800,000 ethnic Albanians were forced to leave Kosovo and suffered similar experiences. Reunited with my family, I spent 3 days in a border town before being moved to a collective center in Tirana with 3500 other refugees. At this point I really felt nothing – my only focus was providing my family with food and ensuring that we survived.

Assisting others in Albania

I started to work in the collective center placing other refugees and organising schooling. This work sustained me. By helping another refugee it was like helping myself – if I gave a man a blanket it felt like I also got the warmth from it.

Return to Kosovo

I returned to Kosovo 3 days after the war ended, and my family followed me the next day – it took me 3 months to pay for the taxi that brought them back! I knew I didn't have a house but I was happy just to be back in my own country.

C. Work with ICMC

Starting work with ICMC

9 days after NATO entered Kosovo, ICMC started work and I was employed by them a week later. I went home to tell my wife that I had a job, and with an organization that I *thought* worked with refugees – at that time I did not speak English and so I didn't know anything more than that!

Work with EVIs

I worked as a caseworker on the Program for Extremely Vulnerable Individuals which helped the most desperate cases: the elderly, the chronically sick, and the mentally ill, both returnees and remainees. It was often risky for me to help minorities. Whenever people questioned why I was somewhere to see a minority I would answer that I was there to help a human being.

Work as a tolerance trainer

Later I became a trainer in the Tolerance Building Program. ICMC taught us how to deal with conflict and with group dynamics when different ethnicities are brought together. First we had to feel that we were tolerant ourselves. I believe that to understand someone you have to imagine how they feel – easy for me as I had been in their shoes.

Stakeholder analysis

When we first visited different communities to conduct stakeholder analyses, people responded that it was too early to talk about tolerance and reconciliation. I answered that if a

baby is born and cannot breathe it will suffer brain damage or death, and that it was now time for us all to take a deep breath to keep our country alive.

The first training

The first training we conducted was in the village of Dragash where we worked with Albanians, Gorani and Bosniacs. It was difficult for most participants to share their feelings and talk amongst each other but the methodology helped them to express themselves and open up, and on the second day all the participants were having coffee together. By the end of the third day there was a common understanding that they needed a vision for the future.

We conducted further trainings with the same communities on topics such as mediation and reconciliation, as well as training trainers so that we could build a network of people to help us build tolerance.

This program didn't necessarily bring about wholesale reconciliation but it started a process.

ICMC's work today

ICMC's work in Kosovo now appears more practical in nature, offering returnees and remainees, ethnic Albanians and minorities, assistance such as income generation inputs and minor shelter repair, as well as continuing to assist the most vulnerable members of society, but this work is still underpinned by the ethos of tolerance; it has built on the foundation of reconciliation built by the tolerance building program.

My current work

I now work in the community projects team, promoting dialogue and fostering inter-ethnic cooperation and reconciliation through community projects, which offer everyone the opportunity to contribute to the stabilization of their communities. The projects are developed through co-ordination with members of the community and NGOs with the aim of facilitating inter-ethnic dialogue and encouraging community participation in areas where return is occurring.

Summary and Thanks

I brought much to the work that I have spoken of, but ICMC helped me to clarify who I am and enabled me to perform it.

Thank you for this opportunity to tell you a little of "my story" of intolerance and reconciliation.

EUCHARIST AND COOPERATION BETWEEN CHURCHES

Bishop Ramón C. Argüelles
Chairman, Commission for Migrants and Itinerant People,
Episcopal Conference of the Philippines

An undocumented Filipina factory worker in Taiwan, thanking me for bringing her money to her family at home and for paying some debts to the bank, narrated her spiritual journey as a migrant. In the homeland her whole family went to mass only during Christmas, town Fiestas and birthdays. Her Catholic faith consisted only in those infrequent traditional practices. After she left for -and illegally overstayed in- Taiwan, her family gradually fell into sectarian groups. But exposed to a non-Christian milieu and in search of a remedy for her loneliness, she sought refuge in clusters of fellow Filipinos gathering in Catholic Churches. The Church-based organizations provide needed company and consolation but also and more importantly the deepening of the faith. The Filipina always looked forward to the Sunday reunion in the Chaplaincy.

Once her Chinese employer asked: “Why do you have to go to Church every Sunday? Why are you not like us? We go to the temple only when we are in need of something!” The Filipina answered, ‘I must go to Mass; I must have fellowship with my fellow Christians; because God loves us and we love Him. We must encounter Him frequently.’ Her faith witnessing led her to influence, first, the children and, later, the parents to take interest in following Christ.

Like this Filipina in Taiwan, most Filipinos take for granted the faith while in the Philippines. Exposed to non-Christian or de-Christianized environment, some lose their faith; but others take the faith more seriously. They at times complain: “Why didn’t they tell this to us earlier?” They regret not being properly formed in the faith back home. Indeed, not only was there lack of proper Catechesis, there was severe lack of enthusiasm to undergo catechetical formation.

At home migrant Filipinos participate in the Eucharist out of social convention. Away from home they seek and gradually find deeper meaning in it. Participation in the Eucharist in their place of economic exile is no more obligatory family activity nor the result of social pressure. The Eucharist is seen as a source of strength helping them carry on with the difficult life without losing hope.

The Great Jubilee Year brought many bishops, coming from all directions of the globe, to congregate one Sunday at the Audience Hall for the Eucharistic Concelebration with the Holy Father. The bishops presented themselves to one another. When some bishops learned that I was from the Philippines, almost all of them would exclaim: “Oh! The Philippines, the most Catholic nation in the world!” To which I swiftly replied: “I wish it is true, Your Excellency, but I feel we still are a long way before we can merit such compliment.” To this the prompt rejoinder will be: “Oh yes, it’s true. I have forty, or four hundred, or four thousand or forty thousand Filipinos, in my diocese. They fill the Churches; they make the liturgy lively; they are devout and God-fearing people!” The late Bishop DiPietro of Port Pyrie told me how he valued a Filipina married to a local person in the

Australian outback. She took care of her two growing boys in a very Catholic and Filipino way that everybody noticed the extraordinary upbringing they got from her. Moreover she took upon herself voluntarily the duty of taking care of the parish Church and preparing the Sunday liturgy to make it easier for the priest coming from the distant parish. In many other places many Filipinos are asked to take care of parishes in the absence of a resident priest. I saw this myself in Frechen, Germany. A parish in Mallorca is being taken care of by a Filipino couple whom I knew in my first assignment as a young priest. In Saudi Arabia, a Filipino lay minister almost died a martyr for being an active Catholic leader of the Filipino community. He proudly and joyfully narrated how he celebrated priestless Sunday service several times before he was put in jail. He took the consecrated host from the Italian chaplain who “anointed” him to be an extraordinary eucharistic minister.

Filipinos overseas find the Eucharist very important and indispensable in life. They feel its hidden power that gives them strength. They see the Eucharist as the first reason for fellowship. But the Eucharist also gives them the meaning of their suffering and sacrifices. It is also the basis of what they perceive as their duty to be bearers of the same faith to others.

Many host Churches have seen the importance of strengthening the faith of the Filipinos. Archbishops and bishops have visited Filipino communities within their jurisdiction, thanking them for their presence and activities which contribute to the re-evangelization of their local Christian Communities. They admit the missionary potentials of Filipino migrants. In many places, bishops and archbishops have given migrant Filipinos their places of worship. They realize the importance of the Eucharist for the Filipinos. They provide the Filipinos with holy places where, in participating in the Eucharistic mysteries, their faith is strengthened and their evangelical effectivity is assured.

It is the hope of the Church in the Philippines that the host Churches continue to give the Filipinos overseas the possibility of always *starting afresh in Christ* by providing them with the possibility of frequently celebrating and deeply living the Eucharistic mysteries in their daily life in order that they can become true evangelizers of the Third Millennium.

**ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH
HOUSTON, TX, USA**

Fr. Italo *Dell'Oro*, CRS
Vocation Director, Somascan Fathers

Assumption Catholic Church is located in the north side of the city of Houston, Texas. Immigrants from Italy, who came here in the early 20th Century through the port of Galveston and the sugar plantations in Louisiana, established the first parish in this area which in 1914; it was dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. These immigrants were mainly from the towns of Bisacquino and Corleone, both in Sicily. The people from Bisacquino used to celebrate their devotion to the Blessed Mother on August 15 each year. Then, during the late 1940s and early 1950s other people came to this area. Many of them were from the countryside north and west of Houston, of Polish and Czech origins respectively.

When I first arrived at Assumption Church in 1992 I had the immediate strong sensation of a community on the verge of a serious division or rather, one that had not yet come together. In the early 90s, the population in the parish was already changing from the cluster of 2nd and 3rd generation of European ancestry to the other growing group formed by recent immigrants from Latin America.

In the first group, in addition to those of Sicilian, Polish, and Czech descent, there were others of German, Irish and Mexican origins and the so-called *Tex-Mex*, people who had lived in this area of the United States of America for several generations and who spoke either English only or both Spanish and English. All of these people were the *hosts*, so to speak. Immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia and other countries, who were Spanish speaking only, formed the second group, by now fast growing. They were the *guests*.

Neither group was affluent, since mainly “blue-collar” people made up even the first one. These were, on the other hand, people in their 60s and older whose children, although raised right there, had moved on in life, moved up the social ladder and moved out of this area.

It seemed to me that the language barrier between the two large groups was felt as being insurmountable. This, however, in my opinion included racial, national and social implications. On the one hand, the *hosts* felt that they were being deprived of something, such as the attention of the priests and other resources, and they were the ones supporting the finances of the parish, whereas the other party was not contributing adequately. One consequence was that they, reflecting the mood of the civic society, were practically expecting that everybody spoke English; they had strong feelings about this issue. On the other hand, the second group, the *guests*, were and still are in fact placing heavy pastoral demands – sacraments, catechesis, counseling, etc., yet some of them complained that parish activities were still leaning more toward the “older” parishioners. It was a no win situation.

My reaction was just about as instinctive as the initial perception and it was to foster both unity and solidarity: the former in opposition to the felt division, the latter to counteract the perceived racial and social barriers. I tried to articulate it in light of Acts 6:1-7. There we have the complaint of Greek speaking people about their widows who are neglected in the daily distribution of bread. Without any special presumption on my part, I read the episode and the apostles’ solution as a primacy given to both the *catechetical-liturgical* dimension of the community and to that of *charity*: neither can be neglected. Hence the call and mission of the seven (Greek) men to ensure the work of mutual attention, while the apostles reserved to

themselves the responsibility to pray and preach the word. In other words, the language was a barrier, but the real issue was the neglect, that is to say, the lack of charity toward widows, so that the Hellenists were at social disadvantage. Three diocesan documents issued around that time were very helpful to move in such direction. They were the two pastoral letters, “Sunday: The Original Feast Day” and “Many Members – One Body,” and the “Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry”.

We framed our efforts in a threefold model which we called, “*our Triptych*”. It was the combination of the works of the *heart* (liturgy), the *mind* (religious education and Catholic Social Teaching) and the *body* (works of charity). Such model, which I derived from a booklet by Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk, helped us to focus more clearly on the celebration of the parish feast day of the Assumption, by making it the symbol of the entire pastoral activity. Hence the three moments of the Feast Day: the parish *Bazaar*, symbolizing the *Body*; the *Convention*, consisting of a presentation by a special speaker – a bishop, a seminary professor, etc., symbolizing the *Mind*; and the *liturgy of the Vigil of the Assumption* – procession and Eucharist, usually with one of Houston’s bishops presiding, was the *Heart*. Thus, all parish activities revolved around the threefold model and would lead each parishioner to feel and be a member of one community, certainly as diversified as the civic community, and yet, united and interconnected in solidarity by the same faith.

So, from a practical standpoint, we began focusing on the dignity of liturgies – not that they were to be necessarily perfect, but simple and according to the rubrics. A simple, yet well celebrated Eucharist must both reflect and inspire the life of a community, and not presume a perfection which is not there, or be offered with a casual approach that trivializes it. Hence, building upon the methodology, already in practice at both the diocesan and parish levels, of celebrating bilingual masses, we chose a few occasions that would symbolize our hoped for unity and at the same time would not be too much of a burden to either of the two main linguistic groups. These were Holy Thursday, Easter Vigil, the Vigil of Pentecost, the Vigil of the Assumption, and the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The two Marian feasts held a special relevance because that of the Assumption had been actually “brought” to and celebrated in Houston by the founding Sicilian community almost a century ago, whereas the feast of Guadalupe is, as it is known, the greatest feast for all of the Latin Americans. They were celebrated liturgically, with elements of the traditions of each group, such as the Rosary prayed in Sicilian and the “Matachines” dances during the processions, and also socially, at which time we learned and shared some other cultural distinctiveness of the groups, such as foods, dances, etc. This helped us to introduce the idea of *each being a gift to the other, rather than one taking something away from the other*. Thus, the coming together in unity was also the symbol of the sharing of gifts that, perhaps unique to one party, were not exclusive to it.

Next, we strived to become aware of the common pattern of immigration faced by all groups, albeit at different historical junctures. We expressed it especially during the liturgy of the vigil of Pentecost through the Prayers of the Faithful which were prayed in Italian, Polish, German, French, Czech, English and Spanish, by native speakers of each respective language. This was a particularly moving moment of the entire Eucharistic celebration, a beautiful and uplifting experience of the universal Church.

Out of such liturgical experiences, we emphasized the need to recognize the different social needs of the several groups and worked toward making the parish community one that is open to transforming the world. Hence, the Convention and the feast of St. Jerome Emiliani became the occasions to learn more about the Social Teaching of the Church; we then engaged more deeply in a network of Churches, Catholic and not, jointly concerned with improving the living and working conditions of the immigrants and other people throughout the city. Through this ministry, leaders have emerged even from the immigrant population

itself. They, in turn, are now working with their fellow immigrants, both in this same area of activities and in other ministries.

Many wonderful lay people, devoted to God and dedicated to His Church and who are willing to really sacrifice their time, talents and even personal consolations for the greater goods of unity and charity, were the real makers of all of this. In particular, the Pastoral Council, which was formed according to the Diocesan Guidelines as a “representative body” rather than a “body of representatives,” and was itself a sample of the parish population, was instrumental in bringing about such mutual welcoming and in defining the pastoral direction of the community. I am particularly grateful to all of these people and uplifted by their love of God and neighbor.

Finally, we always benefited from the pastoral leadership and the encouraging support of Bishop Joseph A. Fiorenza, to whom I personally am greatly indebted and deeply grateful.

At this time, I am involved in vocational work on behalf of the Somaskan Fathers and I have the opportunity to interact with groups of young adults. The largest group in the Diocese is the one composed by Hispanics, many of them recent immigrants, as are others from the African and Asian continents, in addition to the African-Americans, and those of European origin. The Diocese is currently doing some groundwork to prepare a pastoral plan for young adults and I am gladly involved in it.

From my previous experience, I have come to believe that language is a relatively small barrier, a technical one, so to speak. But it may signal more profound divisions: those of racial suspicions and social differences. With the young adults, we have the beautiful opportunity to imagine a different world and then to build it in a spirit of unity founded on our Lord Jesus Christ. He calls us to recognize him in the Sacraments of the Church, but also in the hungry and thirsty ones, in those who are ill and in prison, and in those who are strangers in a foreign land. Liturgy and organized works of charity and justice can and will build different people for a different society and a different world, in which people are connected in solidarity and have no need to leave their home in order to live. I desire that those with whom I work in my new ministry share in the same hope.

CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION FOR HUMAN PROMOTION IN GUINEA, AFRICA

Mr. Robert *TÉDOUNO*
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« Organisation Catholique pour la Promotion Humaine »
Republic of Guinea

Background

Located in West Africa, the Republic of Guinea has a population of around 7.5 million and an area of 245,857 km², with an average density of around 30.5 inhabitants/km². It is bordered to the north by Guinea Bissau, Senegal and Mali, to the south by Liberia and Sierra Leone, to the east by Ivory Coast and to the west by the Atlantic Ocean. The main ethnic groups are the Fulbes (40%), the Maninkas (30%) and the Sosso (20%), with other groups making up around 10% of the total population. The people are mainly Muslim (85%), while other religions represent only a small proportion of the population: 8% Christians and 7% animists.

Guinea has significant natural resources in the areas of agriculture, fishing and mines (bauxite, diamonds and gold). Nevertheless, Guinea is one of the poorest countries in the world. According to the UNDP Report⁶², it ranks 159th out of 173 in the world human development index. Other important statistics include: an adult literacy rate of 35.9%; per capital GNP of 1,300 dollars; a life expectancy at birth of 45.91 years; and an infant mortality rate of 129 deaths per 1,000 births. Around 40% of the population live below the poverty threshold, which in 1994/95 was evaluated at around US\$ 300 dollars per capita per annum. In addition, is the silent spread of AIDS in the country: 4% of adults had HIV/AIDS in the population ranging from 15 to 49 years of age in 1999.

Encouraging progress has undoubtedly been made since 1985, especially regarding social sectors and budgetary control, but in recent years overall economic performance has been unstable and disturbed by the climate of insecurity and persistent tension in Liberia and Sierra Leone, which has contributing to discouraging investors. The long-term presence of refugees and displaced persons in Guinea has also led to considerable degradation of natural resources such as vegetation and soil.

An overview of the humanitarian situation in Guinea

Due to its geographical location, for over ten years Guinea has been facing a difficult and precarious humanitarian situation, caused by troubles and upheavals in the neighbouring countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast.

Liberia has been experiencing civil war with incalculable consequences since 1989, with a fresh upsurge of conflict since 2000 and more recently at the beginning of 2003.

Sierra Leone has also been prey to internal rebellion since 1991. Thanks to peace accords signed in 2002, refugees are returning in increasing numbers, with the support of an HCR⁶³ voluntary repatriation programme.

The crisis in Ivory Coast has led to the flight of certain categories of displaced persons to Guinea. Among the displaced persons, are evacuated Guineans, refugees and foreigners in transit to their countries of origin.

⁶² United Nations Development Programme

⁶³ High Commission for Refugees

All these conflicts have led refugees to flee to Guinea. At the height of the crisis they numbered around 700,000, equal to around 10% of the Guinean population.

It should also be pointed out that following rebel attacks that Guinea suffered on its borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone in September 2002, the refugee situation greatly deteriorated, given that the camps were located along the border, and because the refugees were accused of being accomplices, and sometimes rebels, by the host population. Moreover, this gave rise to the displacement of a large number of Guineans, estimated at over 670,000, and caused considerable damage. The reason for these aggressions are still unknown, and are most likely an imbroglio. The complexity of the situation must be borne in mind and analysed in terms of its sub-regional aspect.

Today, thanks to the lull in the conflict in Sierra Leone and the repatriation programme supported by HCR, the number of refugees from Sierra Leone has decreased considerably. The current refugee camp population is estimated at over 100,000, the majority of whom are Liberians. Ivorian refugees in the camps are a minority, because most of them chose to stay in host communities not far from the border with Ivory Coast.

The initiatives of the Organisation Catholique pour la Promotion Humaine (OCPH)

Unlike other humanitarian aid organisations, which seem to delight in the long-term presence of refugees and take advantage of it for their survival, OCPH's commitment to refugees and displaced persons in Guinea is designed and carried out as a disinterested service. It is rather giving oneself and providing a concrete Christian response to humanitarian crisis situations, in which people are really suffering and are prey to a kind of panicking despair because they have been abandoned by those who received a mandate to relieve their suffering.

Without wishing to refuse the partnership and collaboration of those who share its objectives, in its operations OCPH has always given priority to situations where needs are most blatant, and where other organisations are less interested, either for safety reasons or because they do not stand to make any financial gain. *Therefore we see our mission as a vocation, a living witness of the love of Christ manifested to men and women in distress and in need of hope.*

Concrete actions in favour of refugees: OCPH's assistance to refugees from Sierra Leone and Liberia dates back to 1996. This assistance primarily takes place in the field of agriculture via distribution of agricultural inputs and technical support to refugees in improving slum areas. The objective was to contribute to restoring the dignity of refugees by enabling them to earn their living by working. However, as mentioned above, the situation of refugees deteriorated considerably following rebel attacks in September 2000, and OCPH was faced with an emergency humanitarian crisis. Moreover, a speech by the president of the republic to the Guinean people on 9 September 2000 brought things to a head when he asked them to protect their country by all possible means. This is when people lumped together refugees and rebels, leading to threats and witch hunts being triggered off in Conakry. In this situation the refugees said: "If we must die, we prefer to do so in our own country".

How can one not be moved by the cries of distraught, helpless refugees? Some of the refugees who were able to do so gathered in their embassies' compounds and desperately pleaded to return home even though the situation in their countries of origin did not guarantee their safety.

OCPH could not remain impassive in the face of this horrible and inhuman situation. It was called upon by its own mission, which is none other than to communicate the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ to all men and women, especially to those who are suffering. Therefore, as a member of Caritas Internationalis, OCPH requested and benefited from the solidarity of the whole network which mobilised by giving technical and financial support. A

series of emergency operations were scheduled and implemented including the voluntary repatriation of over 500 of the most vulnerable people. However, not being specialised in repatriation by boat which is highly risky (insufficient life jackets, etc.), we opted for another course of action by offering logistical support to the Sierra Leone embassy. We provided trucks to transport the refugees from the camps where they were stranded to Conakry so that they could take the ferry made available by the Sierra Leone government.

However, after many setbacks, at the height of the rainy season and in extremely difficult conditions, a large number of refugees ended up in and around the embassy compound waiting for the ferry which had been delayed. This created the need to set up a transit camp in Conakry. This was done by OCPH and the international NGO, Doctors Without Borders (MSF). OCPH provided the site and managed the camp (distribution of hot meals, monitoring and surveillance, etc.) and MSF took charge of setting up the medical aspect. It should be borne in mind that all these operations took place with the agreement of the Guinean and Sierra Leonian authorities represented by their embassies, but paradoxically without the approval of HCR whose policy was ambiguous at the time. The camp accommodated over 18,000 refugees before they travelled to Freetown by ferry, and also via the International Organisation for Migration. It should also be noted that an operation called “Glass of Water” was launched in the south of the country on behalf of more than 100,000 of the most vulnerable refugees who had been left to their own devices by international humanitarian organisations which, for security reasons, had declared the area inaccessible. Our goal was to restore hope and trust to these people, who had been forgotten for months, by giving them food.

Currently, with the return to stability, the refugees have been relocated to camps that are well away from border areas. Thanks to the quality of its assistance to refugees, the legitimate value of which HCR hasn't failed to recognise, OCPH currently enjoys the esteem and respect of the Guinean authorities, HCR and also the refugees. We continue our operations in Liberian and Ivorian refugee camps, via distribution of food and non-food items. We also act in favour of those who, although refugees, are not in camps, and therefore do not benefit from HCR assistance, but are constantly knocking at OCPH's door.

Concrete actions in favour of displaced persons: Unlike refugees who are generally the object of “business and funding manna” for a number of humanitarian organisations that orbit around HCR, the plight of displaced persons in Guinea arouses less sentiment and attention from so-called humanitarian organisations. Nevertheless, they are just as vulnerable as refugees. They too are refugees in their own country. Therefore, in addition to our operations in favour of refugees, our actions also concern those displaced by war after the rebel attacks in 2000. The assistance given to these displaced persons is delivered in two phases:

Emergency assistance via distribution of food and non-food items (blankets, clothes, etc.) and the setting up of medical teams to provide first aid. A total of over 40,000 persons (including the host families whose burdens are significantly increased and who may even end up as vulnerable as their guests) have benefited from this kind of aid.

Post-emergency rehabilitation: This action only concerns a part of the areas devastated by conflict. The aim is to promote long-lasting economic reintegration of affected vulnerable groups who have returned to their places of origin, via reconstruction of housing and rehabilitation of agriculture. This work is in progress and will bring assistance and relief to 1,540 households, or around 13,860 people.

Conclusion

As a Church organisation, OCPH's mission is to provide a Christian response to human aspirations and integral human development by contributing in a specific way to building a society in which the Kingdom of God comes every day: a kingdom of justice and

peace, a kingdom of love and truth. Our actions are inspired by Jesus Christ who offered himself as a ransom for humanity. Therefore our actions solely aim to contribute to the restoration of human dignity, because people were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). *Indeed, the source of our commitment lies in the sacrament of the Eucharist which we have the privilege and the grace to receive each time we take part in the Holy Mass. Partaking in the body of Christ requires that we also allow ourselves to be “eaten” by others, for the glory of God.*

Currently, with a fresh upsurge of conflict in Liberia and the fragile peace in Ivory Coast, many needs, which are difficult to fulfil due to lack of resources, have still to be met. Undoubtedly, through the Church's traditional network (parishes, Christian grassroots communities) acts of solidarity and charity are still carried out by communities which are also fragile themselves. Problems continue to be greater for Guineans evacuated from Ivory Coast after living there for many decades and who have almost no ties in Guinea. Due to their nationality they are considered to be at home, and as such do not benefit from the assistance of international organisations. OCPH is almost the only organisation that looks after them despite the meagreness of its resources. Yet it is to those in distress, those who are forgotten and without help, to whom the love of Christ should be concretely expressed, to the point of giving oneself. We are also involved in peace-building through participation in national and sub-regional meetings.

Thank you very much.

THANKS AT THE END OF THE FIFTH WORLD CONGRESS

H.E. Stephen Fumio *Cardinal Hamao*
22 November 2003

Giving thanks is our duty and joy and at the same time a risk. This is simply because the presence of so many people contributing to this Congress means there is the danger of failing to mention one or even more of them. But allow me to take that risk.

First of all, we thank God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through whose goodness we have safely come to this Congress. For all that we have shared, all that has enriched us or inspired us to reflect or make good resolutions for the future, all the consolation we have received – for all of this we thank our merciful Father in Jesus Christ, moved by his Holy Spirit.

Next we want to thank our Holy Father, the Vicar of Christ, who kindly received us Thursday and offered us an encouraging word. He did this despite the physical challenges he has to face daily. I am sure I can assure him of the thanks of all of you.

God makes of us his instruments for doing good, for consoling, for strengthening. So I want to mention at least some of the people whom God has directly used to make this Congress a success. First of all, the participants of this Congress: You are the ones who have given shape to it. Thank you for your contributions and your presence, especially those of you who have made real sacrifices and suffered humiliating treatment to come to Rome. It has been worthwhile.

Then, none of this could have happened without the willing contribution of my closest coworkers. In particular I want to thank the Secretary of our Pontifical Council, Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, who took in hand the organization and coordination of all the details of the Congress. Together with him were Fr. Michael Blume, our Undersecretary, and all the members of staff, who have generously contributed their services to the Congress, not as a job, but as their mission and vocation. It would be impossible to list all the things they have been doing. But it is possible to say to you, thank you from all my heart.

I am grateful to the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles, who even contributed one of their own sisters, bringing her from Brazil, to start preparing details of this Congress more than a year ago. For the last two weeks she has been joined by some of her sisters and even by members of their General Council to do the day to day work of keeping the business of this congress moving forward. The Scalabrinian Sisters likewise set the tone of this Congress by designing its logo, with the welcoming symbol of the Church. My sincere thanks to all of you.

A special thanks for all who have prepared conferences, papers for workshops and other presentations, the presidents and secretaries of workshops. Your input has been invaluable. Many of you have rewritten your texts, sometimes several times, to stay within the time restraints of the Congress. Thank you once again.

Then there are our friends from Migrantes, who so ably organized the cultural evening, along with their groups, whose members really had to sacrifice to come and meet us here. We are likewise grateful to the musicians, singers and other artists who added life coming from many cultures to our liturgies and meetings.

Our hosts here at the Istituto Patristico Augustinianum merit special mention. They have made available this building and its facilities at a reasonable cost and have been with us to make sure everything functioned well. Thank you.

We do not want to forget the people who helped keep us awake and nourished: those involved in our much appreciated coffee break and in our restaurant, the *Giardinaccio* and the *Istituto Santa Maria Bambina* and the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*.

There are also special benefactors, without whose generous financial help this Congress could not have been held. Let me start with the Episcopal Conference of Japan, then the Archdiocese of Toronto through Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic, the Archbishop emeritus of Philadelphia, Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua, and the Scalabrinian Missionaries. In addition there were Catholic aid agencies who have helped World Congresses of the past and have once again affirmed it this year too. They are

Adveniat
Aid to the Church in Need
Misereor
Missio Aachen and
RENOVABIS.

Three banks have also continued their past support and once again affirmed their commitment to sponsoring this project, with its many social implications: the Banca d'Italia, the Banca IntesaBci S.p.A., and the Banca Popolare di Vicenza.

We also want to thank the Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops who presided over the Eucharistic celebrations of every day as well as their Eminences, the Cardinals, who accepted to preside at the sessions of every day.

Many thanks also to the group that worked on the Final Document and the Appeals and dedicated much time and effort to this effort. Special gratitude goes to the Presidents and Secretaries of the Discussion Groups, without whose contributions there would have been no Final Document.

We were also privileged to have a special visit to the Sistine Chapel. Thanks to the staff of the Vatican Museums whose generosity with their time at an unusual hour made it possible.

Let us also give a warm hand to our translators, both those in this hall and those who worked over many months prior to our meeting to get documents ready in several languages. They have been crucial in the ability to communicate cross-culturally among us. Thank you so much.

FINAL DOCUMENT

Part I. The Event

1. The 5th World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants⁶⁴ and Refugees⁶⁵ assembled 319 delegates and observers from 84 countries. These included Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, priests, pastoral agents, men and women of various religious congregations, ecclesial movements and lay associations, Fraternal Delegates from the Anglican Communion, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the World Council of Churches, Ambassadors and Representatives of Diplomatic Missions accredited to the Holy See, members of international and non-governmental organizations, experts in relevant academic fields, as well as representatives of associations, movements and organizations that are directly or indirectly concerned with migrants and refugees.
2. The Congress opened with a Eucharistic concelebration in the Basilica of St. Peter, presided over by Card. Stephen Fumio Hamao, President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (PCMIP). Highlight of the daily sessions, in fact, was the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, presided over, on the subsequent days, by Cardinal-Members of the PCMIP or Presidents of Episcopal Commissions for Migrants and Refugees (Cardinal Georg Sterzinsky, Archbishop of Berlin; Bishop Adriano Langa, President of the Episcopal Commission for Migrants and Itinerant People of Mozambique; Cardinal Pedro Rubiano Saenz, Archbishop of Bogota; Cardinal Jean Baptiste Pham Minh Man, Archbishop of Thành-Phô Hồ Chi Minh and President of the Episcopal Commission for Migrants and Refugees of Vietnam). The daily celebrations were animated by the songs and other forms of participation by migrant groups of various nationalities.
3. The Opening Session started with the warm welcome of the PCMIP Cardinal-President, followed by the welcome addresses of Sen. Antonio D'Alí, Undersecretary of the Italian Ministry of the Interior; Hon. Maria Pia Garavaglia, Vice-Mayor of the City of Rome; and Dr. Marco Buttarelli, Chief of Cabinet of the President of the Lazio Region. Cardinal Hamao then gave an overview of the program explaining the choice of the theme: "Starting afresh from Christ. Towards a new pastoral care of migrants and refugees." The Church cannot remain indifferent in the wake of the present plight of migrants and refugees. She wants to share their joys and grief, there where they are, and be with them in their search for a better and safer life, worthy of being children of God.
4. Unlike the Congress that preceded it, which examined more closely the socio-economic and political aspects of the migration phenomenon, the present Congress concentrated primarily on the pastoral aspects and renewed in Christ the pastoral programmes in favor of migrants and refugees for the coming years.
5. To examine today's challenges among migrants and refugees, Dr. Gabriela Rodriguez, United Nations Rapporteur for the Human Rights of Migrants, discussed the present situation of international migration world-wide. She made the assembly aware of the fact that although a wide framework of international laws is set up to protect the human rights of migrants, be their position "regular" or "irregular", these human rights are often not implemented. Prof. Stefano Zamagni, President of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), spoke on the present situation of refugees in the world. He called attention to Africa, where one third of the world's refugee

⁶⁴ Where applicable, migrants include seasonal workers and foreign students.

⁶⁵ Where applicable, refugees include asylum seekers and internally displaced persons (IDPs).

population lives. It also accounts for 60% of Internally Displaced Persons (2.5% of the African population). He stated that more finances and time should be devoted to this situation to avoid the creation of explosive situations. Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington and Member of the PCMIP, then pointed out the pastoral challenges that the world of migrants and refugees puts before us. After reading his text, the Cardinal concluded by saying that an encyclical letter on migration would be welcome.

6. At a round table presentation, a representative from each of the five continents illustrated a more detailed regional picture of the phenomenon of migrants and refugees. Bishop León Tharmaraj, President of the Office for Human Development of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences spoke for Asia and the Pacific. Rev. Anthony McGuire, outgoing Director of the Office for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, presented North America, while Bishop Jacyr Francisco Braido, Chairman of the Section on Human Mobility of the Latin American Episcopal Council, discussed the situation in Latin America. Africa was discussed by Rev. Abraham Okoko Esseau, S.J., National Coordinator of the Commission for Migrants and Refugees of the Episcopal Conference of the Republic of Congo, whereas the situation in Europe was exposed by Msgr. Aldo Giordano, Secretary General of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences.
7. Faced with the challenges of our times, the Holy Father stated in his apostolic letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, we shall not be saved by a formula but by a Person, Jesus Christ. Thus the Congress *started afresh from Christ*, first by examining society and culture according to the vision of the Church, and also by recalling its teaching regarding human mobility. Cardinal Paul Poupard, President of the Pontifical Council for Culture, spoke on the first aspect. He underlined that a given culture is not truly human until it contains openness towards other cultures and to the universal. The second aspect was presented by the Secretary of the PCMIP, Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, who analyzed the teaching of the Church after the Second Vatican Council and future prospects. The Church's vision and guidelines for ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue, specifically in relation to the world of human mobility, were presented respectively by Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, and by Archbishop Pier Luigi Celata, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue.
8. The Christian view was enriched with statements of the Fraternal Delegates. The Anglican Communion was represented by His Grace Ian George, Archbishop of Adelaide, Australia; the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Delegate was Metropolitan Emmanuel of France of the Office of the Orthodox Church to the European Union; and the World Council of Churches was represented by Ms. Doris Peschke, General Secretary of the Commission on Migrants in Europe. Unfortunately, the Delegate from the Lutheran World Federation, Rev. Willy S. Haag of the Church of Sweden, in Rome, could not be present for health reasons. Their active participation is a hope for an increasing ecumenical collaboration in the sectors of migrants and refugees that will contribute to the realization of full unity among Christians.
9. The reflections were rendered vital and concrete by the experiences of the participants in the round table presentation that followed. Auxiliary Bishop Josef Voss, President of the Commission on Migration of the German Episcopal Conference, shared the Commission's experience on ecumenical collaboration in the work among migrants and refugees in Germany, while Sr. Valeria Rubin, Coordinator of the "Enfants d'Aujourd'hui, Monde de Demain" Association, spoke on the inter-religious experience in Marseille. Mr. José Zepeda, Director of the Centre for Multicultural

Pastoral Care in the Archdiocese of Brisbane, Australia, presented the life and activities of the Centre and Fr. Michael Ryan, pastor of Our Lady of Hope Parish in Moscow, talked about the situation of his multi-ethnic parish and its migrant community.

10. The Congress also *started afresh from Christ* by staking everything on charity, considering the stupendous page of Christology in the Gospels, when Christ identifies himself with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the sick, the prisoner, the suffering, the marginalized... Yet, this page also means that “no one can be excluded from our love, since ‘through his Incarnation the Son of God has united himself in some fashion with every person’” (GS 22, NMI 49). With this in mind, there is a reason to dream of a new world.
11. Reflections on how to *start afresh from Christ* for a more Christian world, in the light of the Sacred Scriptures, were given by Fr. Albert Vanhoye, SJ, Professor *emeritus* at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, whereas Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya, outgoing President of SECAM, discussed *starting afresh from Christ* for a more fraternal and welcoming world in solidarity. Finally, Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, outgoing Secretary for State Relations of the Secretariat of State, unable to attend, delegated Msgr. Pietro Parolin, Undersecretary, to read his text on *starting afresh from Christ* for a more just, free and peaceful world.
12. The aforementioned reflections were rendered dynamic by the testimonies. Dr. Aldo Morrone spoke of the medical services given to migrants and refugees in Rome at the Department of Preventive Medicine of Migration, Tourism and Tropical Dermatology of the “Santa Maria e San Gallicano” Hospital, which he directs. Sr. Janete Aparecida Ferreira shared the experiences of the Welcome Centre for Migrants in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where she formerly served as Executive Secretary of the Commission for Migration of the country’s Episcopal Conference. From Beirut, Fr. Martin J. McDermott, SJ, Coordinator of the Committee on the Pastoral Care of Afro-Asian Migrant Workers in Lebanon, relayed the life and activities of the Center. The African experience of Jesuit Refugee Services was shared by Sr. Anne Elizabeth Vuyst, SSMN, from JRS Lilongwe, Malawi, while the work that the Fountain of Life Centre in Pattaya City, Thailand, carries out among trafficked women was witnessed by Sr. M. Supaporn Chotiphol, RGS.
13. Since it is impossible to *start afresh from Christ* without contemplating the mystery of the Holy Eucharist and considering the importance of Liturgy, Cardinal Geraldo Majella Agnelo, Archbishop of São Salvador da Bahia, in Brazil, spoke on the “Eucharist as Bread and Word of Life, Our Hope,” while Bishop Renato Ascencio León, President of the Mexican Episcopal Commission for Human Mobility, presented it as the sign and instrument of the unity of the whole Christian community. On his part, Cardinal Godfried Danneels, Archbishop of Malines-Bruxelles, reflected on the Eucharist as the seed, the promise and the assurance of new heavens and new earth.
14. Related to various aspects of the Eucharist, Mr. Zenel Elshani, ICMC Project Director in the Balkans, witnessed about the elements leading to the civil war in Kosovo, recalling events from his own life and his activities in ICMC programs for reconciliation. Bishop Ramon Argüelles, Chairman of the Commission for Migrants and Itinerant People of the Episcopal Conference of the Philippines spoke of concrete cooperation solicited and established with the Churches in the countries to where Filipino men and women migrate. The participants also heard of the experiences in celebrating the Sunday Eucharist with the use of various languages in the Assumption Parish of Houston, from Fr. Italo Dell’Oro, CRS, its former Parish Priest, and on human promotion among refugees in the Republic of Guinea from Mr. Robert

- Tédouno, Assistance Programme Director of “Organisation Catholique pour la Promotion Humaine” in the country.
15. The Sessions were chaired on the different days by the Cardinal President of the PCMIP, its Cardinal-Members (Cardinal Adam Joseph Maida, Archbishop of Detroit and Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic, Archbishop of Toronto) and Cardinal Renato Martino, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, with whom the PCMIP has a long tradition of collaboration. Archbishop Agostino Marchetto and Fr. Michael A. Blume, Secretary and Undersecretary of the PCMIP, moderated the morning and afternoon sessions respectively.
 16. Fourteen workshops met daily thus giving all participants the possibility to speak about their experiences in the field of migration and refuge, to express their thoughts, hopes and expectations and their suggestions for future plans of action.
 17. On Wednesday, 19th of November, in the evening, the Congress participants visited the Sistine Chapel, through the courtesy of the Vatican Museums, while on Thursday evening, 20th of November, a "Festa dei Popoli", a festival of songs, dances and other presentations of various migrant groups in Rome, connected with *Migrantes*, of the Italian Episcopal Conference, was offered to the participants
 18. The culminating point of the Congress was the Audience with the Holy Father on Thursday morning, 20th of November. His encouraging and enlightening words were an important support to the work in favour of migrants and refugees.

PART II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Keynote speeches, statements, round tables, and working groups enabled the participants of the Congress to make an inventory of the present situation of migrants and refugees all over the world taking into account global, regional, and local specificities. On this basis, the Congress, *starting afresh from Christ* in the light of the Sacred Scriptures, whose heart is love, with special attention given to the Eucharist, dealt with various challenges concerning the vision of the Church on migrants and refugees. At the same time, it considered the pastoral care of the Church, taking into consideration the multicultural, inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue as well as the promotion and protection of human rights deeply linked with evangelization.

Migrants and refugees do not have only material, but also spiritual, needs to which the Church is called to respond through a holistic pastoral care as a specific area of action within the ordinary pastoral care of the Church. The participants of the Congress agreed that the starting point for Church ministry is an understanding of the situation of migrants and refugees in all its dimensions – personal, social, and political - in the light of God’s Word and of the Social Teaching of the Church. The more migrants and refugees themselves are actively involved in pastoral processes, the deeper the pastoral understanding of their situation and the more fruitful their spiritual life will be. They have been and continue to be valuable evangelizers in their receiving country, often secularized societies or societies of non-Christian traditions.

The participants of the Congress noted that the tragedies of forced and voluntary migration are still growing throughout the world and that adequate answers, which put people first and affirm their dignity, have hardly been developed. Violations of human rights, armed conflicts, political oppression, poverty and economic disruption, degradation of the environment, lack of safety nets for basic needs in moments of crisis and lack of people’s participation in discussions that affect their lives all lead to forms of migration as a way of escaping conditions of life that have become practically unbearable. Behind the statistics

human beings are hidden: individuals with faces, families who love and are loved, persons like everyone else. Each one has a reason for emigrating, with hopes, aspirations and fears.

While the participants of the Congress recognized the right of sovereign States to regulate migration flows, they expressed concern over the lack of respect for the human rights of migrants and refugees. They endure both individual and collective sufferings, often finding themselves in unfamiliar surroundings with different norms, values, and customs. Places that gave meaning and dignity to their life are frequently lost to them forever; often traumatic experiences leave scars that last a lifetime. In a world of economic globalization which practically pushes them to migrate, they face incomprehension in general and - for a growing number of them - stricter movement regulations as well as suspicion, prejudice and xenophobia.

Taking into account that migration flows lead ever more to the formation of multicultural and multi-religious societies, the participants of the Congress underlined the importance of increased dialogue among cultures and religions as well as among Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities. However, dialoguing with others presupposes that those who are partners in dialogue are well-aware of their cultural identity and well-formed in their religion.

Against this background, the Congress makes the following RECOMMENDATIONS concerning the mission of the Church toward migrants and refugees.

Pastoral Care

1. The care of migrants and refugees in the first years of this millennium is an essential part of new evangelization. The various pastoral structures provided for by the Church through many years of experience (including personal parishes, *missio cum cura animarum*, chaplaincies for migrants, etc.) must be updated and mobilized for this new evangelization.
2. Liturgical celebrations and catechetical instruction are privileged instruments in the care of migrants and refugees. Also for them, the weekly celebration of the Eucharist is the summit and source of their Christian life. They should therefore be able to celebrate the liturgy and learn catechism in their own language.
3. These celebrations are also an important occasion to live Christian communion and experience the catholic dimension of faith, enriched by the cultural and spiritual patrimony of migrants and refugees.
4. Expressions of popular religiosity which are dear to migrants and refugees should be recognized and valued by the Church in the receiving countries.
5. Migrant communities are also a privileged area for vocation ministry.
6. Migrants and refugees are a resource for and can contribute to Church and society. Thus, they should be respected and appreciated by the local population.
7. At the same time, the local population has the right to preserve its cultural identity, which migrants and refugees, in turn, must respect and understand.
8. Pastoral care should be guided by a spirituality of communion and service, which promotes a presence of compassion, patient acceptance and listening also to those who have sometimes been severely hurt.
9. It should be led by the principle that no one, be they migrants, refugees or members of the local population, should be looked upon as a "stranger", but rather as a "gift", in parishes and other ecclesial communities. This is an authentic expression of the "catholicity" of the Church.
10. Pastoral care is, first of all, the responsibility of the Church in the receiving country. However, as far as possible, adequate preparation of migrants before departure should be provided by the Church in the country of origin.

11. The duty of the Church of origin includes, as far as possible, accompanying migrants and refugees by priests, religious and lay pastoral agents, preferably of their native language and rites. Missionaries, although not primarily dedicated to the care of migrants, should also consider involving themselves in this mission.
12. Initiatives of pastoral care and spiritual and psychological support should be offered by the Church in the country of origin to the families of migrants left behind. Families of migrants in the receiving country should make full use of offices for counseling available therein.
13. Co-operation and sharing among local Churches in the care of migrants and refugees should be encouraged and developed, at the national, regional and continental levels, through dialogue, common initiatives and pastoral visits.
14. The pastoral care of migrants and refugees should foster their integration in the local Church. Therefore, it should be given its due place in the ordinary pastoral care of the Diocese.
15. The local Church should ensure that migrants and refugees are constitutive and active participants in the life of the local Christian community, and be allowed representation in the parish and diocesan councils.
16. Migrants and refugees need to be given adequate spiritual formation and the possibility to live fully their spiritual and sacramental life.
17. A special effort must be made to provide appropriate care to migrants and refugees who live in countries where the public expression of faith is hampered or not allowed.
18. Migrants and refugees are rendered vulnerable in their experience and become a target of the activity of sects. Pastoral agents and Christian communities should provide them support and a community atmosphere to avoid their marginalization, which gives field to the sects.
19. The Church should develop more concern for the children of migrants, unaccompanied children, migrant women, irregular migrants and asylum seekers in detention centers.
20. The migrant youth, especially in the 2nd and 3rd generation, strive with issues of identity and belonging, and require specific attention to be helped participate in the local Christian community.
21. The Day of the Migrant and the Refugee, sometimes extended to a week, should be celebrated in all Dioceses and utilized as an occasion to deepen the understanding of the various dimensions of migration. The Message of the Holy Father released on such an occasion should be given proper publicity. It should be made available in all the languages spoken by the migrants and refugees in the local Church, at least when translations are available.
22. In consideration of the relevance migration has for the life of the Church and for the world, suggestions were expressed that an Encyclical Letter on migration be issued. A proposal for an Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on migration to be convened was also presented.

Study, education and formation

1. The issues related to the definition of refugee and the concept of migrant must be further analyzed in view of providing necessary protection to categories of persons currently neglected.
2. The Church must find ways to give wide circulation to her Social Teaching, and specifically the teachings about migrants and refugees, for example, by providing literature and pastoral kits on various subjects.
3. Persons involved in the assistance and care of migrants and refugees (priests, religious and lay pastoral agents) need and should be provided with adequate formation to be

more effective in their action in the context of the growing complexity of population movements. Such formation should be an integral part of the regular formation programs for priests and religious, from the seminary onwards, as well as of specific initiatives. A specialized institute in Rome (the “Scalabrini International Migration Institute”), as well as various programs and courses at different universities all over the world, are available for specific formation in this regard.

4. The work done by academic institutions of the Church in the scientific study of the social and pastoral aspects of human mobility should be encouraged and supported.
5. Catholic universities are encouraged to create study centres on issues of human mobility and special programmes should be offered in schools for education in this regard.
6. The Church must contribute toward education on intercultural, inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue, especially through her schools.
7. Results of research on migration should be widely utilized by parishes and ecclesial communities, as well as Church leaders, to maintain awareness of the transformations occurring in migration and society.

Communication

1. In the light of the powerful impact of the way migrants and refugees are portrayed by mass media, specific initiatives must be taken by the Church to demand balanced and fair reports, and utilize her own media to present the full situation of migrants and refugees, often victims of exploitation, but also resources for a better society.
2. The Catholic Church should favour common standings with other Churches and/or other religions regarding service of migrants and refugees and express this through available media.
3. Radio stations, which are sometimes the only means of mass-communication, should be fully utilized for information to migrants and refugees, particularly during emergency times.

Dialogues

1. Migration can be regarded as an invitation to live “communion in diversity”. Therefore, the importance of dialogue between cultures and religions must be recognized.
2. The great diversification of origins in migration flows has placed ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue at the center of the care for migrants and refugees, making these dialogues not an option, but an obligation inherent in the Church’s mission in migration.
3. Multicultural, inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue should be carried out in the context of “new evangelization”.
4. Dialogue and mission are both part of the Church’s ministry. *Missio ad gentes* (mission to peoples), *missio ad migrantes* (mission to migrants) and *missio migrantium* (mission by migrants) must be kept as interrelated dimensions of this new evangelization.

Co-operation

1. Ecumenical co-operation should be broadened and strengthened.
2. Collaboration between the Church and NGOs, in advocacy and protection of migrants and refugees, should be encouraged and strengthened.

Advocacy

The Church considers her action toward the protection of migrants and refugees as an integral part of her mission.

1. The Church should forcefully advocate for interpreters, legal counsellors etc., whom migrants and refugees need in order to plead their cause.
2. The Church must find ways to help undocumented immigrants, who are already part of the society where they live and work, to obtain a legal status therein.
3. The Church should respond to the needs of migrants and refugees also through actions facilitating long term solutions of problems affecting them.
4. Bishops' Conferences should more often use their good offices to influence legislation in favour of migrants and refugees.
5. The Church should intervene to speak in favor of freedom of religion on behalf of migrants who cannot practice it in the receiving country.
6. The Church must intervene to defend the right of migrants to live with their family. It should demand that such right be recognized and no obstacles introduced to family reunification.
7. The Church should speak out more clearly against new forms of slavery like, for example, those existing in the undeclared labour market - which acts as a major pull factor for irregular immigration - or in human trafficking, which victimizes mostly women and children in prostitution and the trade of organs.
 1. The Church should advocate a reformulation of cultural rights.

PART III. APPEALS

The Congress appeals to the Church, her hierarchy, her members and her related organizations

1. to recognize migrants and refugees as a sign of our times when God calls His Church to live more fully her catholic dimension and her vocation as pilgrim Church;
2. to take more seriously her vocation to walk with migrants and refugees, in whom the face of Christ can be seen (cf. Mt. 25: 31-46);
3. to respond to the various calls for help through a holistic approach to pastoral care integrating, in particular,
 - a. specific pastoral programmes which include adequate formation in view of the services to be fulfilled,
 - b. networks of improved communication within the Church,
 - c. a stronger commitment to advocacy,
 - d. further ecumenical cooperation,
 - e. dialogue among cultures and religions;
4. to have an increasingly more active and welcomed presence of migrants and refugees within the Church, recognizing their rich cultural and spiritual patrimony as an asset for the local Church, including appropriate expressions of their popular religiosity and liturgical celebrations;
5. to witness that injustice can be overcome.

The Congress appeals to the Holy See

to ratify as soon as possible the UN Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

The Congress appeals to Governments, legislative Bodies and International Organizations

1. to respect and protect the human dignity and human rights (especially the freedom of conscience, cult and religion) of migrants and refugees, be they in a regular or an irregular situation, and not to make international terrorism a pretext to reduce their rights;
2. to give special attention to migrant children, young people and women, and institute heavy sanctions against their exploitation;
3. to admit that policies which are only repressive and restrictive towards migrants and refugees are unable to control migratory flows;
4. to develop comprehensive, realistic and just approaches in global, regional, and local migration management;
5. to fulfil obligations under international and national laws, in letter and spirit, without any reservations. Special reference is given to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its related Protocols, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman Treatment or Punishment, the Convention of the Rights of the Child and its related Protocols, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
6. to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;
7. to further develop and encourage a system of international responsibilities for internally displaced persons, based on the “Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement”;
8. to vigorously maintain and, when new phenomena require it, broaden the present 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, including its existing minimum standards for vital necessities, entrusted to the UNHCR, which requires need-based budgets;
9. to offer better services to migrants including the protection of their right not to have their identity and travel papers subtracted from their possession, and appeals to embassies to assist better their emigrants;
10. to promote justice and peace, reconciliation and integral development in the light of the common good of the whole humankind;
11. to address and tackle effectively the root causes of migration.

The Congress denounces

the permanent tragedies resulting in the loss of lives of migrants in many different frontier zones in the world like, for example, the passage of the Strait of Gibraltar between Morocco and Spain, the one of Rio Grande and of the desert between Mexico and the United States, as well as the one between Africa and the Island of Lampedusa in the Mediterranean.

Therefore the Congress appeals to those concerned to face the true causes that provoke these serious and dramatic events and to exert maximum effort and employ all means necessary to avoid such painful tragedies when co-ordinating and regulating migration flows.

The Congress appeals to all migrants and refugees

1. for those who are Christians, to be true witnesses of their faith, particularly in countries where Christians are a minority;
2. to be protagonists in building a society which grows in mutual respect and in the recognition of the inalienable dignity of each human being;
3. to learn, as much as possible, the local language of their receiving country;

4. to engage in dialogue with the local people and be interested in their culture;
5. to know their rights in the country of arrival and the proper authorities to approach for the redress of any grievances;
6. to help their children and grandchildren in the latter's efforts towards full integration in the receiving country, while preserving their cultural identity;
7. to appreciate the receiving country and respect its laws and cultural identity.

The Congress appeals to civil society and its individual members

1. to meet migrants and refugees without prejudice;
 2. to appreciate the cultural origins of every person, and respect different cultural practices, as long as they do not contradict the universal ethical values inherent in the natural law or in human rights;
 3. to combat racism, xenophobia and exaggerated nationalism;
 4. to help migrants and refugees feel at home, as much as possible, in spite of their situation.
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