

Sisters and Brothers to be Welcomed, Protected, and Included

The Church has a bigger view of the world than any one country. We do not view asylum seekers and refugees primarily through the lens of legal status. We see asylum seekers, refugees and migrants as our sisters and brothers, members of one human family. Our starting point is not defending borders, but rather defending the dignity of the human person from conception to natural death.

Official Church documents like [*Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*](#) (on the Love of Christ Towards Migrants) offer a scriptural reading of the meaning of human mobility. They encourage us to see in people on the move the face of Jesus, who was born away from home, had to flee to Egypt, and spent his public life moving from town to town. Even after the resurrection, on the road to Emmaus, he was a foreigner and unknown (EMCC n 12, 15). We are reminded of the role of migration and deportation in the story of the chosen people. Reflecting on scripture we can see that human mobility is part of our journey towards “the birth of a people without discrimination or frontiers” (EMCC n 13). We are reminded that the church itself was born from the experience of Pentecost, signaling that there is no room for distinctions – the presence of people from many countries is a sign and a reminder of the universality of the church.

Pope Francis frequently reminds us that migrants and refugees are not a problem to be solved or a burden to be shared equitably among countries, but sisters and brothers to be welcomed, respected, and loved. Their presence is not an imposition but presents us with the opportunity to contribute with them to building a better world.

In his [*Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2022*](#) Pope Francis links human mobility and the building of the Kingdom of God, saying that “the ultimate meaning of our ‘journey’ in this world is the search for our true homeland, the Kingdom of God inaugurated by Jesus Christ, which will find its full realization when he comes in glory”. He goes on to explain that God’s plan “gives priority to those living on the existential peripheries” including “migrants and refugees, displaced persons, and victims of trafficking” and that “the Kingdom of God is to be built with them, for without them it would not be the Kingdom that God wants.”

Migration is part of humanity’s journey, seeking to live ever more truly as one human family on our way to our true home.