

# *The Presence of the Church in Migration*

## *A Report on Four Regional Consultations and a World Meeting on the Pastoral Care of Migrants*[\[1\]](#)

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### **Introduction**

“The Church’s response to the changes occurring in the modern world will be significant as long as it considers migration among its top priorities (...). The upheavals that are at the horizon need new responses, anchored in the Christian traditions and apt to face the unknown that is approaching. Everything points to the supposition that Christians will be obliged to double up their efforts in the sphere of migration.” There is no room for doubt in this affirmation contained in the Conclusions of the IV World Congress on the pastoral care of migrants and refugees held on October 5-10, 1998 in Vatican City, under the auspices of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People.[\[2\]](#) The Church, all Christians have a serious role to play in facing the challenges that migration represents in the century that has just begun. “The task before us is not easy,” continues the concluding statement. “International migration is developing in various and specific ways. However, the phenomenon is global and requires strategies at the worldwide and regional levels.”

### **I. Premise**

1. As part of its institutional task[\[3\]](#) and in line with the Holy Father’s invitation to carry out the recommendations of the aforementioned World Congress,[\[4\]](#) the Pontifical Council organized a series of four regional meetings of National Directors for the Pastoral Care of Migrants, officially designated as such by the Bishops’ Conferences of the different countries or his representative. These concluded with a World Meeting of all the National Directors.

2. These meetings intended to examine the concrete situation of migration in the different countries in the world, its causes and effects, find out how the local Churches are actually responding to this situation and, in this context, determine how they could be more effective in the pastoral field. The way migration evolved historically has strongly influenced the pastoral strategy and structures that the Church has developed to cope with it. With the explosion of the phenomenon at the turn of the millennium, are these strategies and structures still valid? Have the characteristics of migration remained as they were, or have there been radical changes, which require new responses? These were some of the leading questions that these regional meetings intended to answer in some way.

3. The analysis of the present situation and ongoing commitments was done in the light of the teachings of the universal Church and the local Churches. In particular, the norms for the Pastoral Care of Migrants spelled out in the document *De Pastoralis Migratorum Cura* (henceforth DPMC) were re-examined[\[5\]](#).

## II. Pastoral solicitude of the Church

1. When we speak of the pastoral care for migrants, exactly what do we mean? Who are the recipients of this pastoral care? What are its characteristics? These fundamental questions needed to be answered before any effective discussion could take place.

2. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, when the first efforts to organize the pastoral care of migrants took place, migration streams flowed from Europe to the New World. Many migrants were Catholics and the Church was greatly concerned regarding the preservation of their faith in a foreign land, especially when they did not speak the language of the destination country, and consequently, the Church of arrival. Later, during the early part of the twentieth century, efforts went beyond merely safeguarding the migrants' faith and sought to affirm their right to preserve their cultural heritage and traditions in expressing their faith.<sup>[6]</sup> Obviously, the norms that were later developed for this specific pastoral care<sup>[7]</sup> were meant to respond to these particular needs. It is worth mentioning, however, that Bishop Giovanni Battista Scalabrini himself, who strongly promoted the pastoral care of migrants during that period, envisioned a holistic care including a design of evangelization and integral human promotion.<sup>[8]</sup>

3. At the turn of the millennium, the migration phenomenon has practically assumed a new face. Western Europe has joined the New World in being a destination for migration flows. Migrants originate from countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe where cultures are often rooted in religions that are not Christian, if they are rooted in religion at all. Catholics no longer make up the majority of migrants.<sup>[9]</sup> It goes without saying that it is far from sufficient for the Church, which has been sent forth to proclaim the good news<sup>[10]</sup> to all peoples, to address only Catholics in the world of migration.

4. Without denying the need and importance of safeguarding and promoting the Catholic faithful's allegiance to the faith, this concern is no longer enough before the huge numbers of migrants who have never heard of Christ. There are also those who have been baptized but have practically lost a living sense of Christianity. Evidently, in the world of migration, "the boundaries between pastoral care of the faithful, new evangelization and specific missionary activity are not clearly definable, and it is unthinkable to create barriers between them or to put them into watertight compartments."<sup>[11]</sup>

5. Furthermore, the proclamation of Christ's Gospel would be credible in the migration milieu if it is witnessed by a concern for people and charity toward the poor, the weak and those who suffer; if it includes a commitment to peace, justice, human rights and human promotion directed toward integral human development. This inevitably raises questions that lead to God and the Gospel.<sup>[12]</sup>

## III. The Migration Situation <sup>[13]</sup>

1. The Regional Meetings confirmed that migration is not a homogeneous phenomenon. Although there are characteristics in common, each region has its own peculiarities. This implies that strategies and responses need to be diversified according to the needs of the area.

2. **Asia**<sup>[14]</sup> is characterized by temporary labor migration. People move from countries where manpower is abundant but not adequately paid, or jobs are not available, to countries where labor gets a better compensation. This is strongly influenced by the presence of labor

recruiters and brokers who, in reality profit most from the process while migrants are turned into indentured laborers until they finish paying their broker's fee. Contracts are usually short-term and at times non-renewable. Women are increasingly becoming part of the migration experience because they are economical, flexible and willing to take up jobs shunned by local men and women. As a consequence, they are usually in vulnerable situations.

Refugees have been generated by the political and economic instability in the region. Thailand has repeatedly functioned as a country of first asylum for refugees escaping from strife in Cambodia and Burma. The turmoil in Aceh and the tragedy in East Timor have resulted in massive displacement of people, some of whom will probably seek resettlement in countries in the Pacific that welcome permanent migrants.

3. In fact, in **Australia** and **New Zealand**[15] migration is intended for permanent settlement. This system provides the best guarantees in safeguarding the dignity of migrants and their opportunity to advance. However, even in these Pacific countries, migration is not free from problems. Aside from restriction in the number of migrants they are willing to receive, new arrivals have limited access to social benefits. Social mobility for migrants is difficult, especially for those who are resettled refugees. Although a humanitarian component is included, there is an increasing preference for skilled workers in the selection of migrants.

4. In **Africa**[16] the emergency character of the refugee situation has pushed to the margins any attention to other forms of migration. Unfortunately so, because the latter is just as serious and urgent, being structurally imbedded in the problems of local society. The causes that provoke conflicts and wars resulting in refugee flows are simply variations of the causes of migration: unequal chances in participating in the political process, unequal access to economically advantageous natural resources, to job and income-generating opportunities, unequal social conditions. In fact, it is a tall order to clearly distinguish between refugee flows and economic migration. At times, the difficulty in being admitted as an immigrant in many African countries has prompted potential migrants to apply for asylum or declare themselves as refugees.

Internal displacement is another alarming phenomenon in Africa. With the ongoing wars and violence, internally displaced people need the same protection that refugees are getting through international treaties and conventions. However, since they have not crossed their country's boundaries, such protection is not applicable to them. The victims in this situation are highly traumatized persons, especially children.

Although there are regular emigrants who leave their country to work abroad, most migration in Africa is irregular, with all its implications. Still another disturbing phenomenon in the continent is *brain drain*. Africans who study in Europe or in the Americas do not want to return to their own country depriving it of badly needed human resources for its development.

5. No continent has been touched more by the migration phenomenon than **America**, a "new" continent founded on migration flows from the Old World. Today, Latin American countries have undergone a transformation: from being destination countries into lands that generate migrants. Probably inherited from their migrant ancestors, Latin Americans are fond of moving. It would not be incorrect to consider migration a part of their culture. At present,

however, a lot of movement in Latin America is the result of socio-economic and political factors that have pushed people out of their homes and countries.

6. Internal migration is also frequent in Latin America. Rural-urban migration usually takes place for economic reasons, but internal displacement is also caused by violence or political factors.[\[17\]](#) In some countries, the violation of human rights and violence is such that people are forced to leave the country.

7. The United States is a destination dreamed by many Latin American migrants. Mexicans have often crossed the border shared by the United States in search of better opportunities. Even when the United States sealed the historical crossing points that undocumented migrants used through urban areas, *irregular migration* from Mexico continued in other parts of the country, less safe and more difficult to cross, but still a road of hope for many. Many deaths have been reported as a result. This has also encouraged the employment of “coyotes” to lead migrants through mountains and deserts across the frontier.[\[18\]](#)

8. Mexico, which has benefited from the North American Free Trade Agreement, has in turn become a favorite destination of labor migration, mostly irregular, from Central America, especially Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala. Mexico increased its border control with Guatemala. On its part, Guatemala withdrew its adhesion to the CA-4 treaty which permitted freedom of movement for citizens of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua and required passports for foreigners who intended to cross its borders. In this wave effect of tightened border controls, *deportations* greatly increased. United States deported Mexicans and other Latin Americans into Mexican territory, and Mexico deported undocumented Latin Americans, found on or deported into its territory, mostly to Guatemala. Yet, irregular migration continues and has risen to alarming numbers.[\[19\]](#)

9. The **United States** is a dream destination country not only for Latin Americans. The largest legal immigrant populations in the country are in fact Mexican, Chinese, Filipino and Vietnamese, in this order. There is also a relatively large number of undocumented migrants who enter the United States, some 40% of whom are Mexicans.[\[20\]](#)

10. Where there is irregular migration, human trafficking[\[21\]](#) invariably arises. In the process, migrants are maltreated and their human rights violated not only by the coyotes, but also by some migration and police officers in transit countries. Oblivious of existing laws and their rights, migrants are helpless in this situation.

Quite a number of Latin American women are smuggled to Europe either for domestic work or for prostitution. The second case also includes children.[\[22\]](#) In the United States, the smuggling of persons into the country through organized, illicit trafficking schemes is on the increase. Persons being smuggled include quite a few unaccompanied minors. The largest number of human smuggling cases come from China.

11. Irregular migration is, in fact, widespread in **Asia and the Pacific**.[\[23\]](#) Its worst form, which is unfortunately increasing in the region, is trafficking of migrants. Here, too, it affords high profits to traffickers who have no qualms in dumping migrants over borders, pushing them into illegal activities or keeping them in an indentured condition.

In East Asia most irregular migrants are those who stay in the country after the expiry of their visa that permitted them to enter as visitors, students, trainees or workers. In Southeast Asia, the most prevalent form of irregular migration is entering a country without proper travel documents. The difference is determined, among others, by the long borders shared by the country of origin and the destination country in Southeast Asia which is not so for East Asia.

**Australia** and **New Zealand** are keeping the phenomenon under control, first because geographic conditions discourage irregular migration and second because administrative measures that give uncompromising treatment to irregular arrivals get through the message that irregular migration is not tolerated.

No **European** country is exempt from the migration phenomenon.<sup>[24]</sup> The new cultures and religions represented by migrants are a challenge that require adequate response. European states seek to cooperate in facing migration issues and have made entry into Europe more difficult.

Europeans are becoming more aware of migration. They generally have a negative attitude towards asylum seekers from the Balkans and non-European countries while European migrant workers circulate unnoticed between European states. *Xenophobia* and *racism* are on the rise in all European countries. It is interesting to note that a high degree of concern regarding immigrants, even among former immigrants themselves, exists in areas where the number of immigrants is rather limited.

#### **IV. The Church's response**

1. The Church does not encourage migration because of the suffering that it inevitably entails. However, she defends the person's right to migrate and offers her maternal care to those who are forced to do so in search of a dignified life, worthy of human beings and children of God. She has taken steps to be with the migrants both at the sending and at the receiving ends, to prepare and sustain them in this important step in their lives. The Church is ready to be at the service of any migrant in need and does not ask anyone to produce passport or baptismal certificate.<sup>[25]</sup> For her, all migrants, including those in an irregular situation, have fundamental rights, in particular human and labor rights. Wherever they are, these rights are to be protected and defended.<sup>[26]</sup> Many migrants are in an irregular situation, but before focusing on this, the irregularities committed against them need to be tackled and the system which generates or condones irregular migration when it is convenient should be reformed.<sup>[27]</sup>

2. The Churches in **Australia, New Zealand and the United States** are fairly well organized in the care for migrants. They work for the defense of migrants' rights, provide legal services, resettle refugees, at times advocate on immigration issues and formally express positions on migration-related questions. Local communities and Church structures for the pastoral care of migrants give social and religious care and support both to new arrivals and settled migrant groups.<sup>[28]</sup>

3. Churches in **Asia**<sup>[29]</sup> have increased their awareness and capacity to respond to the migrants' needs and defend their rights, particularly in these last two decades when migration became more significant. However, receiving Churches are still inadequately equipped to effectively respond to these needs. In the majority of cases, those missionaries who were

already present in the country and familiar with the language and culture of the migrants, diverted the focus of their apostolate to this new issue. In some cases, Churches explicitly invited missionaries to come and help in this task. Various Episcopal Conferences or dioceses set up commissions for the pastoral care of migrants.

4. The Church in the **Philippines**,[\[30\]](#) country of origin of the second highest number of emigrants in Asia, has dedicated considerable effort in sensitizing and speaking out in defense of migrants. She recognizes their evangelical potential and intends to prepare them to be bearers of Gospel values and truths in their host countries.[\[31\]](#) The chaplains of Filipinos abroad are numerous and there are specific initiatives geared to improve their action and coordination.

5. **African Churches**[\[32\]](#) are mostly found in poor countries and this is reflected in the Church structures for the pastoral care of immigrants in the country. These are either poorly-developed or simply non-existent. Where they exist, their role is not well-defined due to financial restrictions and lack of personnel. Resources are usually poured into the emergency needs of refugees. As a result, funds for pastoral programs in the field of migration are scarce. The scarcity of priests in the local Church makes it difficult to send priests to follow migrants abroad or in refugee camps.

Given the lack of specific structures for them, migrants are expected to form part of small Christian communities where they receive the necessary social and spiritual support. This, however, becomes particularly difficult when migrants speak a different language from the local population, and even more so when they are of a different religion.

6. In **Latin America**,[\[33\]](#) the Church is a strong defender of human rights, especially of migrants who are receivers of her preferential love. Lay people, deacons, religious men and women, priests and bishops are doing much to assist migrants. Church structures have more or less been developed, but operations are strongly put to test by financial restrictions. Many Episcopal Conferences have given this pastoral care priority in their programs, however, others have not yet perceived this challenge. National Directors for migration and missionaries for migrants feel the need for greater support from their Episcopal Commissions or Bishops Conferences and Diocesan Bishops.

7. In **Europe**,[\[34\]](#) the Church has long been aware of the challenges that migration offers. She also realizes that migration is not a phenomenon of the past and therefore needs to be given particular consideration by the individual bishops, the Episcopal conferences, the parishes and the missions. Migrants in irregular situations usually put their trust only in the Church. The parishes, and especially missions for migrants, are the points of reference and places of welcome for these people. The Church does charitable and pastoral work, but is also called to stimulate political action and the defense of human rights in the field of migration.

Local Churches and National Directors for the Pastoral Care of Migrants in European countries are aware that they have a leading role to play in all this. The Council of European Bishops Conferences and each individual Episcopal Conference try to keep an eye on all developments through an annual meeting of National Directors, and every three years, a meeting of Bishops responsible for migration issues.

8. An important pastoral concern shared by all Catholic emigrants is the religious education of their children, born or raised in a country whose culture and, in some cases,

religion are different from those of their parents. The role of the grandparents, who are the first medium of transmission of the Christian faith and values in the absence of working parents, have proved to be very important. The role of the chaplain for migrants is also quite significant for school-age children and adolescents.[35]

## V. Organization of the Pastoral care of Migrants

In recent messages, the Holy Father has repeatedly dwelt on the human and social realities of migration and on the fundamental human rights that must be respected. To understand these words properly, it is necessary to point out that while the Church “does not neglect the whole human person, she knows well that the true man is one called to conform himself to the mystery of Christ ... A pastoral care, therefore, that wishes to remain in these purely human and sociological perspectives, though they may be valid, would make them lose their full meaning and, above all, it would make the Church lose the characteristic of her presence in the field of migration.”[36]

### 1. Existing Church structures

The Church is convinced that migrants should be given adequate pastoral care that is not less than that enjoyed by other faithful. To ensure this, institutions and structures proper to this specific pastoral care were established.[37] Although the Bishop of the Church of origin is called to make priests available to accompany migrants into their country of destination, it is the Bishop of the Church of arrival who has the real responsibility of the pastoral care of migrants in his diocese. He is called to welcome the migrants with Christian hospitality, provide them with priests who speak their language[38] and institute for them adequate pastoral structures. For this purpose, he may institute diocesan offices for the pastoral care of migrants. This may be entrusted to an *episcopal vicar* who takes care of this particular pastoral sector in the name of the Bishop and in communion with him.

However, since the pastoral care of migrants necessarily has an extra-territorial dimension and is linked with other dioceses, it needs an ultra-diocesan organization. Bishops need to study, stipulate agreements, seek advice. For this purpose, it is necessary to constitute an *episcopal commission* in those countries where the migration phenomenon is significant, whether as areas of departure or arrival. This commission follows and studies the pastoral care of migrants at the national level. It is to be provided with a *permanent secretary or a director* whose task is to monitor the phenomenon and problems of human mobility at the national level.

### 2. Task of the territorial parish

Special structures for the pastoral care of migrants may be present in the diocese, but “the spiritual care of all the faithful, *and thus of the immigrant people*[39] falls ... especially on the shoulders of the pastors of the parishes within which they live. These shall one day give an account to God regarding the fulfillment of their duty. Let them bear this heavy burden in association and union with the chaplain or missionary if there is one present.”[40]The Holy Father[41] affirms that the parish is called to welcome everyone and not to discriminate against anyone, because there no one is a stranger. Where the sense of the parish is alive, differences between natives and foreigners grow weak or disappear. There, listening to the same Word of God, celebrating the same liturgy, sharing the same religious festivities and traditions help local Christians and immigrants feel that they all belong to one

and the same people. The territorial parish is therefore called to give pastoral care to the migrants living in its territory. In fact, the chaplain for migrants does not exercise an exclusive competence but one that is cumulative with that of the territorial parish priest.<sup>[42]</sup> It is important to keep in mind that the pastoral care for migrants is called to be open to their new world and to lead them to a full participation in the life of the diocese.<sup>[43]</sup>

### *3. Responsibility of the whole People of God*

In virtue of baptism, every Christian is called to share in the mission of the Church.<sup>[44]</sup> The modern world of human mobility offers “opportunities to exercise to the full the privileges, even before the duties, connected with the Christian vocation”. The whole people of God is needed to cater to the needs of this phenomenon even if it does require specialists and specialized services.<sup>[45]</sup> With the existing scarcity of priests in general, and those assigned to the task of accompanying migrants in particular, it is necessary to encourage lay people, including migrants themselves, and unordained religious men and women to exercise their mission anchored in the priestly, royal and prophetic dignity of all the members of the People of God.<sup>[46]</sup> It is not a role of substitution or contingency. They are “in the front line of the Church’s battle to spread the message of salvation.” Their work, both individually and in organized apostolate, is necessary both within the Church and in relation to the outside world.<sup>[47]</sup>

## **VI. The Need for a global strategy**

Migration today exists in a globalized world. Thus, each Church or region can no longer devise its own strategies in facing the challenges of the phenomenon without taking into consideration all other Churches and continents. There is a need to establish a common and global perspective in reading and addressing the global migration phenomenon.<sup>[48]</sup> What has been done so far?

### *1. Cooperation between Churches of origin and receiving Churches*

In the Asia-Pacific region, there is a factual cooperation among the Churches, best expressed by sending missionaries among migrants. This is usually solicited by the receiving Churches facing mission needs which they are not sufficiently equipped to cope with. However, it is also encouraged by the Churches of origin, especially when awareness of migrants’ plight abroad and concern for them increase.<sup>[49]</sup> In Africa, there is practically no collaboration between the migrant’s Church of origin and the local Church due to lack of priests and institutionalized structures. To make up for this, Bishop Promoters for migration regularly visit their country’s emigrants in their host countries.<sup>[50]</sup> The receiving Churches of Asian and African migrants include Churches in North America and Europe. In America, various forms of collaboration are present. There are bilateral commissions representing Churches of origin and receiving Churches. Meetings between bishops, whose dioceses are found on either side of the frontier, are held.

### *2. Regional cooperation*

The existence of regional commissions for migration, like the Office for Human Development in Asia, the Comece in Europe and SEPMOV in Latin America, are attempts to ensure cooperation among the Churches in the region. There is still much room for improvement and development in this venture.

### *3. Cooperation with the Pontifical Council*

It is not easy to monitor, encourage, animate and coordinate the pastoral care of migrants throughout the world. The Pontifical Council for Migrants is doing its best to carry out its task effectively. The periodic organization of meetings and Congresses at a worldwide level is an excellent instrument towards a global vision of the migration phenomenon and the adequate responses needed. Dialogue between the Pontifical Council and the National Directors for Migration is cordial and greatly appreciated.

### *4. Cooperation with international organizations*

There is ongoing collaboration with other international institutions and Catholic organizations (ICOs) including Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved in migration and refugee programs, such as the International Catholic Migration Commission, Caritas, the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration. Concrete forms of cooperation may be providing assistance for repatriation, handling the cases of detained migrants, and so on.

### *5. Cooperation among Churches and religions*

The new face of migration taking place in Asia, with the increasing presence of non-Christian migrants, has extended the concept of cooperation among Churches beyond the limits of Christianity. While cooperation with other Christian Churches is sometimes impossible or irrelevant, cooperation with non-Christian religious leaders, as initiated in Thailand and Taiwan, is at times the only way to benefit migrants.[\[51\]](#)

## **VII. What next [\[52\]](#)**

Before such a huge and multi-faceted phenomenon, a feeling of inadequacy is the most immediate and logical reaction. Any and all responses appear inadequate in facing the challenges that migration places before the Church and society. However, Christ's reassurance that He has conquered the world is a light of hope and an encouragement to proceed in determining future programs.

1. The rapid transformation that the migration phenomenon is undergoing in the modern world has rendered instituted responses insufficient. The structures proposed in the document *De Pastoralis Migratorum Cura*, which were coined in a context that has almost completely changed, have become quite inadequate. An updating of the document is necessary if it is intended to be an effective tool in catering to the needs of migrants today.

2. An urgent cause for concern is the widespread phenomenon of irregular migration, the worst form of which is trafficking of human beings for illicit and even criminal purposes. Nobody can remain indifferent before such a serious matter. Much less can the Church be absent from the debate and the struggle to come to a solution. The National Directors recommended that the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People organize a special meeting or Congress on the specific issue of irregular migration and human trafficking, particularly of women and children.

3. Special attention needs to be given to second and succeeding generation migrants, born and brought up in the host country. The whole process of educating migrants' children

in the Catholic faith takes place from the time of their birth through kindergarten and throughout all their schooling years. This must be done with the maximum respect for the values and traditions of their parents and, at the same time, give them the possibility of integrating into the host society. Hopefully, they will freely and responsibly choose to assume the positive aspects of both cultures. The family, the school, groups and associations, the local Christian community must each be aware of the importance of their role in this process.

4. Family separation caused by migration has serious implications. This has increasingly resulted in family break-ups and troubled children. It is necessary to facilitate the reunion of families. In this regard, an appeal is voiced out for states to ratify the international convention on the “Protection of the Rights of All Migrants Workers of their Families”.

5. The world of migration has a great potential for evangelization. Rome was evangelized by migrants from Jerusalem. This potential must be tapped by sensitizing migrants and preparing them for an evangelizing mission, first of all through witness and also by explicit proclamation where the opportunity arises. Welcoming migrants can also be an important expression of evangelization, especially when the host community is Christian and the immigrant comes from a non Christian or a non religious culture. Migrants are privileged recipients of evangelization, as the new poor to whom the Gospel is proclaimed. Clergy and lay pastoral agents and the receiving Christian community have to be prepared and sensitized in this regard.

#### *Formation*

6. In any diocese, the pastoral care of migrants is entrusted to the local Bishop, although he may appoint his vicar for this specific responsibility. In the parish, this falls on the parish priest, of course with the support of the whole Christian community. An immigrant community may be assisted by a chaplain, who preferably comes from the migrants’ country of origin and knows their language and culture. The involvement of practically all the clergy in the pastoral care of migrants, although in varying forms and degrees, require that all priests be given at least a basic formation in the pastoral ministry to migrants. This is necessary to inform, sensitize and prepare them for any form of ministry in this field.

7. With the rapid decline in the number of priests and religious, the lay people, including migrants themselves, are the key to the future of the ministry in the field of migration. To be efficacious, however, they have to be adequately trained for the apostolate. This includes formation on the tenets of their faith, the teachings of the Church on migration and the social doctrine of the Church, as well as knowledge of the actual migration situation, civil laws and regulations, existing migrant-related organizations, and so forth.

8. Episcopal Promoters, Presidents of Episcopal Commissions and National Directors for the Pastoral Care of Migration have specific duties and responsibilities spelled out in the “De Pastoralis Migratorum Cura”. They are therefore urged to consult the Instruction as soon as they are named to the office. They are also encouraged to study other universal and local Church documents on migration and obtain information regarding the actual migration situation and the various programs carried out to meet its challenges under various aspects.

9. Training courses for National Directors and religious and lay pastoral agents could be offered at the national, regional and international levels. This may be attended by Presidents of Episcopal Commissions, Episcopal Promoters for Migration or any Bishop who wishes to

do so. Specifically, the National Directors for Migration invite the Pontifical Council for the pastoral care of migrants to institute a periodical training course for newly appointed National Directors and pastoral agents.

10. Regular information on existing courses related to the pastoral care of migration offered by religious Congregations, Universities and NGOs could be collected and circulated in all Seminaries and Schools of Theology. It could also be communicated to the National Directors and Commissions on migration for the benefit of all pastoral agents who wish to attend these courses.

## **Funding**

11. Commissions for the pastoral care of migration and pastoral programs cannot forever rely on the creativity of National Directors and pastoral agents who run offices or carry out projects without or with very limited funds. Though confident in the intervention of Divine Providence, they urge the relevant episcopal authority to include this specific ministry in fund allocations for the various pastoral programs in the diocese or country.

12. The celebration of Migrants' Day is an important instrument in creating awareness of the migration issue. It would be proper to set aside the Mass collections on that day for projects related to the pastoral care of migration, particularly those of the Episcopal Commissions for Migration.

13. In all regions, there are richer countries and poorer countries, and as a result, there are richer Churches and poorer Churches. A more effective cooperation, like sharing resources or information on available funding and how to get access to them, would certainly benefit pastoral programs in the field of migration.

14. The Pontifical Council is invited to act as a bridge between Episcopal Commissions for Migrants and funding agencies like Caritas, Misereor, ICMC, and so on.

## **Regional Centers**

15. The National Directors recommended the creation of Regional Migration Centers or Forums that would monitor and study the migration phenomenon in the region from political, religious and social points of view. These could act as a resource center in the region.

## **Networking**

16. There is a need to increase collaboration between Churches, in and among the different regions. The meetings of National Directors for migration, organized by the Pontifical Council for Migrants at the regional and worldwide levels, proved to be good forums for dialogue and participation. The National Directors unanimously endorsed the convocation of these meetings periodically.

17. Networking with the offices of the United Nations and NGOs, especially those of Christian inspiration, needs to be promoted. However, this should not hinder the pastoral action of the Church.

18. Care must be taken to harmonize the program of the Pontifical Council for Migrants with the projects of the Regional Episcopal Commissions and Catholic international organs or associations operating in the field of migration to avoid duplication of initiatives or a conflict in schedules.

19. Cooperation with organs of other Churches and leaders of other religions could be tapped for the defense of the human rights and the social wellbeing of migrants.

## Conclusion<sup>[53]</sup>

At the beginning of the third millennium, it is beyond doubt that there is still a long way to go in the world of migration. However, all men of good will are called to face courageously such a challenging situation which calls for joint efforts among all forces. In particular, Christians are called to rely on the help of Christ, as Pope John Paul II recommended, and not to falter but quicken their steps along the highways of this world. As the Holy Door closes behind the new millennium, everyone is urged to let the Jubilee enthusiasm live on and, strengthened by the Jubilee Year pilgrimage, bravely face the task that lies ahead. May Mary, radiant dawn to whom the Holy Father has entrusted the third millennium, be the sure guide of migrants and all those who walk with them towards the new heavens and the new earth.

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## Notes:

[1] The first meeting in the series was held for the Region of Asia and the Pacific (henceforth Asia-Pacific Meeting) in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, from September 22 to 24, 1999. It was attended by 14 National Directors or Bishop Promoters from 13 countries. The second meeting gathered together representatives of the countries in the African continent (henceforth African meeting) in Cape Town, South Africa from March 7 to 9, 2000 (13 delegates from 10 countries were present. Unfortunately many could not come for financial reasons. The European regional meeting (henceforth European Meeting) took place in Strasbourg, France from September 13 to 15, 2000. It was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Migration Commission (Comece) of the Council of Bishops Conferences in Europe (CCEE). The regional meeting for the Americas (henceforth American meeting) took place in Mexico City on September 17 to 20, 2000. This was joint meeting with the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC). Of the 30 participants, 13 were National Directors representing 13 American countries. The concluding World Meeting (henceforth World Meeting) took place in Rome, Italy on October 10-12, 2000. It was attended by 53 delegates representing 46 countries or regions. The Final or Summary Statements of these meetings will be published in a forthcoming issue of *On the Move*.

[2] cf. *Migration at the Threshold of the Third Millennium, Proceedings of the IV World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees*. Vatican, 1998.

[3] *Pastor Bonus*, art. 149, states: "The Pontifical Council (for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People) applies the pastoral solicitude of the Church to the particular needs of those who have been forced to abandon their homeland.... Consequently, the Council closely follows all questions pertaining to this matter."

[4] During the audience accorded to the Congress participants, Pope John Paul II said: "I trust that the analyses carried out, the decisions taken and the resolutions made in the course of the Congress, would be a valid stimulus for those who, in the Church and in society, share the solicitude for migrants and refugees."

[5] Congregation for Bishops, Vatican City, August 22, 1969

[6] Loreto De Paolis, cs, "Promozione della pastorale migratoria," Paper presented at the European Meeting and the American Meeting.

[7] See *Exsul Familia; Christus Dominus*, no. 18; *Pastoralis Migratorum Cura; De Pastoralis Migratorum Cura*.

[8] Giovanni Cheli (Archbishop), "La posta in gioco della pastorale specifica per i migranti," in *On the Move*, no. 75, December 1997, pp.5-11.

[9] Stephen Fumio Hamao (Archbishop), "Saludo," Mexico Meeting.

[10] "Newness of life in Christ is the 'good news' for men and women of every age: All are called to it and destined for it. Indeed, all people are searching for it, albeit at times in a confused way, and have a right to know the value of this gift and to approach it freely. The Church, and every individual Christian within her, may not keep hidden or monopolize this newness and richness which has been received from God's bounty in order to be communicated to all mankind" (*Redemptoris Missio* - henceforth RM - no. 11).

[11] RM 34.

[12] cf. RM 42.

[13] The observations given in this paper are based on the reports of the participants in the regional meetings. In some regions, several countries were not represented. This resulted in an incomplete picture of the migration phenomenon and the Churches' response in those areas. This is especially true for Africa.

[14] cf. Final Statement, Asia-Pacific Meeting.

[15] cf. *ibid*.

[16] cf. Final Statement, African Meeting.

[17] cf. Country Reports, American Meeting.

[18] cf. Mexico and US Country Reports, American Meeting.

[19] cf. Country Reports, American Meeting.

[20] cf. US Country Report, American Meeting.

- [21] For more details, see Susan F. Martin, “Smuggling and Trafficking in Humans: a Human Rights Issue” and Jorge A. Bustamante, “International Migrants as Subjects of Human Rights,” Papers presented at the American Meeting.
- [22] cf. Country Reports and Summary Statement, American Meeting.
- [23] cf. Final Statement, Asia Pacific Meeting.
- [24] cf. Synthesis of Country Reports, European Meeting.
- [25] cf. Notes, World Meeting.
- [26] cf. Final Statements, Asia-Pacific Meeting, European Meeting, American Meeting.
- [27] cf. Final statement, Asia-Pacific Meeting.
- [28] cf. Final Statement, Asia-Pacific Meeting and US Country Report, American Meeting.
- [29] cf. Final Statement, Asia-Pacific Meeting.
- [30] *ibid.*
- [31] cf. Ramon Arguelles (Bishop), “The responsibility of a Diocesan Bishop in the Pastoral care of Migrants,” Paper presented at the World Meeting.
- [32] cf. Final Statement, African Meeting.
- [33] cf. Summary Statement, American Meeting
- [34] cf. Synthesis of Country Reports and Recommendations, European Meeting.
- [35] cf. Group D Report, World Meeting.
- [36] Velasio De Paolis, cs, “La Pastorale dei Migranti e le sue Strutture secondo i Documenti della Chiesa,” Paper presented at the World Meeting, VI.1., p. 29.
- [37] *ibid.*, IV.:loc.cit., p.14. See also Ramon Arguelles (Bishop), *op. cit.*; Abraham Okoko, sj, “Le Role du Directeur National de la Pastorale des Migrants: Le cas du Congo-Brazzaville ” ; Bruno Mioli, cs, “Il Compito del Direttore Diocesano della Pastorale Migratoria nella Chiesa Italiana” and Ildo Griz, cs, “Il Misionero para los Migrantes: Testimonio de un Sacerdote Latinoamericano,” Papers presented at the World Meeting.
- [38] defined by DPMC as *chaplains or missionaries for immigrants*.
- [39] italics mine.
- [40] DPMC 30,3.
- [41] cf. Message for Migrants’ Day 1999.
- [42] cf. DPMC 39.3.
- [43] cf. Velasio De Paolis, *op. cit.*, II.6.2.
- [44] cf. *Lumen Gentium* (henceforth LG), no. 31.
- [45] cf. *Church and People on the Move* (henceforth CPM), 29.a.
- [46] cf. LG 31-38.
- [47] cf. CPM 30.
- [48] Notes, World Meeting, point d.
- [49] Final Statement, Asia-Pacific Meeting, 8.
- [50] Final Statement, African meeting, 2.
- [51] Final Statement, Asia-Pacific Meeting, 8.
- [52] The recommendations formulated in this section are taken from the group reports, discussions and final statements of the Regional and World Meetings of National Directors for the Pastoral Care of Migration.
- [53] cf. *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nos. 58-59

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[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/migrants/pom99-00\\_81\\_84/rc\\_pc\\_migrants\\_pom84\\_castro.htm](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/pom99-00_81_84/rc_pc_migrants_pom84_castro.htm)