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"It is necessary to respond to the globalization of migration with the globalization of charity and cooperation, in such a way as to make the conditions of migrants more humane. At the same time, greater efforts are needed to guarantee the easing of conditions, often brought about by war or famine, which compel whole peoples to leave their native countries.

—Pope Francis
Message for the 101st World Day of Migrants and Refugees



World Day of Migrants and Refugees

The Church Without Frontiers, Mother to All

The Church Without Frontiers, Mother To All” was the theme for World Day of Migrants and Refugees for 2015. Pope Francis has made migration one of the priorities of his pontificate. He calls for “more decisive and constructive action” to deal with the phenomenon of migration, saying this will lead to “greater effectiveness in the fight against the shameful and criminal trafficking of human beings, the violation of fundamental rights, and all forms of violence, oppression and enslavement.” Pope Francis said the Church “spreads throughout the world a culture of acceptance and solidarity, in which no one is seen as useless, out of place or disposable.”

“Often, however, such migration gives rise to suspicion and hostility, even in ecclesial communities, prior to any knowledge of the migrants’ lives or their stories of persecution and destitution,” the Pope writes. “In such cases, suspicion and prejudice conflict with the biblical commandment of welcoming with respect and solidarity the stranger in need...Jesus Christ is always waiting to be recognized in migrants and refugees, in displaced persons and in exiles, and through them he calls us to share our resources, and occasionally to give up something of our acquired riches.”

When migrants leave to find work abroad, they seek to improve the well-being of their family and provide better opportunities for their children. While migration may assist in achieving financial stability, research shows that the absence of a parent can be detrimental to a child’s social and psychological development. No part of the world remains untouched by the phenomenon of labor migration and its effects. An estimated 232 million people currently live outside their country of origin, many having moved for a variety of reasons in which the search for protection and the search for opportunity are inextricably entwined.

Migrants and refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity. They are children, women and men who leave or who are forced to leave their homes for various reasons. The sheer number of people migrating from one continent to another, or shifting places within their own countries and geographical areas, is striking. Contemporary movements of migration represent the largest movement of individuals, if not of peoples, in history.

According to Pope Francis migration movements are today on such a scale that only “a systematic and active cooperation between States and international organizations” can be capable of regulating and managing them effectively. “A more decisive and constructive action is required, one which relies on a universal network of cooperation, based on safeguarding the dignity and centrality of every human person. Pope Francis says it is necessary to

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respond to "the globalization of migration with the globalization of charity and cooperation," in such a way as to make the conditions of migrants more humane. This will lead to greater effectiveness in the fight against the shameful and criminal trafficking of human beings, the violation of fundamental rights, and all forms of violence, oppression and enslavement."

The reality of migration needs to be approached and managed in a new, equitable and effective manner; more than anything, this calls for international cooperation and a spirit of profound solidarity and compassion. Cooperation at different levels is critical, including the broad adoption of policies and rules aimed at protecting and promoting the human person.

Working together for a better world requires that countries help one another, in a spirit of willingness and trust, without raising insurmountable barriers. No country can singlehandedly face the difficulties associated with this phenomenon, which is now so widespread that it affects every continent in the twofold movement of immigration and emigration.

It must be emphasized that cooperation begins with the efforts of each country to create better economic and social conditions at home, so that emigration will not be the only option left for those who seek peace, justice, security and full respect of their human dignity.

Migration affects every region of the world, and many countries are now simultaneously countries of origin, destination and transit. Large numbers of migrants today move between developing countries, and around 40% of the total global migrant population have moved to a neighboring country within their region of origin.

Migrants contribute to economic growth and human development in both home and host countries and enrich societies through cultural diversity, fostering understanding and respect among peoples, cultures and societies.

Migrants are often to be found working in jobs that are dirty, dangerous and degrading. While for some migration is a positive and empowering experience, far too many migrants

have to endure human rights violations, discrimination, and exploitation.

“ Far too many migrants have to endure human rights violations, discrimination, and exploitation.

” While it is true that migrations often reveal failures and shortcomings on the part of States and the international community, they also point to the aspiration of humanity to enjoy a unity marked by respect for differences, by attitudes of acceptance and hospitality which enable an equitable sharing of the world's goods, and by the protection and the advancement of the dignity and centrality of each human being.

Particularly alarming are those situations where migration is not only involuntary, but actually set in motion by various forms of human trafficking and enslavement. Today, "slave labor" is common. Yet despite the problems, risks and difficulties to be faced, great numbers of migrants and refugees continue to be inspired by confidence and hope; in their hearts they long for a better future, not only for themselves but for their families. Violence, exploitation, discrimination, marginalization, restrictive approaches to fundamental freedoms, whether of individuals or of groups: these are some of the chief elements of poverty which need to be overcome. Often these are precisely the elements which mark migratory movements, thus linking migration to poverty.

A change of attitude towards migrants and refugees is needed on the part of everyone, moving away from attitudes of defensiveness and fear, indifference and marginalization towards attitudes based on a culture of encounter, a culture capable of building a better and more just world.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, has made promoting and protecting the human rights of all migrants a priority of the work of her office - Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). “The protection of migrants is an urgent and growing human rights challenge. Governments have obligations to ensure that xenophobic

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Related Websites This Issue:

Message of Pope Francis for 2015 World Day of Migrants and Refugees

w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/index.html

Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.

cliniclegal.org/news/world-day-migrants-and-refugees-pope-francis/2015-world-day-migrants-and-refugees-church World Day of Migrants 2015

Migration and Refugees: Inter Press Service News Agency

www.ipsnews.net/news/human-rights/migration-refugees/

Unwelcome Strangers: The Suffering of Migrants and Refugees as an Ecumenical Global Challenge for the 21st Century

www.nationalcouncilofchurches.us/docs/GETI-BuhleMpfu.pdf

Buy Responsibly

www.buyresponsibly.org

International Organization of Migrants

www.iom.int

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

www.buyresponsibly.org



Catholic teaching has a long tradition in defending the right to migrate. Based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the Church's teaching provides the basic principles regarding the right to migrate for those attempting to exercise their God-given human rights. Catholic teaching states that the root



TheRefugeeProject.org

The Refugee Project is a narrative, temporal map of refugee migrations since 1975. Using UN data, the map visualizes refugee volumes over time and adds a layer of historical content to help explain the events that caused some of the largest refugee movements of the last four decades.

Not considering the large number of economic migrants and other undocumented populations, nor the millions of internally displaced persons in troubled countries around the world, it is an image almost exclusively of social and political crises, rather than of natural disasters or economic turmoil (though these factors are often interrelated).

The Catholic Church's Teaching on Migration

causes of migration; poverty, injustice, religious intolerance, armed conflicts, must be addressed so that migrants can remain in their homeland and support their families.

The Church recognizes the right of a sovereign state to control its borders in furtherance of the common good. It also recognizes the right of human persons to migrate so that they can realize their God-given rights. These teachings complement each other. While the sovereign state may impose reasonable limits on immigration, the common good is not served when the basic human rights of the individual are violated. In the current condition of the world, in which global poverty and persecution are rampant, the presumption is that persons must migrate in order to support and protect themselves and that nations who are able to receive them should do so whenever possible.

Five principles guide the Church's view on migration issues:

- + Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.
- + Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.
- + Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.
- + Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.
- + The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.

In his message *Church Without Frontiers, Mother To Us All*, Pope Francis states, "The mission of the Church, herself a pilgrim in the world and Mother of all, is thus to love Jesus Christ, to adore and love him, particularly in the poorest and most abandoned; among these are certainly migrants and refugees, who are trying to escape difficult living conditions and dangers of every kind."

As Church, as the people of God, we are called to spread throughout the world a culture of acceptance and solidarity, in which no one is seen as useless, out of place or disposable. Today, large numbers of people are fleeing their homelands in the hope of finding a new home in a place where they can be safe and where living conditions are more humane.

Pope Francis encourages us, as Church, to "move away from attitudes of defensiveness and fear, indifference and marginalization...towards (attitudes) based on a culture of encounter, the only culture capable of building a better, more just and fraternal world." (*Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2014*).

by Jane Remson, O. Carm.



United Nations Years of ...

2015: International Year of Soils

Soils provide a key set of fundamental ecosystem services that are crucial for our well-being. Despite their crucial role, soils have been taken for granted for a long time. Considering that human pressures on soils are reaching critical limits that jeopardize our future, there is an urgent need to raise awareness on the importance of this strategic resource.

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2015: International Year of Light and Light Based Technologies

... recognizes the importance of raising global awareness about how light-based technologies promote sustainable development and provide solutions to global challenges in energy, education, agriculture and health. Light plays a vital role in our daily lives and is an imperative cross-cutting discipline of science in the 21st century. It has revolutionized medicine, opened up international communication via the Internet, and continues to be central to linking cultural, economic and political aspects of the global society.

