THINKING MIGRATION

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EDITORS
Fr Maurizio Pettenà
National Director

George Nulley-Valdés
Policy Officer

GPO Box 2720
Canberra ACT 2601
Tel: 02 6201 9848
info@acmro.catholic.org.au
www.acmro.catholic.org.au

COVER PAGE
Louis Barcelona

Cover designed by:
Louis Barcelona
Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office

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FOREWORD

Fr Maurizio Pettena

National Director

Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office

16 July 2018

Memory of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Welcome to Volume 3 of Thinking Migration. This publication comes under a new dress: for the first time, in fact, this is on-line. In doing so, we hope to reach out to a larger number of people and to make available the long and rich tradition of the teaching of the Catholic Church, in terms of theological reflection, policies, practices, and pastoral care to migrants and refugees, in a way possible only through cyber space.

This issue of Thinking Migration comes into existence in the week the Catholic Church in Australia marks the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees. In His message for the occasion, Pope Francis says that:

"Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age". (Matthew 25:35-43).

The Holy Father qualifies this *encounter* with for action verbs: *"Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees".* The global political debate demonstrates, once again, that migration is looked upon not as an opportunity for an encounter, but rather, from the point of view of interest. Everyone seems to have some interest in migration: States, politicians, employers, migration agents and lawyers; perhaps it is less considered from the point of view of migrants and refugees.

The Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church, which serves as foundation to the magisterial, diplomatic, and pastoral activity of the Holy Father and the Holy See, has contributed greatly to the social debate and to the international legal

instruments that have resulted in the recognition of the right to ask for asylum and seek refuge. In the action of welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees, the Church expands her horizon as far as it is needed to comprise those men and women persecuted for religious or political reasons, environmental refugees, and the victims of human trafficking.

The present publication, through its contributors, attempts to explore exactly this: peoples' needs and how the global community and the local communities respond to them. Whose responsibily are they? What are our responsibilities? What is possible?

The table of contents highlight the three main parts of this publication.

The first part presents the proceedings of the Fifth National Conference on the Pastoral Care in a Multicultural and Church and Society (19-20 July 2017) and comprises seventeen interventions by various authors. I wish to mention the two keynote speakers: H.E. Cardinal Peter K. Turkson, Prefect of the Pontifical Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development and of H.E. Cardinal Orlando Quevedo, Archbishop of Cotabato, Philippines.

The second part collects the speeches of the Seventh Annual Bishop Joseph Grech Memorial Colloquium on Ethics and Migration, dedicated to the memory of the late Bishop Joseph Grech. These speeches focus on the theme of Migration and Freedom of Religion from the perspective of the church in Australia and from the observation of the Universal Church.

The third part comprises the Media Statement of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office addressing issues extending from offshore detention to the call to protect the human dignity of people seeking asylum in our region; from the reality of human trafficking to the plight of persecuted people, to the responsibility to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate migrants. These statements represent an eloquent testimony to the voice of the local Bishops of Australia and to their listening to "the voice of those who cry out". (Ex 3,7)

The attention to the people on the move cannot be the fruit of mere human sensitivity of cultural affinity. It cannot result simply in statistics and number; in

strategies and policies. It is necessary that these contributions land on the desks and heart of those called to make decisions to guide them towards journeys of authentic welcoming, protecting, promoting, and integrating migrants, refugees.

The Church is not there to take the place of the political institution or to supply to the responsibilities of those called to govern. Though these represent different depth of responsibility and of intervention, both – it is hoped – are geared towards the common good. No one and nothing should ever stop the Church from announcing the Gospel.

Whatever we say and whatever we do we stand before the judgment of history, more so we stand before the judgment of God for this, we are watched and for this we will be judged!

*****

PRESENTATIONS DELIVERED AT THE FIFTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PASTORAL CARE IN A MULTICULTURAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY,
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

19 – 20 JULY 2017

Pastoral Models for the Care of Migrants and Refugees in our Community

His Eminence Cardinal Quevedo

Archbishop of Cotabato, Philippines

Pre-Note

Last evening's presentation by Isaiah Lahai about his refugee experience as he and his family fled from the civil war in Sierra Leone was both heart-breaking and inspiring. The response to the plight of refugees by the Australian Bishops Commission on Migration was for me impressive, edifying, and effective. Undoubtedly, it is a Pastoral Model for the Care of Refugees.

Introduction

For this presentation on Pastoral Models for the Care of Migrants and Refugees, I would like to use a process of reflection which the Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences (FABC) uses. It is called the Pastoral Spiral (Cycle) and is another version of the "See-Judge-Act" process. This is the Pastoral Spiral:

Situation Analysis → Faith-Reflection → Pastoral Recommendations or Decisions → Planning and Implementation → Evaluation

However, this presentation will end with pastoral recommendations. I shall treat mostly of "Overseas Filipino Workers" (OFW).

The Situation of Migrants

OFW Phenomenon

About 5,000 Filipinos leave the Philippines every day to migrate overseas, either permanently or as temporary migrants. In 2016 there were 2.2 million

OFWs scattered over the globe. More than half (53%) are in the Middle East, of whom 60,000 are women and 53,300 are men. Saudi Arabia has the most number of OFWs numbering 23,800. The Philippines is the world's main supplier of seafarers, with 460,000 in 2013. Some 280,000 graduate every year from maritime schools. They serve as officers, engineers, chefs, servers, or waiters. About 19,815 nurses were deployed abroad in 2014. Health workers also include midwives, nurse's aides, and other hospital workers. Most OFWs are workers under contract or 'contract workers'. They work for a certain number of years as per contract, return home and re-apply for work abroad. About 34.4% are skilled workers: administrators, supervisors, engineers, workers in the health profession, teachers, etc. The remaining are in unskilled work such as domestic helpers.

Lights

In 2016, the 2.2 million OFWs sent cash remittances to the Philippines amounting to US $26.9 billion or 9.8 % of Gross Domestic Products. For this reason, they are regarded as "heroes." The economic benefits for their families are far beyond local workers. OFWs provide funds for the education of members of their families, for better homes, better health coverage. In one village in my former Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia almost every family has a member working in Italy. The village itself looks like a European village, with many houses built to withstand snowfall!

Shadows

But the situation of dysfunctional families because of prolonged work abroad, despite economic advantages, has to be confronted. The growth and development of children is seriously disadvantaged by the absence of a mother or a father. Broken families often result. Moreover, because of the prolonged absence of a husband or a wife, 'double families result as loneliness occurs. The fact that so many skilled workers go abroad is itself a brain drain, particularly in the health services. Rural areas in the Philippines need the services of nurses and trained midwives. Observers of the plight of OFWs in several countries in Asia and the Middle East have documented the woeful plight of migrant workers in several countries in Asia and the Middle East. This sad plight consists of:

- Long hours of work;

- Less than human living conditions;
- Poor working conditions;
- Withholding passports so as to prevent OFWs from leaving;
- sexual abuse;
- physical maltreatment that sometimes results in severe injuries and even death;
- conversions to another faith for better economic compensation;
- salaries that are much lower than the contracts stipulate;
- salaries that are lower than that of citizens for the same job;
- collusion between recruiting agencies and places of employment in not implementing salaries promised or contracted;
- discrimination; and
- lack of respect for culture.

One thousand four hundred and fifty (1,450) OFWs are in prison in Middle East countries with five hundred and twenty-eight (528) in China mostly for drug trafficking, and one thousand two hundred and twelve (1,212) in other Asian countries for the same reason. The situation of OFWs is sometimes made worse by the lack of concern of government officials whose responsibility it is to be alert regarding abuses against OFWs and to provide protection for those threatened, abused, maltreated, or terminated from work at the whim of employers. On the other hand, among receiving countries, there is a certain fear about refugees, a sense of insecurity and a tendency, if not a reality, to reject migrants. Some reasons are the fear that terrorists might enter in the guise of migrant workers and the fear that migrant workers might take away jobs from citizens. Racial profiling and discrimination result from such xenophobia.

Faith-Reflection on the Situation of OFWs

The Social Teachings of the Church are the fruit of a dynamic interplay between changing realities, Sacred Scripture, and the perennial doctrinal and moral teachings of the Church. They are principles of discernment, norms of judgement and directives for action. Scriptures are clear about the treatment of "strangers" in other lands. Ex. 23:9, "You shall not oppress an alien; you well know

how it feels to be an alien, since you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt." Lev. 19:33-34, "When an alien resides with you in your land, do not molest him. You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt." Mt. 25: 35, "for…I was a stranger and you welcomed me." In the light of Sacred Scriptures and of the reality in which migrant workers live, the Social Teachings of the Church declare:

- That immigrant workers are a "resource to development and not an obstacle," especially when the local work force is not sufficient;[1]
- That institutions in host countries must carefully watch against exploitation of foreign workers; and
- That they should be received as persons, their human dignity and rights guaranteed.[2]

To prevent the negative side of the OFW situation, the following principles in the Social Teachings of the Church are governing principles:

- The dignity and fundamental rights of the human person;
- The right to life;
- The right to work abroad and earn a livelihood;
- The right to decent living and working conditions and compensation;
- Freedom of religion and worship;
- Freedom from abuse and oppression;
- The principle of solidarity; and
- The common good.

[1] Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 297
[2] Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 297

C. Pastoral Recommendation – a Pastoral Model

Observable good practices for the care of OFWs by the government are:

- Establishment of welfare programs for migrant workers and their families;
- Worker preparation and empowerment through information programs and training before they depart;
- Pre-Departure Orientation Seminars (PDOS);
- Supplemented by Pre-Employment Orientation Seminars (PEOS);
- In some destination countries, Post-Arrival Orientation Seminars (PAOS);
- Comprehensive Pre-Departure Program for Household Service Workers;
- Providing standard employment contracts; and
- Forging bilateral agreements with destination countries

On the part of the Church

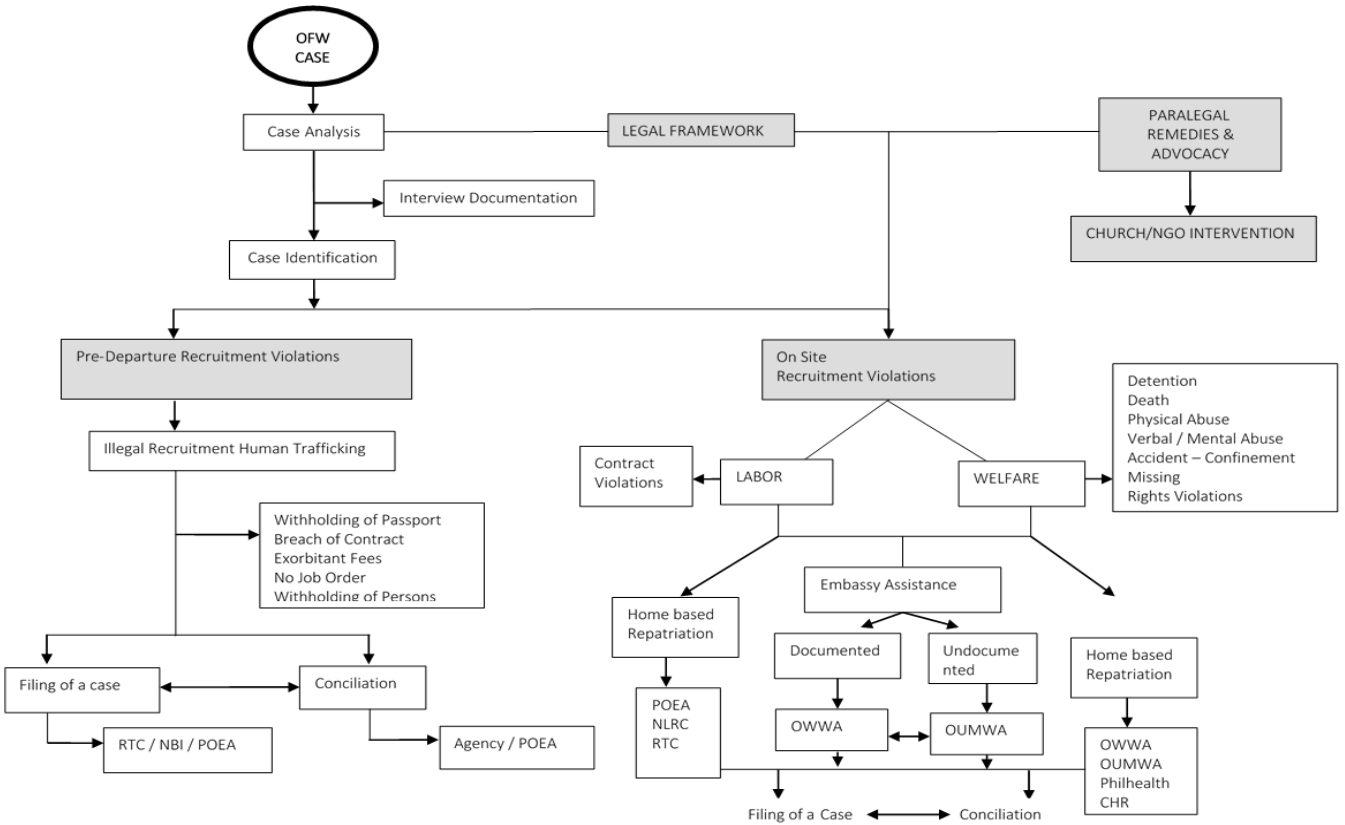
Between five hundred (500) and seven hundred (700) chaplains from dioceses and religious congregations provide part-time and full-time chaplaincy services for OFWs (some under contract with the receiving countries as in Jordan). Sixty (60) chaplains in Japan gather annually for on-going formation. Continued collaboration with migrant-oriented NGO's and forging transnational links of the Church with dioceses in receiving countries. Recommendations:

- Welcoming attitude by receiving dioceses;
- Special support for children of OFWs; and
- Collaboration with other stakeholders.

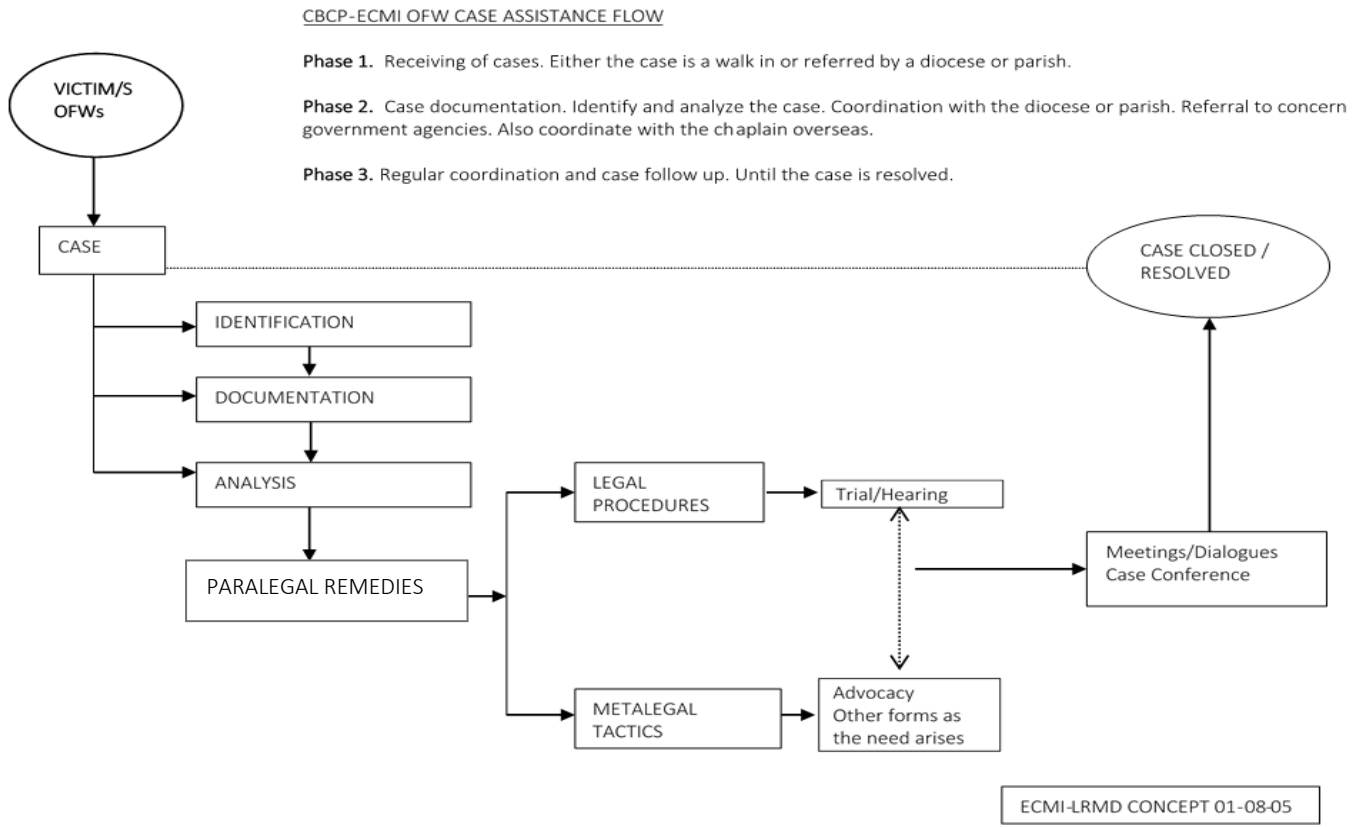
OFWs in crisis situations – a pastoral model

In the light of the OFW situation as reflected upon through the optic of Sacred Scriptures and the Social Teachings of the Church, the following can serve as a pastoral model for the care of OFWs in crisis situations. This model consists of the structural framework of the CBCP (Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines) Episcopal Commission for Migrants and Itinerant Workers in order to respond to the needs of OFWs in Crisis Situation. The Formation Program is directed to the on-going formation of Chaplains and others caring for migrants.

Framework of Collaboration in Crisis Situations.



ECMI OFW CASE FLOW CHART





EXODUS: CBCP-ECMI FORMATION PROGRAM FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS AND ITINERANT PEOPLE

Formation Program for Chaplains and others caring for Migrants

After almost four decades of Filipino labour export, the psycho-social costs that come with migration remain the most sensitive issue that confronts the overseas Filipinos and their families. Institutions, such as family, school and the church in the receiving country have varied perceptions and understandings of migration. Many Filipinos are not familiar with this complex reality, hence the intervention for their problems is given less importance.

In receiving countries of migrants, the local churches have responded to their needs to the best of their abilities. Initially, such response generally was to provide religious services in the language of migrants mostly through the missionaries already present in the Church. They then organized other forms of assistance for their various needs. Over time Churches have deepened the awareness that the care of migrants characterizes the way of being Church today. In his message for the 2001 World Day of Migration, His Holiness John Paul II

expressed it well by calling the pastoral care of migrants *"a way to accomplish the mission of the Church today."* In his message for the 2003 World Day of Migrants and refugees, the Holy Father reminded us that this mission is a *"basic expression of evangelical love,"* which has been manifested by the Church's *"ecclesial heritage of practical service to immigrants and displaced people."*

In various forums, laypersons, religious, and priests working with migrants and migrants' issues have expressed the need to know more about the various dimensions of the migratory phenomenon, the teaching of the Church on migration, and how to assess Church programs and personal experiences in the care of migrants. To respond to this request, the CBCP's Episcopal Commission on the Pastoral Care of Migrant and Itinerant People has been offering the *"Exodus: A formation seminar on migrant ministry"*. This program aims to facilitate dialogue among missionaries involved in the same activity in various countries, and in the process, provide an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the care of migrants and of 'being Church'. Resource persons are drawn from academia, the Church, and the NGO community to provide contextual information on the complexities of the phenomenon. However, the program is participatory. Therefore, participants are expected to share their experiences, which is an important basis for discussing programs and directions in the pastoral care of migrants.

Place and Time

In previous years the Exodus seminar was held for a week once a year in a suggested place in the Philippines. As some of the previous participants originated from overseas the same program was requested to be brought to Australia, Japan, Korea, and Malaysia. The program is normally timed according to the availability of the busy schedule of many migrant pastoral workers. Albeit in its abbreviated version now, the seminar will still continue to provide the very basic modules in understanding and appreciating migration and the ministry.

Contents and Scope

The program is divided into six important modules:

- Understanding international migration;
- Migration and the Bible;
- The Catholic teachings on migration;
- The response of the Philippine Church;
- The care for other migrants; and
- Networking and planning future programs on the care of migrants.

Liturgy

Each day a liturgy is organized on migration themes, using relevant passages in the Scripture, and prepared by the participants based on their experiences. Participants are divided into groups who then animate the daily prayers and liturgy.

Invitation to participate

The ECMI seeks participants who are actively engaged in the care of Filipino migrants overseas or to their families left behind in the Philippines who intend to deepen their commitment to their work. Lay leaders, religious missionaries and the clergy preparing to work with migrants are expected to benefit from this seminar. Participants from other continents involved with Filipino migrants are also welcome. Interested applicants must confirm their participation by submitting a completed registration form to the following address:

CBCP-ECMI
CBCP Bldg., 470 Gen. Luna Street, Intramuros, 1002 Manila
(632) 527-4142 & 527-4135
(632) 527 9568
ecmi.cbcp@gmail.com

Note: The following papers were useful in preparing my presentation:

1. Michael A. Blum, S.V.D., "Migration in the Social Doctrine of the Church," in People on the Move, nos. 88-89, April-December 2002, Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care for Migrants and Itinerant People.
2. Sandie Cornish, "Catholic Social Teaching on Refugees – What are the Basic Teachings?" (www.social-spirituality.net)/Catholic Social Teaching.
3. Graziano Battistella, "The Teaching of the Church in Asia," in Baggio F. and Pettenà M (eds) 2009, Caring for Migrants. Strathfield, NSW. St. Pauls Publications, pp. 1103-1108.
4. F. Baggio, "Filipino Inernational Migration: Pastoral Challenges and Responses," Paper presented at PACM, Cagayan de Oro, 3-4 February 2006.
5. U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Welcoming the Strangers Among Us: Unity in Diversity," Washington, D.C., 2000.
6. CBCP-ECMI papers on caring for migrants in crisis and on the *Exodus* Formation Program.

*****

Pastoral Care in a Multi-ethnic church, one size fits all? – Pastoral Care for a post-World War II Community in Australia: The Ukrainian Greek Catholics

Fr Brian Kelty

Ukrainian Eparchy

Background

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is both ethnically and ritually diverse. I mean by that that most members of the Church are of Slavic ethnic origins, although these days, due to marriage, many come from other ethnicities, myself included. Matters are complicated even more by the ritual difference of a Church which derives its liturgical life from the Byzantine Rite. Vatican II, in Lumen Gentium, referred to:

> *…different Churches set up in various places by the apostles and their successors joined together in a multiplicity of organically united groups which, whilst safeguarding the unity of faith and the unique divine structure of the universal Church, have their own discipline, enjoy their own liturgical usage, and inherit a theological and spiritual heritage.*

This provided a challenge for Ukrainian Catholics who came to Australia mainly as displaced persons from Germany in the wake of World War II. Initially they came with their own priests from Europe and later Canada. Some of these priests were married, as was the custom in Ukraine and other places. Fr Smol, the first married priest went through the immigration system of the time, was sent to Bonegilla and then eventually came to Melbourne where he worked as a labourer by night and each morning celebrated the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom in Slavonic in the Archbishop's personal chapel at St Patricks. Other bishops did not share Mannix's tolerance for married priests of the Eastern Churches; so, Fr

Smol was sent packing (to Florida as it turned out) and married clergy did not emerge again until after the Australian Bishops Conference overwhelmingly approved a motion presented by the then newly appointed Ukrainian Bishop Peter Stasiuk in 1996. The essence of the issue was that in Ukraine most priests in parish ministry are married. There simply is no pool of celibate priests available. In the light of this sliver of Church history, Ukrainian Catholics are shocked to learn today of plans in Europe to form one Byzantine Metropolia for all Eastern Catholics of the Byzantine Rite. Such a plan appears to fly in the face of pastoral care which takes ethnicity fully into account.

What worked?

Given that celibate priests were not readily available some religious orders such as the Redemptorists, the Dominicans and the Sacred Heart Fathers helped by providing priests from their communities. Churches and community halls for local communities were purchased or built. In this way provision was made for people of the same language to gather and share information; help on common or similar issues could then be more readily provided. Parish brotherhoods developed credit unions early on to help with housing loans and financial planning. In the 1950s priests identified with the problems of migrants because they themselves were often émigrés. Ethnically mixed marriages were often perceived as a problem at least by the clergy. It is no surprise that a principal topic discussed at clergy conferences was the problem of marrying out and how to prevent it. Most weddings are ethnically mixed even if between a Ukrainian Catholic and a Roman Catholic. There are exceptions, but they are becoming more unusual. Most of those in ethnically mixed marriages can't be fully at home in this situation, unless they effectively become Ukrainian Catholics who offer hospitality to a marriage partner from elsewhere. Parishes and leaders frequently ignore this issue. During the last 20 years at least, some things have changed. The marriage Liturgy known as Crowning is usually conducted in English. However, the local custom of the procession of bride and father accompanied by the bridal party has all but supplanted the custom of assembling the families of both couples at the entrance to the narthex where the betrothal takes place.

Challenges

Some would go so far as to say that a quasi-Ukrainian ghetto has been set up by a powerful in-group who maintain strong nationalist sympathies especially given the present crisis in Ukraine created by the Russian invasion of Crimea and further aggression on the borders. One effect of this approach is the aging of parishes. Nearly all of the first generation has gone. Youth seldom attend regular Church services. Sunday attendance is in severe decline. Very few return to attend regular Sunday worship after the baptism of an infant. This is mainly a family event with little connection to Sunday worship.

The success stories

Many problems were solved by forming a cohesive likeminded community of Ukrainians which maintains a strong federation. There are many successful professionals in medicine, nursing, and education (many chose to become doctors, nurses, and teachers for their profession); others have achieved success as academics in Australian universities; the world of business was successfully chosen by many. The first generation came from agricultural stock: their children were like them but were the first to form relationships outside the community (they are stuck in their own past: i.e. the 1960s). However, the following describes that reality:

Ethnic Schools	Ukrainian is often learnt as a 2nd language
	(English is first spoken language)
	The multi lingual reality is still working
Dance groups	These are a very popular, athletic outlet for youth
PLAST & CYM	These outdoor groups are not quite so successful as they once were. They are struggling to maintain a connection with the Church
	They struggle with identity and change

The Church	Came from diverse places, built parishes and became a community. Transition from village life to urban cosmopolitanism Village: cohesive, generational identity, walk to church, the village priest (usually married); the Church the soul of the village Belonging: face to face relationships Urban life: Church at a distance; neighbours; the priest is now a professional who services births, deaths and marriages; going to Church is a decision rather than an integral part of life.

Points on Ethnicity

1. The Founding Fathers came from Ukraine via Germany. They were political refugees and displaced persons, their children were mostly born in Australia, essentially non-attenders; separate existence;
2. Children born in Australia or who came as infants; 1st wave of Yugoslav migrants in the 70s; non-attenders;
3. 1991 Post Soviet Ukraine; immigration of homo sovieticus;
4. Late to mid-90s second immigration after dissolution of Yugoslavia;
5. Almost all immigrants in ethnically mixed marriages; and
6. Of 18 active priests 8 were born outside of Australia.

What have I learnt?

No group is sufficient to itself, especially not the westernised pagan culture that now dominates the public life of Australia. The tribe, the culture the languages of the group from which I came are precious to me for they gave me life. Family and church are the strongest generators of meaning available to me in this life.

*****

Pastoral Care in a Multi-ethnic church, one size fits all? – Reflection on Panel Sharing

His Eminence Cardinal Quevedo

Archbishop of Cotabato, Philippines

Two images struck me from the sharing of Ms. Mitra Khakbaz of Multicultural Development Australia (MDA) and of Fr. Brian Kelty of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The first image comes from the poem of the 13th century Persian writer, Sa'adi, as quoted by Mitra:

Human beings are members of a whole
In creation of an essence and soul.
If one member is afflictd with pain
Other members uneasy will remain
If you've no sympathy for human pain
The name of human you cannot retain.

Listening to the poem what immediately came to my mind is the mystery of the Mystical Body of Christ in St. Paul. We are all parts of the Body of Christ. Every member is important, even what seems to be the least. When one member suffers, the whole Body feels the pain. When one member achieves success, the whole Body rejoices. Migrants in Australia are marked by multi-culturalism, differences in race, in culture, in ways of life and traditions, in thinking, valuing, language and thought expressions. This is part-and-parcel of multi-ethnicity, of multi-culturalism. Yet they have objective communion on two levels. They all share in the same humanity and share the same home, our one and only mother earth. At a deeper level, the baptized have communion in the one Body of Christ.

Objective communion is not always a subjective reality. For it to be a fact, we need to move from multiculturality to interculturality. Multi-culturalism is the fact that migrants have varied cultures. But each cultural group can create a ghetto for itself, unrelated to the others except for peaceful co-existence. In

ghettoes, fears, insecurities, biases, and prejudices are not resolved. They remain possible triggers for violence and extremism. Mitra spoke of moving away from the "transactional" to "inter-relational." To my mind she was referring to the "intercultural" dimension where multi-cultures relate with one another, moving beyond themselves, building community, unity in diversity. Pastoral Care for migrants in such a setting aims at integration or assimilation, but not by way of a dominant mono-culture but by way of interculturality -- and the becoming of an inter-cultural community. It is in such a community where biases and prejudices recede into the inoperative margins of the mind. Respect for cultures, language, ways of worship -- mutual cultural enrichment takes place.

In his turn Fr. Bryan told the story of a Bishop visiting his flock in the Ukrainian Church in Phoenix, Arizona. He spoke to them as a "community of the desert." What a beautiful image this is! "Community of the desert." The term reminds me of the liberation of the Israelites from slavery and oppression in Egypt. Moses confronted Pharaoh and relayed to him God's message: "Let my people go that they may worship me in the desert" (Ex. 7:16). For the Israelites in the Exodus, the Sinai desert was both a wasteland of great suffering, of hunger and thirst, of rebellion and idolatry, and also an oasis of faith and of God's mercy on his people. In the desert God is present, God is encountered, God is experienced as compassion, providing bread from heaven, water from the rock, shelter from the heat, light in the darkness. In the desert the transformation of an oppressed people into God's own people took place. In the desert the Israelites became community, the "community of the desert." Indeed, there is strength in diversity. As at the Pentecost event where various tongues were spoken but everyone understood one another, so also today in the catholicity of many cultures and tongues, everyone can understand one another. But only through the common language of the heart which is love. Beyond ears, beyond words. Heart speaks to heart. "*Cor ad cor loquitur*."

I have spoken of several movements in the pastoral care of multi-ethnic groups: a movement towards interculturality, a movement towards community, towards a deeper experience of communion in the one Body of Christ. Pastoral care for multi-ethnic groups in the Church in Australia will require close and active pastoral accompaniment towards this vision of communion. I thank my colleagues on the panel, Mitra and Fr. Brian, for their sharings. They provided the main lines of thought. My task was simply to weave their thoughts together into a theological and pastoral tapestry. I hope I have been helpful.

Thank you and God bless.

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Integral Human Development in Our Parishes – Integral Human Development for a Just Settlement of Refugees

Fr Joe Caddy

Episcopal Vicar for Social Services,

Archdiocese of Melbourne

The Catholic Church in Australia has been consistent in advocating for the just treatment of asylum seekers and refugees in this country. In continuity with Pope Francis, our church has advocated for compassionate responses to those who seek asylum in a war-torn world where the human rights of too many are routinely violated.

The Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference has been highly critical, and rightly so, of the harsh and punitive treatment inflicted by our government on asylum seekers including children who in their desperation have landed on Australian shores without the required visas. So, while support for this threshold issue – that is the acceptance of migrants and refugees – has been well made and consistent I think there is need for further advocacy and service not just about acceptance of refugees but also for their integrated settlement. Unless settlement is given the right level of priority there is a high chance that refugees will not be able to avail themselves of the opportunities that the host country has to offer. We need to appreciate that refugees most often come to us out of very traumatic circumstances; they may have lived in war zones, survived in under resourced refugee camps, and in many cases, have spent years on the run – their lives under constant threat. Loved ones will have died or been killed on the journey, families will have been separated. It is one thing to accept people from such desperate circumstances into our country and our neighbourhoods and communities but along with that acceptance comes a serious responsibility to make it work, to help them to overcome their traumatic backgrounds to settle well in their new home.

How well do we help these people to integrate into our communities? With very disrupted backgrounds how do they find opportunities for English language

development, for education, for employment? How can they get the attention they need for their health needs? How do they negotiate our complex legal and social welfare systems? When these matters are not attended to adequately then settlement will fail. In the event of that failure many young men and women will feel alienated and powerless, elders will disengage finding no way to take responsibility for their future and their family in the context of their new land, and the human fall-out will last for generations. So we must not fail these people.

Already we see young people of refugee backgrounds over represented in our criminal justice system and in our state child protection system. Over the past few years we have seen a concerning change in emphasis in Australia from hospitality and settlement to hostility and security – this has been signalled by a change in name of what was the Government Department for Immigration and Citizenship to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. The news reports this week announce a further move in the same direction with the creation of a new super ministry of Home Affairs which will bring together ASIO, the Australian Federal Police, the Australian Border Force, and other agencies.

Successful integration and settlement, however, are equally if not more important than border security issues for sustained community safety and growth. The quality of settlement poses an obvious risk for the refugees themselves, but it also has implications for community safety that could in turn lead to a backlash against all refugees and amplify calls to reduce our intake. Settlement, then, is vitally important – government provides programs with access to some initial housing and English-speaking classes and other services but for many groups there is so much more that is required.

Let's consider the case of most people who have grown up in a stable community – they know people who open doors for them, who give them chances for work, and social interaction; someone able to introduce them to people that might help out in some way or another; who will even look after the children while mum goes shopping. Consider on the other hand a new arrival – who knows nobody of real influence. We all appreciate the fact that it is often not "what" you know but "who" you know that really opens the doors and gives people their place

in the community. For new arrivals we in the church can be the “who they know” that helps to create connections and identify opportunities for them.

At CatholicCare in the Archdiocese we run homework support for the children of refugees. We also run a community farm and provide mentoring and conversation programs. You may walk into a room that looks like a sewing class or a cooking class, but it is there that the women will mix with other locals – conversing in English – laughing and engaging in a truly remarkable cultural exchange to the advantage of all.

Parishes of course are very well placed to assist as well. In my own parish school recently, a mother from a refugee background was struggling to get the youngest of her children off to school in the mornings while she was dealing with some of her own health issues. We found an older woman, a parishioner, who lived nearby who was able to go over to the family each morning at about 7.00 o’clock and get the children some breakfast and dressed for school. This was a great assistance to the family, but it also provided a wonderful opportunity for the parishioner to engage in a really worthwhile activity – one that gave her a fresh lease of life.

I would also like to mention another initiative that CatholicCare has developed with the parishes which may serve as a model that others could take up. A few years ago, the agency was able to raise some funds to employ a person to provide parishes with information and resources and support; enabling the people of the parish to care directly for asylum seekers in their own community. There has been a great deal of interest in parishes to support those seeking asylum but as you would expect some of the needs are quite complex and while people can be well meaning they don’t always have the knowledge and skills to address the issues and manage those complexities. The new role that we developed is one that trains and provides resources to assists parish volunteers to provide appropriate care and accommodation support. This has been a good use of resources as rather than employing a person to assist a few asylum seekers directly we were able to have someone who would assist four or five parishes, each with twenty or so volunteers, to provide help to a far greater number of asylum seekers. This experience exposes a broader range of people to the needs the situation and the

humanity, gifts, and culture of the refugees on the one hand while increasing community connection for the refugee families on the other.

Asylum seekers and refugees and other migrants will continue to be accepted in Australia, but it is critical that for both their successful integration and the ongoing support of the broader community for newly arrived communities we need to devote more resources and attention to settlement. Government policy and resources need to reflect this. The Church too, through its agencies and parishes has a great deal to offer in helping new arrivals to make a true home in their adopted country.

*****

The Church in Australia: make up and composition – Multicultural Church and Society in Australia

Stephen Reid

Pastoral Research Office



Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
Pastoral Research Office

The Pastoral Research Office: Our Mission

. . . . to assist the Catholic Church in Australia at all levels in understanding the cultural, social and personal dimensions of religion in the changing contemporary context.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
Pastoral Research Office





A Snapshot from the 2016 Australian Census of Population and Housing

(03) 9953 3457 Stephen Reid s.reid@pro.catholic.org.au

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
Pastoral Research Office

Overview: The Catholic Community in Australia

"Snapshot" taken on Tuesday 9th August 2016
(with 2011 comparisons):

Australian population	23,401,892	(21,507,719)
Catholic population	5,291,834	(5,439,267)
% Catholic	22.6	(25.3)
% born overseas	24.7	(23.6)
% born in NESC*	19.1	(17.9)
% speaking LOTE* at home	20.4	(19.0)

*Source: ABS 2016 Census of Population and Housing. All figures except 'Australian population' apply to Catholics only. * NESC: Non-English speaking country. LOTE: Language other than English*

(03) 9953 3457 Stephen Reid s.reid@pro.catholic.org.au

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Major countries of birth of Catholics, 2016 & 2011

	Birthplace	2016	2011
1	Philippines	174,619	134,657
2	Italy	149,900	168,804
3	United Kingdom	126,595	137,221
4	New Zealand	68,837	73,154
5	India	59,702	48,216
6	Ireland & Northern Ireland	59,425	56,317
7	Vietnam	44,225	39,896
8	Croatia & other Former Yugoslavia	39,209	49,188
9	Malta	33,474	37,809
10	Poland	31,979	36,118

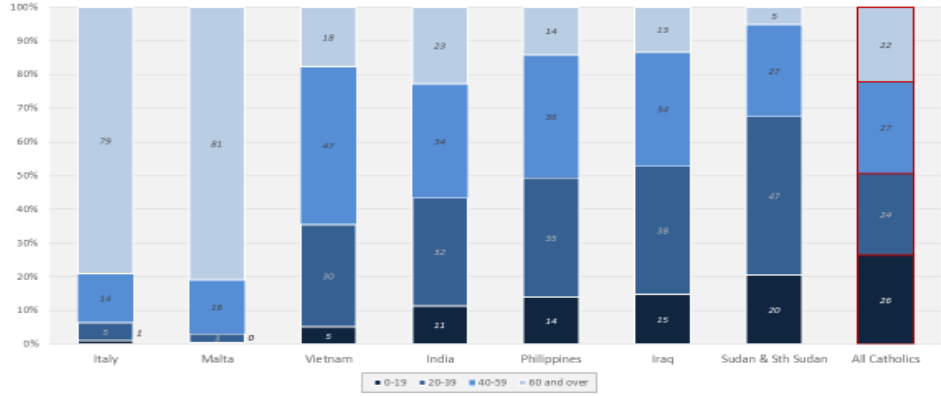
Source: ABS 2016 & 2011 Census of Population and Housing.

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Age profile of Catholics, 2016

(from selected countries of birth)



Source: ABS 2016 Census of Population and Housing.

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Pastoral Research Office

Major countries of birth of Catholics, 2016

by Year of arrival in Australia (selected birthplaces)

Birthplace	Total	% arrived since 2006
Brazil	13,349	73.0
Iraq	23,770	52.2
India	59,702	49.4
Philippines	174,619	49.3
Ireland & Northern Ireland	59,425	45.4
Sudan & South Sudan	7,496	29.7
Vietnam	44,225	24.1
. . . .	. . . .	. . . .
Italy	149,900	6.2
Malta	33,474	1.5

Source: ABS 2016 & 2011 Census of Population and Housing.

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Country of birth, 2016

Local Government Areas* with high numbers of Catholics born in NESC

Local Government Area	Born in NESC	% born in NESC	Main Countries of birth
1 Brisbane (Qld)	45,424	17.4	Philippines, Italy, Vietnam
2 Blacktown (NSW)	34,400	35.0	Philippines, Malta, India
3 Fairfield (NSW)	31,133	50.7	Iraq, Vietnam, Italy
4 Canterbury-Bankstown (NSW)	29,479	36.4	Lebanon, Vietnam, Italy
5 Brimbank (Vic)	26,570	43.6	Philippines, Malta, Vietnam
6 Casey (Vic)	24,495	34.2	India, Philippines, Sri Lanka
7 Hume (Vic)	20,453	33.5	Iraq, Italy, Philippines
8 Cumberland (NSW)	20,250	39.1	Lebanon, Philippines, Malta

Source: ABS 2016 Census of Population and Housing.

** Census data for parishes and dioceses will be available later this year.*

(03) 9953 3457 Stephen Reid s.reid@pro.catholic.org.au

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Major languages spoken at home by Catholics, 2016

(other than English)

Language	2016	2011
Italian	231,664	267,002
Filipino languages	145,635	112,128
Spanish	82,208	75,781
Arabic	68,952	72,204
Vietnamese	68,569	63,887
Croatian	49,546	55,148
Chinese languages	49,057	46,709
Polish	36,561	41,025
Portuguese	29,901	24,714
Maltese	29,828	32,803

Source: ABS 2016 Census of Population and Housing.

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Language: proficiency in spoken English, 2016

Language	Catholics	Do not speak English well	% who do not speak English well
Chaldean Neo-Aramaic	16,680	5,218	31.3
Korean	19,590	5,904	30.1
Vietnamese	68,564	18,897	27.6
Assyrian Neo-Aramaic	8,771	2,250	25.7
Mandarin	21,358	4,106	19.2
Dinka (African)	4,799	752	15.7
Portuguese	29,900	4,338	14.5
Italian	231,671	31,860	13.8
Arabic	68,948	9,308	13.5
Croatian	49,556	6,540	13.2

Source: ABS 2016 Census of Population and Housing.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
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2016 National Church Life Survey

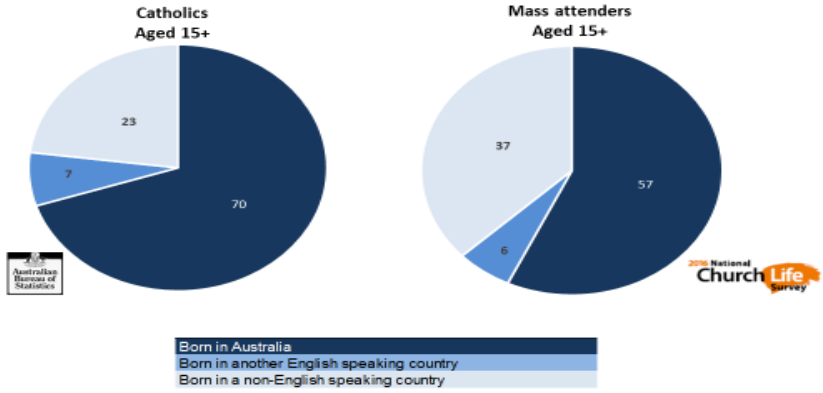
2016 National Count of Attendance

A (very brief) Snapshot from the 2016 National Church Life Survey and the ACBC National Count of Attendance

(03) 9953 3457 Stephen Reid s.reid@pro.catholic.org.au

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Country of birth of Catholics and Mass attendance, 2016



Source: 2016 ABS Census & 2016 National Church Life Survey (Church Life Profile). *'Not stated' and 'Inadequately described' removed.*

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Mass attendance languages, 2016

(preliminary results)

2016 NATIONAL COUNT OF ATTENDANCE



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Mass attendance, 2016 (preliminary results)

2016 NATIONAL COUNT OF ATTENDANCE

Attendance at Mass in languages other than English:

- ***44+** different languages (including Aboriginal languages)*
- *Average of **64,000** people each weekend*
- *Masses in LOTE estimated to account for **10-12%** of national total*
- *Combined, more than **37,000** attend Mass each weekend in **Vietnamese**, **Arabic** and **Italian***
- *Likely to be considerably higher due to the complexity of obtaining figures from non-parish centres.*

Source: ACBC 2016 National Count of Attendance.

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A few observations

- Since 1996, the percentage of Mass attenders born in non-English speaking countries has risen from 18% to 37%.
- The arrival of large numbers of Catholics from particularly non-English speaking countries has up until now 'masked' the extent of decline of 'Census Catholics' and Mass attendance numbers.
- Anecdotally, identification and attendance patterns of second-generation Australians is more like that of third and later generations of Australians than that of their parents.
- *Further research is needed . . . .*

For further analysis of the 2011 National Count of Attendance see *Mass Attendance in Australia: A Critical Moment* (available form the PRO website: pro.catholic.org.au)

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For reflection . . .

- Any discussion of future trends in the church must include the context in which the church is placed – the wider society. *I.e. the Church does not take place in a vacuum.*
- What is happening in society which will affect what happens in the church?
- Where will future migrants and refugees come from?

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
Pastoral Research Office

For further information . . .



- Subscribe to E-newsletter
- Websites: www.pro.catholic.org.au
  www.buildingstrongerparishes.catholic.org.au
  www.catholic.org.au/shop (to purchase BSP reports)
- Email: s.reid@pro.catholic.org.au
- Visit: 49 Brunswick Street Fitzroy
  (ACU St Patrick's Campus Melbourne)
- Phone: (03) 9953 3457

(03) 9953 3457 Stephen Reid s.reid@pro.catholic.org.au

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Pastoral Landscape, Where are we and Where can we go? – Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care

Percy Pamo Lawrence

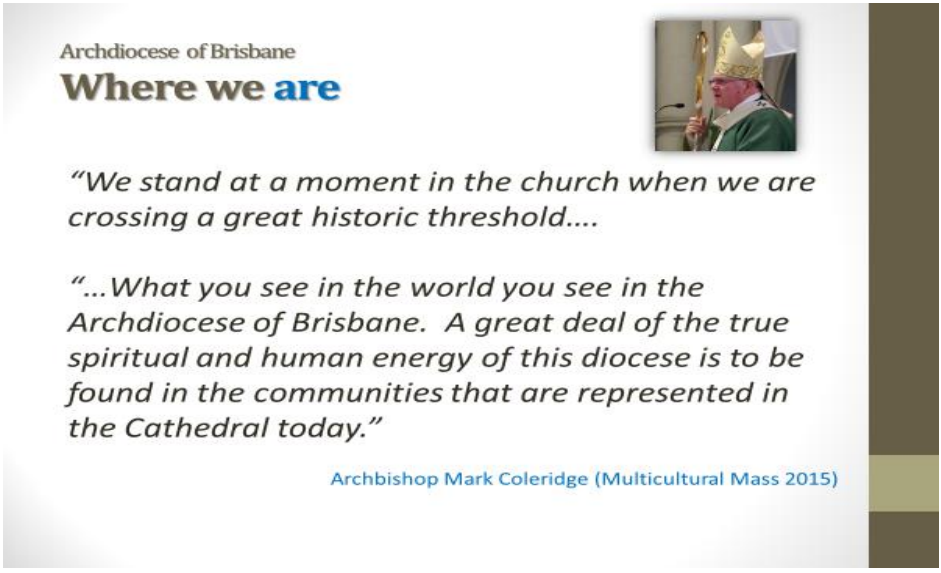
Archdiocese of Brisbane



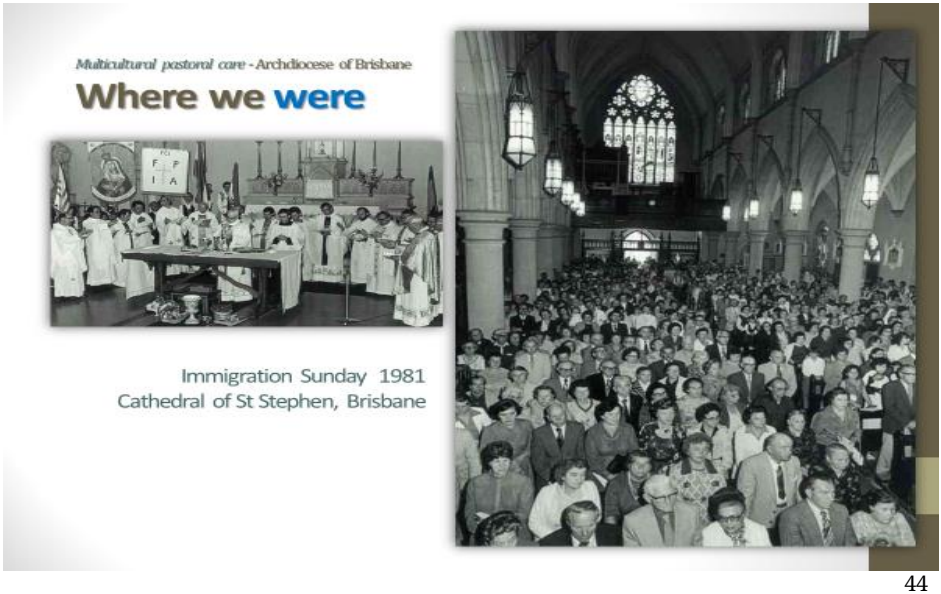
My brief presentation this afternoon will give you a glimpse into multicultural pastoral care in the Archdiocese of Brisbane.



Our Brisbane Archbishop, Mark Coleridge, perfectly articulates '*where we are now'* in the Archdiocese of Brisbane. This is what he said at our Multicultural Mass in the Cathedral two years ago:



To know where we are, we look at where we were. These are photos taken at Immigration Sunday at the Cathedral of St Stephen in 1981. You must have noticed something?



Now these are photos taken at our Multicultural Mass in the Cathedral in 2008, just after World Youth Day in Sydney, almost 10 years ago. Again, do you notice anything? These photos show how much has changed in the composition of the Brisbane archdiocese in the last 30 years – from a predominantly Anglo-Celtic to a culturally diverse church.



Let's take a quick look at the population composition of Australia. Based on the 2016 Census (these are preliminary estimates) there are 24,385,600 people living in Australia. United Kingdom continues to be the largest group of overseas-

Statistics - ABS

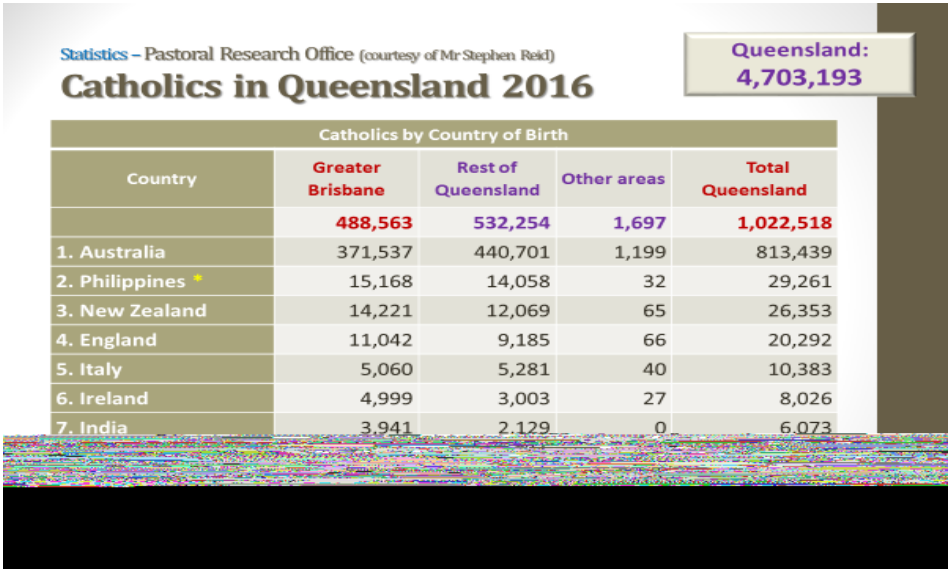
2016 statistics - Australia

Australia: 24,385,600

ESTIMATED RESIDENT POPULATION, Australia
Top 10 countries of birth - 30 June 2016

Country of birth	Persons no.	% of Australian population
United Kingdom	1 198 000	5.0
New Zealand	607 200	2.5
China	526 000	2.2
India	468 800	1.9
Philippines	246 400	1.0
Vietnam	236 700	1.0
Italy	194 900	0.8
South Africa	181 400	0.8
Malaysia	166 200	0.7
Germany	124 300	0.5

born residents, followed by New Zealand, China, India, the Philippines, Vietnam, Italy and so on.



Statistics – Pastoral Research Office (courtesy of Mr Stephen Reid)

Catholics in Queensland 2016

Queensland: 4,703,193

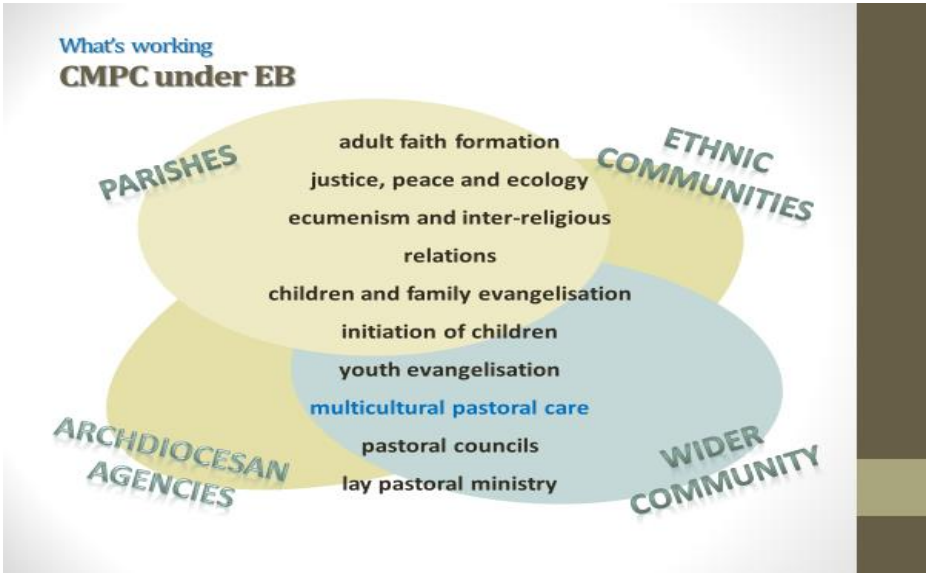
Catholics by Country of Birth

Country	Greater Brisbane	Rest of Queensland	Other areas	Total Queensland
	488,563	532,254	1,697	1,022,518
1. Australia	371,537	440,701	1,199	813,439
2. Philippines *	15,168	14,058	32	29,261
3. New Zealand	14,221	12,069	65	26,353
4. England	11,042	9,185	66	20,292
5. Italy	5,060	5,281	40	10,383
6. Ireland	4,999	3,003	27	8,026
7. India	3,941	2,129	0	6,073

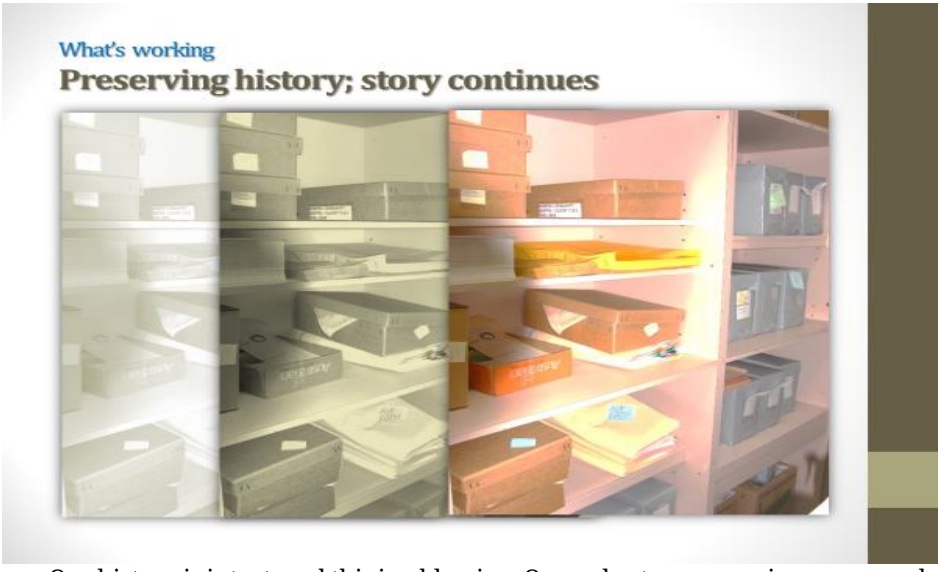
This slide shows the number of Catholics in Queensland. Of the 4.7 million Queenslanders, about 1 million are Catholics. The top 10 Catholics (by country of birth) in Queensland are the following: Those born in Australia, Philippines, New Zealand, England, Italy, Ireland, India, Vietnam, Papua New Guinea, and South Africa. Looking at this table, you will find that the largest non-English speaking group of Catholics in Queensland and in Brisbane are the Filipino-Australians.



In 1994, after 45 years, the Catholic Immigration Office became the Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care. From 1994 to the present, CMPC operated, in succession, under 3 umbrella agencies. Currently, it operates under Evangelisation Brisbane. In 23 years, CMPC has moved on from being a direct service-delivery agency to being a conduit, a link and wealth of information on migrant and refugee matters. We move with the times, and we have our blessings.



Operating under Evangelisation Brisbane means working alongside quite a number of specialty areas – which means, there is a ton of information that we can access for the Chaplains and their ethnic and multicultural communities. Likewise, there is much information that we can provide to parishes, archdiocesan agencies, and the wider community.



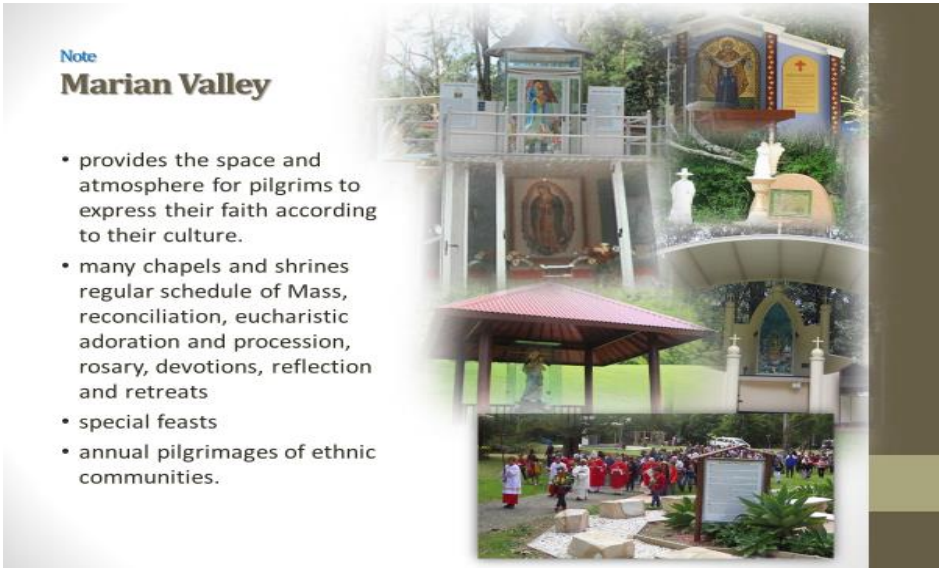
Our history is intact, and this is a blessing. One volunteer comes in once a week and continues to go through thousands of files and records of 60 years of Catholic Immigration in the archdiocese.



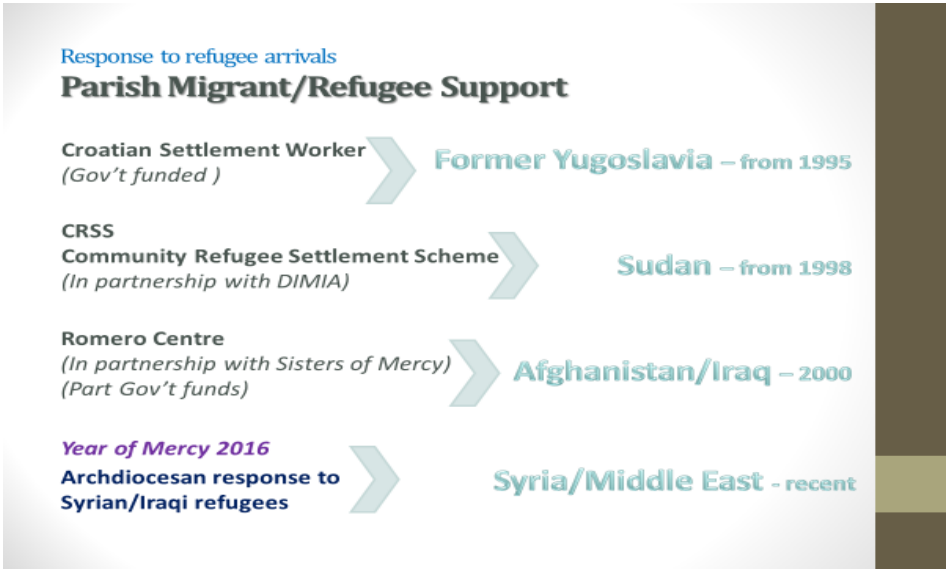
We continue to be the source of information and contact for anything that relates to multicultural pastoral care in the archdiocese. We have a newsletter that has been in circulation for 19 years, a website for easy access of information and resources, and a social media presence through Facebook.



Multicultural Mass has been going on in the archdiocese for 45 years. I have witnessed and was involved in 22 of these annual celebrations at the Cathedral.



This may be a little off-track, but I would like to mention the significant impact the Marian Valley makes on the life of migrants (including tourists) and ethnic communities in Brisbane. The Marian Valley Shrine in Canungra (about an hour's drive from Brisbane) is a favourite pilgrimage site for our Catholic ethnic communities because it provides them the space and atmosphere for expressing their faith according to their culture, which is a more devotional form of worship.



CMPC has been proactive in responding to the needs arising from waves of various refugee arrivals since 1995, partnering with immigration and government settlement agencies and tapping on parish and catholic education support and resources. Last year, our Archbishop made an appeal to parishes to respond to the needs of newly arrived refugees coming from the troubled areas of the Middle East.

These are some of the CMPC projects that have been successful; I'll briefly explain in the next four slides…

Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care

Positive Undertakings

- *We Are One Body* (1998); revised (2017)
- Introduction to Cultural Studies - Banyo Seminary (1998-99)
- Confronting Racism in Communities (2010)
- Deanery Grants (2009 – 2013) – 'seed funding' to assist projects

We are one body was released in 1998. It provides guidelines for multicultural pastoral care in the Archdiocese of Brisbane. This resource is currently being updated and close to being finalised to reflect new archdiocesan priorities.

Positive Undertakings

We Are One Body (1998); 2017

- provides a framework for pastoral action for all Catholics in the Archdiocese of Brisbane in light of the multicultural reality of our local Church.
- Update in 2017



CMPC has offered two courses at Banyo Seminary from 1998 to 2003. Discipleship in a Multicultural Context provides opportunities for seminarians to have an immersion experience with Catholic ethno-specific and multicultural communities.

Positive Undertakings

Cultural Studies – Banyo Seminary

- **Introduction to Cultural Studies (1998-2003)**
- **Discipleship in a Multicultural Context (2002-2003)**



DISCIPLESHIP IN A MULTICULTURAL CONTEX PROGRAM

Duration of the program: 7 hours and a half lectures and reflections.
14 hours Ethnic Communities Immersion

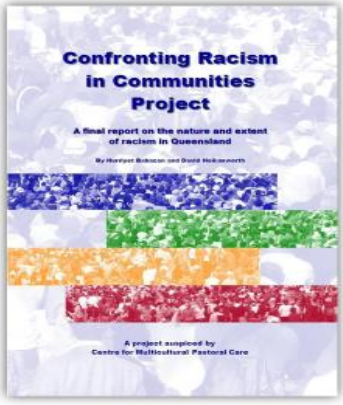
Commences: Monday 22 July 2002
Finishes: Monday 28 October 2002

Venue: Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care (Lectures and reflections)

The Queensland State-funded Confronting Racism in Communities Report brings to a conclusion the three-year pilot project managed by the Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care, working in partnership with multicultural, mainstream and government agencies.

Positive Undertakings

Confronting Racism in Communities (2010)



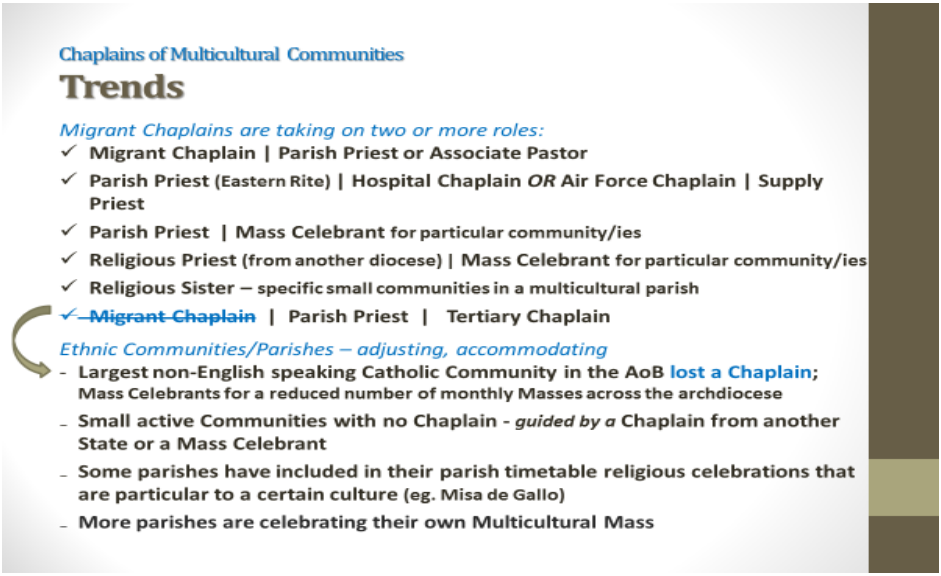
A report on the nature and extent of racism in Queensland was released in September 2010.

Deanery Grants 2009 – 2013. This positive 'seed funding', initially only accessible to parishes through the Deaneries, were eventually made available to ethnic communities. The grants were a tremendous boost to the ethnic communities, particularly the young people.

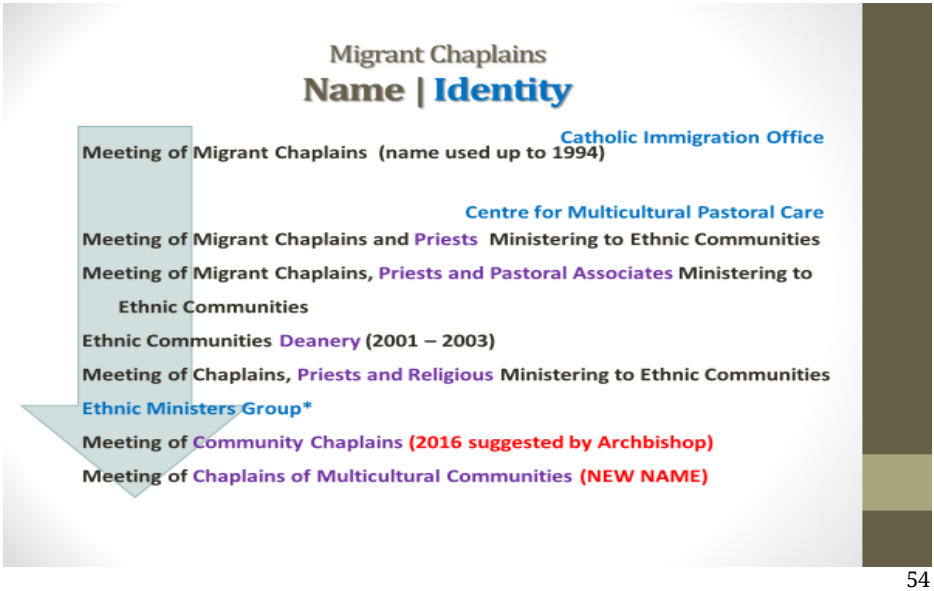




Here, I've listed down what I've observed in the last few years --

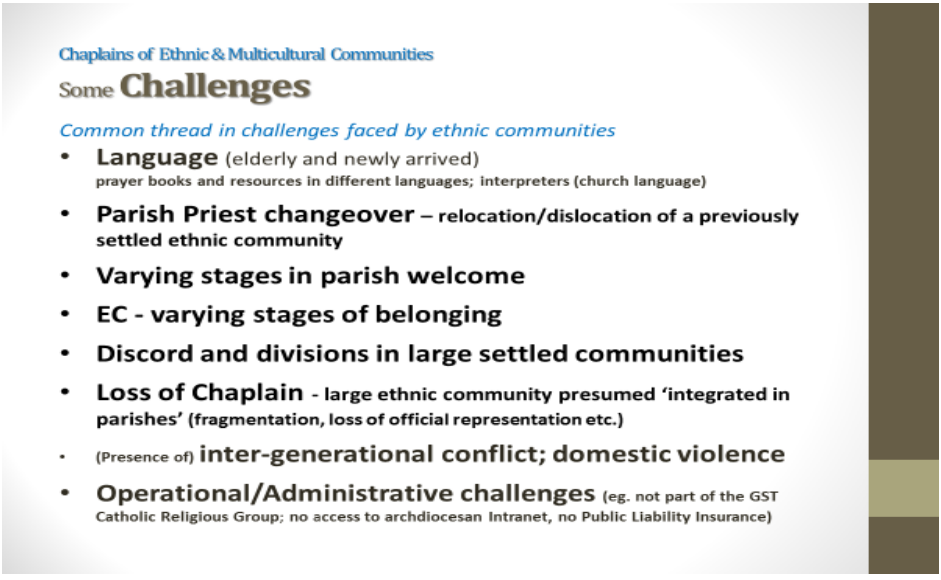


The Chaplains, priests and religious ministering to ethnic communities have been meeting every second month for the last 22 years that I've worked at CMPC. They have been meeting long before I started work at CMPC. On the slide, you will see from top to bottom the changes in the way the Chaplains have identified themselves and their group. The changes in their name somehow reflect the



Chaplains' desire to be inclusive and to adapt and reflect the continuously changing shape of cultural diversity in the Archdiocese.

Some challenges are specific to a particular community. I've listed here the common thread in challenges faced by ethnic communities.



Partly through our work at CMPC over the years, we managed to influence a change in the various operations of the Archdiocese:

Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care

Progress

Communication in the Archdiocese (observed over 22 years)

- **culturally inclusive** design/photos of promotional materials, websites, etc
- Catholic Leader – more culturally diverse **stories**, more '*colourful*' photos
- **automatic inclusion** of Chaplains/EC in archdiocesan mail-outs, etc
- Mass in **languages other than English** on Archdiocese website

Some positives reported

- Ethnic communities ***'hold'*** migrants together
- **Good relationship** with parish, welcoming parish; parish support
- Chaplains encourage **integration** into parishes **without losing** their cultural values
- **Very involved and integrated** in their local parishes (pastoral and finance councils, choir, altar servers, communion ministers, hospitality etc.)
- **Well trained catechetical groups** in Brisbane that are also called upon to assist communities in other states
- Communities as a whole are **vibrant and brimming with activities** (captured in our newsletter, Facebook, and The Catholic Leader)

Fr Tim Norton wrote an excellent article that was included in a publication called 'The Francis Effect', published in 2014 by Catholic Missions. In his article

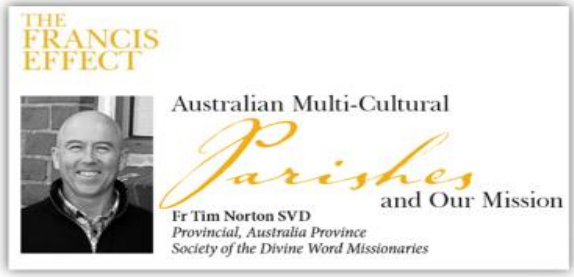
Multicultural pastoral care - Archdiocese of Brisbane

Where we can go

Fr Norton on taking up the challenge of spreading the Good News:

"What makes us think that only those with the finest English and the firmest egos are the best to serve God's mission through parishes? Certainly they have a place, but not at the exclusion of others."

New paths for mission – the migrant experience



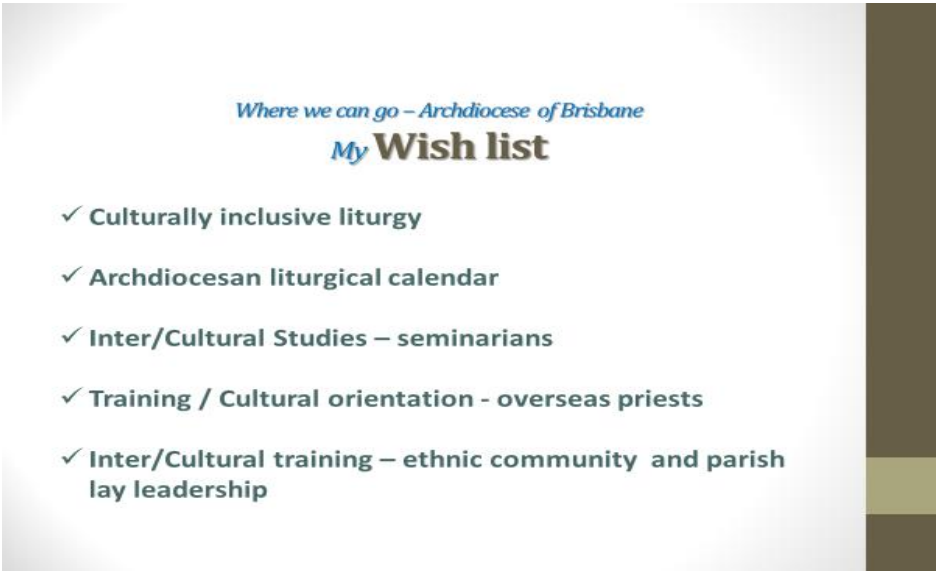


titled 'Australian Multicultural Parishes and Our Mission', Fr Tim outlines recent trends in parish life and suggests new paths for mission.

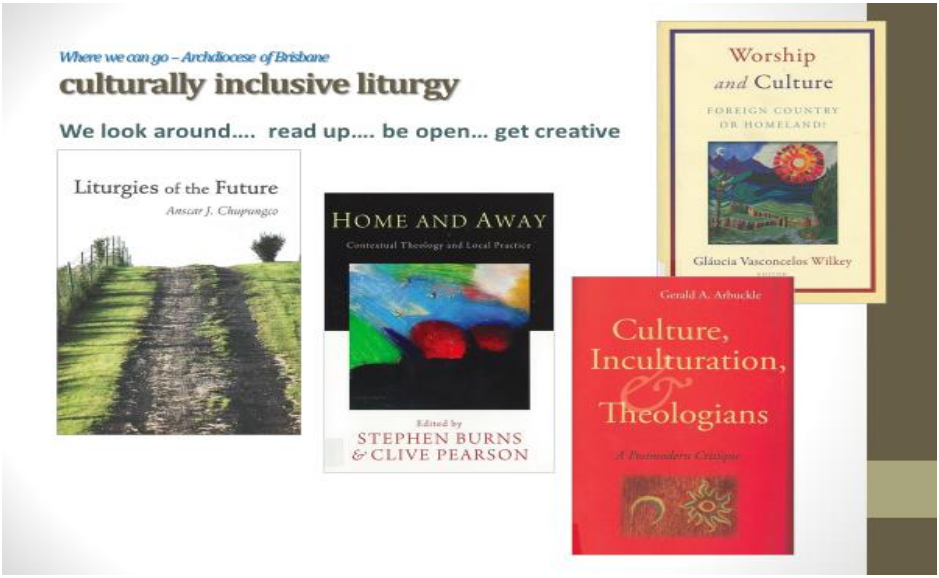
There is no other way to go but towards integration; from multicultural to intercultural. The ethnic and multicultural communities in the Archdiocese of Brisbane are in different stages of integration; pastoral care is not a 'one-size fits all'. And we must be cognizant of the fact that integration cannot be done by force.



Where to from here…I have five on my personal wish list --



I would like to see some kind of Multicultural Mass incorporated into every normal Sunday Mass – a vibrant richness that is effortlessly weaved into the ordinary daily rhythm of parish life, a regular Sunday celebration that is effortlessly prepared and without fuss. We must continue to look around and see what the rest of the world is doing; we must read up, be open and be creative.



Archdiocesan Liturgical Calendar. Theologian and author Fr Anthony Paganoni, who once spoke at a conference like this about 10 years ago, presented a paper titled *Immigrants, the Liturgy and Popular Religion.* To me, this paper articulates where we are in Australia in multicultural pastoral care, and what he believes is the way to go.

In his paper he said, "Immigrants bring Pentecostal gifts needing to be accommodated, perhaps not without some change, into their new local context. Some of these outward faith expressions are the *Misa de Gallo for the Filipinos*, the celebration of saint days by the Italians, Our Lady of Guadalupe for the Mexicans and Our Lady of the Aparecida for the Portuguese.



What Fr Anthony is trying to point out is that, the Australian liturgical calendar could better reflect the celebration days of our ethnic communities.

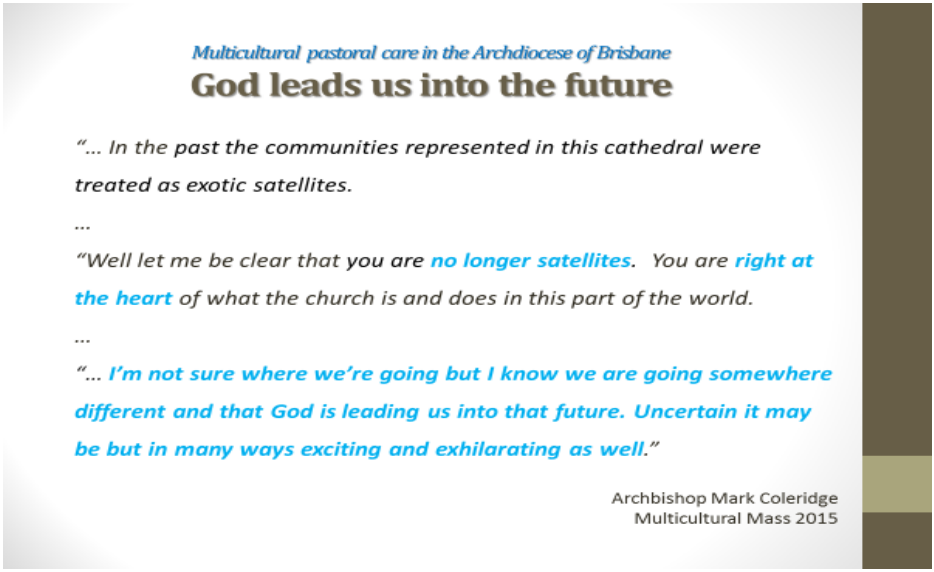
Three more on my wish list relate to some kind of diocesan-based intercultural studies or training opportunities for seminarians, overseas priests and lay leaders (in parish and ethnic communities)



Summing up, I'd like to emphasise the three things that are definitely working for us in Brisbane.

- Multicultural Mass is certainly happening annually, both on diocesan and parish level
- The Marian Valley continues to be a drawcard in the faith and life of ethnic and multicultural communities
- Communication in archdiocesan agencies and parishes has definitely improved and this encourages a sense of belonging in ethnic and multicultural communities.

In closing, I would like us to reflect on the words of Archbishop Mark Coleridge as he addressed a culturally diverse congregation a couple of years ago:



Like the Archbishop, I'm not particularly sure where we're going, but I hope to use this exciting uncertainty as an opportunity to courageously move forward.

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Pastoral Landscape, Where are we and Where can we go? – Salisbury Catholic Parish

Fr Roderick O'Brien

Salisbury Catholic Parish, South Australia

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PASTORAL CARE IN A MULTICULTURAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY

MELBOURNE

2017

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PASTORAL CARE IN A MULTICULTURAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY

"Love one another as I have loved you."

- The cautious operator will preserve the past.
- The lover will risk a broken heart to build the future..

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PASTORAL CARE IN A MULTICULTURAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY

THE TRINITY AS THE THEOLOGICAL MODEL FOR EFFECTIVE PASTORAL LOVE

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PASTORAL CARE IN A MULTICULTURAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY

PASTORAL LANDSCAPE

- Waves of migration
- Early: Irish, some English, post-war Italian and other European
- Recent: Vietnam; Philippines; India; Burma

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PASTORAL CARE IN A MULTICULTURAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY

PASTORAL CHALLENGES

- Openness or Resentment?
- Parish or Chaplaincy?
- Stereotypes
- Cultural Baggage
- Immigration Bureaucracy

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PASTORAL CARE IN A MULTICULTURAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY

PASTORAL SUCCESSES

- Parish Pastoral Council
- Inclusion of Liturgical Ministers
- Welcoming at our Churches
- Music

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- We are heirs to our ancestors.
- We have inherited a world of renewal: the daily round of the sun and moon, the yearly round of the seasons.
- We have inherited the Good News of Easter, and "Alleluia" is our song.
- We have inherited a world of oppression, of violence, of deliberate death.
- We have inherited a world where fear can stifle hope.
- We have inherited cultures of beauty, where love and song and families can flourish.
- We have inherited cultures of ugliness, where revenge and division and hatred can flourish.
- We have inherited a Church which proclaims the Gospel, and brings reconciliation.
- We have inherited a Church which is Catholic – truly universal.
- We have inherited a Church infected with clericalism, careerism, and favouritism.
- We are heirs to our ancestors.
- We sing the praises of those who have begotten us.
- We lament their sins and failures.

WHERE WE CAN GO

- The future is not ours to know. We can only plant the seeds.
- We can now form parishes which are open, and willing to love.
- We can now form parishes which can see the situation of our many cultures and languages.
- We can now form parishes able to judge according to the Gospels.
- We can now form parishes where parishioners are willing to act to build the future Church.
- We can risk a broken heart each day.
- We can build our pastoral practices from the best our ancestors have left to us.
- We can build our pastoral practices rejecting caste, casual racism, sexism, and stereotyping.
- We can build parishes where children are welcomed.
- We can build parishes where adults are nourished.
- We can build future parishes through choices and systems.

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Care for our Clergy and Religious

Br Anthony Crook

University of Notre Dame, Sydney

MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN RURAL MINISTRY

Br Anthony Crook csma, RANR
(anthony.crook@nd.edu.au)
School of Arts & Sciences
The University of Notre Dame Australia (Sydney)

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

'Research over the past decades has demonstrated that clergy, like many professionals, face a great deal of job-related stress. Studies have shown that clergy often face high demand on their time, a lack of privacy, pressures from frequent relocation, and criticism from church members…Such stressors can lead to physical and mental health problems if clergy do not have sufficient social and personal resources to manage them effectively…understanding the patterns of stressors and resources in pastoral work is an essential first step in creating healthy work environments for clergy' (Miles & Proeschold-Bell, 2012, pp:23-24).

THE 10 MINUTES IN 10 SECONDS

1. Touch on some research on clergy life in rural and regional North Carolina
2. Explore some research findings on mental health and life in rural and regional Australia
3. Draw some connections between the two
4. Propose some ways forward for healthy living and ministry

MILES & PROESCHOLD-BELL, 2012

1,373 United Methodist Church clergy in North Carolina

Increases in stress

a. Fewer rural pastors take a day off per week
b. More likely to have responsibility for multiple congregations
c. Shoulder pastoral responsibilities alone
d. More visible and in greater contact with parishioners
e. Salaries lower than non-rural clergy

Decreases in stress

a. Higher levels of social support
b. Feel slightly less lonely in their work
c. More visible and in greater contact with their parishioners

MENTAL HEALTH – REGIONAL, RURAL, & REMOTE

1. Higher rates of death by suicide in rural settings, especially for men (2001 – 2010)
   a. 13.3% lifetime prevalence of suicidal ideation
   b. 3.2% lifetime prevalence of attempted suicide
   c. 12 month: suicidal ideation increases in single people, moderate psychological distress, financial adversity, & history of psychiatric disorders
   d. Lifetime ideation: being single, aged between 45 and 64 yrs of age
2. "strategies to target prevention and early detection of psychiatric disorders are particularly relevant to suicide prevention" (Inder et al, 2014, p: 20)

MENTAL HEALTH – REGIONAL, RURAL, & REMOTE



MENTAL HEALTH – REGIONAL, RURAL, & REMOTE
PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Novello, Stain, Lyle & Kelly (2011) – Psychological distress of rural parents: Family influence and the role of isolation.

- "Research focusing on the mental health of farmers reported that for men being married appeared to be a protective factor, while the opposite was found in the case of women. However, other research has found spousal support to be a protective factor for both male and female farm residents" (p. 27)

MENTAL HEALTH – REGIONAL, RURAL, & REMOTE

Brew et al (2016) – *The health and wellbeing of Australian farmers: a longitudinal cohort study*

1. Physical health in rural and remote Australia is, in general, poorer
2. Usage rates of mental health services decreases with increasing remoteness
3. Factors impacting on farmers physical and mental health:
   a. Long hours
   b. Physically demanding work
   c. Social & geographical isolation
   d. Less like to take vacations
   e. Less likely to retire

MENTAL HEALTH – REGIONAL, RURAL, & REMOTE
PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Kutek, Turnbull, & Fairweather-Schmidt, (2011): Subjective well-being, social support, sense of community, benefits of enhancing informal networks.

- The importance of "informal means of support promoting well-being among rural men" (p. 20)
  a. Social support and a sense of community contribute to a greater sense of well-being
  b. Social support and community reduce the impact of stress on a sense of well-being
  c. Perceived stress mediates the effect of social support and sense of community on well-being.

MENTAL HEALTH – REGIONAL, RURAL, & REMOTE
PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Boyd, Hayes, Wilson, & Bearsley-Smith (2008): ***Harnessing the social capital of rural communities for youth mental health: An assess-based community development framework***

"Social capital is fundamentally an ecological characteristic. Its definition includes a host of overlapping constructs, including social trust / reciprocity, social cohesion, sense of community and social participation…social capital is the 'glue' that holds society together" (pp. 189-190)

"Psychological sense of community involves a feeling emotional connection, the belief that one's needs are capable of being met within the community and a sense of belonging or mattering to the community" (p. 190).

"Rural communities have been characterised as socially proximate or 'close knit', and rural people are said to share traditional values of hard work and cooperation" (p. 190)

"Rural youth, particularly women, experience a sense of belonging and connection to community and are convinced of the principles of reciprocal support" (p. 190).

PRACTICAL TIPS

1. Immerse yourself in the context of 'social capital'
   a. E.g., Rotary, Lions, Apex, Probius, bowls
2. Befriend your local GP and organise for three/four monthly appointments
3. 20mins exercise spots three to four times per week
   a. E.g., fast walking, swimming
4. 10 – 15mins mindfulness/contemplation three to four times per week
5. Ensure that clergy and religious know how to cook five or six simple meals

PRACTICAL TIPS

5. Develop good sleep-hygiene practices
   a. Try for the same bed-time each night
   b. Eat three hours before going to bed
   c. Don't work in your bedroom
   d. Have 20mins between TV / work and going to bed
      I. Clean your teeth
      II. Do your mindfulness
      III. Turn the lights off around the house

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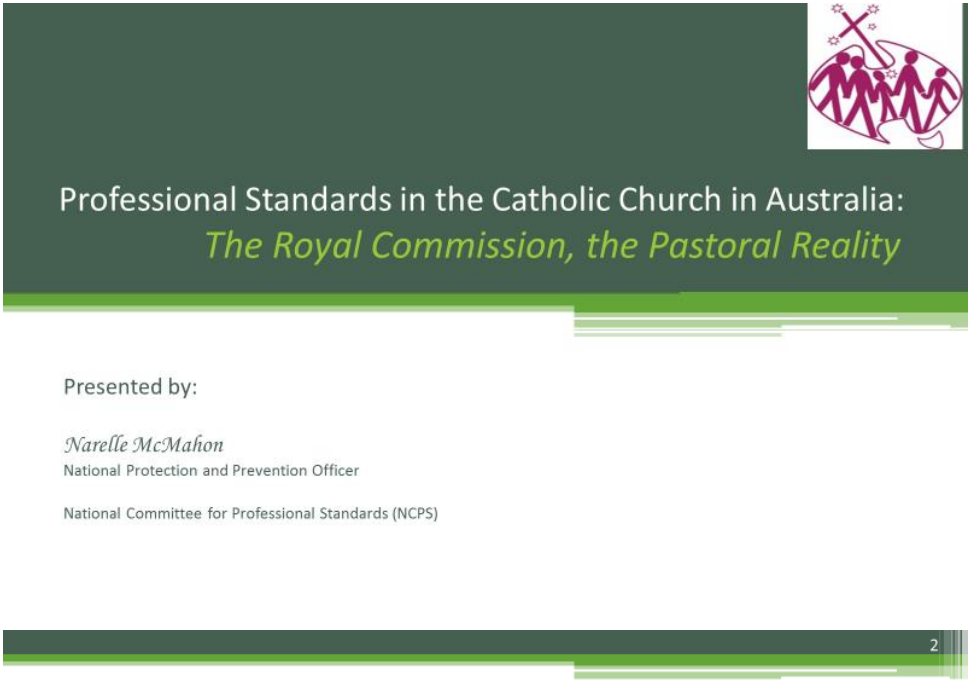
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The Church Post Royal Commission – The Office for Professional Standards

Narelle McMahon

Office for Professional Standards



Overview

- *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse:* the pastoral reality

    1. For all those who provide ministry to children and young people in Australia;
    2. For Migrant Chaplains who work in pastoral care to our migrant communities; and
    3. For the many clergy and religious who come from overseas to minister and mission in our Dioceses and Religious Congregations?

- Post Royal Commission: moving forward with confidence

Present Pastoral reality

Some clergy and religious have said that they are:

- Feeling shocked, disappointed, outraged, numb
- Experiencing suspicion and a diminished lack of trust

Present Pastoral reality

Some clergy and religious have said that they are:

- Overwhelmed and unsure of policies, procedures and legislative responsibilities in relation to Child Protection:
  - -different legislation across the 6 States and 2 Territories
  - -different procedures from diocese to diocese,
- Lacking in confidence as they haven't had sufficient training/education in this area

Comments have included:

- "I am nervous to set foot in a school"
- "What do I do if a young child makes any physical contact with me? E.g. after Mass in front of the Church. Do I push them away?"
- "I don't know what appropriate touch is anymore."
- "What if a young person needs pastoral support and wants to speak to me privately?"

Comments have included:

- "I am overwhelmed by the policies and regulations. I'm scared I will make a mistake."
- "All of this is so different to my country of birth."
- "What do I do if I know a child is being physically or emotionally harmed at home? It really isn't my place to interfere with what is happening in a private home, is it?"

Comments have included:

- "How do we encourage those in migrant communities to come forward and report abuse when it is often counter-cultural for them? They often do not trust Police/statutory authorities."
- "This is a taboo topic in our culture."

There is hope and plenty of support!

Post Royal Commission-moving forward with confidence

WE ARE HERE TO PROVIDE ADVICE AND SUPPORT:

- National Protection and Prevention Officers (NCPS)
- Directors of State and Territory Professional Standards Offices
- Catholic Professional Standards Ltd
- Safeguarding Managers for Dioceses and Religious Institutes

Post Royal Commission-Moving forward with confidence

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK!

- Who is your professional 'go to' person?
- You don't have to become an expert on all Child Protection legislation

Post Royal Commission-Moving forward with confidence

EDUCATION and TRAINING !!!!!!!!!

- Avail yourself of every opportunity
- Facilitate information sessions for your parishes, migrant communities etc.

For people from diverse cultural backgrounds, training is most beneficial when it includes:

- Real-life scenarios
- Opportunities for small group discussions and plenty of time for questions

Post Royal Commission-Moving forward with confidence

ENLIST THE SUPPORT OF ELDERS OR COMMUNITY LEADERS

(particularly when it comes to organising education sessions or bringing forward concerns)

13

Post Royal Commission-Moving forward with confidence

GUIDANCE	**E.g. Equity is promoted and diversity respected**
Child Safe Standards (Governments and Catholic Church)	*'Particular attention is paid to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with a disability, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds'* *(Creating Child Safe Institutions-Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. July 2016)*

14

Post Royal Commission-Moving forward with confidence

GUIDANCE FOR THOSE IN MINISTRY

'Integrity in Ministry' (NCPS)

'Integrity in the Service of the Church' (NCPS)

Diocesan or Religious Institute's Policies and Codes of Conduct

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Eastern Catholic Traditions – Chaldean Eparchy

Most Reverent Amel Nona,

Eparch of St Thomas the Apostle of Sydney of the Chaldeans

Introduction

Chaldeans have come to Australia for the same reasons as other immigrant groups, in search of better religious, political, and economic freedom and opportunity. There are some 40,000 Chaldean people in Australia; with over 25,000 in Sydney, and about 15,000 in Melbourne. A number of families are found in other major cities including Brisbane, Canberra, Perth, and Adelaide. More than one thousand Chaldean families have settled recently.

Historical Background

The Chaldeans are the native people of what is presently known as Iraq. In ancient times this area was called Mesopotamia, 'the land between the two rivers'. An advanced civilisation flourished in this region long before that of Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Mesopotamian literature refers to ancient Chaldeans from the Babylonian Period as *Kaldaie*. Their homeland is Kaldu, and their descent is Kaldieyoutha, after the Biblical term (Chaldeans). In the Old Testament, they are known as *Kashdim/kasdim* which means, 'the powerful, mighty or victorious', which according to modern studies and discoveries was derived from the post-dilluvian dynasty of Kish/Cush (Biblical). The Old Testament also gives the Greek version of the name Chaldeans, *Kaldaniyoun*, which is the common word used nowadays. It appears several times in the Bible. Father Abraham is a Chaldean who migrated from Ur of the Kaldees to the promised-land (Gen 12:1 & Gen 15:7). The great Chaldean civilisation of Mesopotamia has a history that spans over 7316 years. Our forbearers were pioneers and inventors in the fields of science and arts, especially in Astronomy, Mathematics, Medicine, Architecture, and writing.

Language

Today's Chaldeans speak Aramaic (Chaldean) language, the language of ancient Babylonia/Chaldea, and the language spoken by Our Lord Jesus Christ, his Blessed Mother, and his Disciples. Classical Aramaic is still used in the Chaldean Liturgy; the dialect Aramaic -Chaldean- is used at home and in daily life.

Liturgy

Chaldeans belong to the "Eastern" tradition of faith. They were converted to Christianity by St. Thomas the Apostle and his disciples Mar (Saint) Addai and Mar Mari in the first century. The Chaldean Church was the most energetic Christian Church in the world for several centuries and to it goes the credit for spreading Christianity in India, Japan, and China. The Chaldean liturgy is very rich and has many hymns, rhythms, music, and many poems. As an Eastern Rite, we give the sacrament of confirmation with the sacrament of baptism. The language of the liturgy is a classic Chaldean mixed with local languages like English, French, and Arabic. We have some different feasts for example, the feasts of Local Saints or Patrons of each Chaldean Village. We have a fast sf Bayotha of Nineveh for 3 days (reminisce of the prophet Johan and his mission in Nineveh), it takes place in the second week before the Lenten season. During Lent we normally fast for 50 days but we don't celebrate Ash Wednesday.

Chaldeans in their Home Land

The Chaldean community is a Patriarchal society (like other eastern societies) in which the father is the head of the family. The women followed the traditional roles as wives and mothers. They were the heart and the nurturers of the family, beside their jobs or professions if they had one. Children were given a sense of responsibility towards each other and taught to show much respect and honour to their elders. Traditionally, Chaldean parents emphasised the values of Religion, morality, integrity, hospitality, education, a hard work ethic and very strong family ties. In general Chaldeans have preference to live in a close community style and close to the Church. Social life is an important aspect of the Chaldean

people and it is built on two factors, these are Community and Church. This is evident here in Australia where there is large concentration of Chaldeans in suburbs they live in.

Chaldeans in Australia

Chaldeans started coming to Australia in the beginning of 1970s. Since the Gulf War of 1991, and due to the social and political unrest that followed, thousands of displaced Chaldeans were forced to seek refuge in the neighbouring countries. Australia's intake of Iraqi Refugees included many Chaldeans who were directly affected by those events.

The Chaldean Church in Australia

Chaldeans are strongly attached to their Church not only for their spiritual guidance but also as the core of their community. Nearly all educational, charitable, and social functions and services to the community members in Australia are coordinated and implemented through the Chaldean parishes of Sydney and Melbourne.

Culture Shock

Despite the fact that our Parish is relatively new, we have a mix of different generations; the older generation who come from Iraq, Iran, and Syria, who have a unique vision and way in practicing their faith to those who are born and raised here. This leads to having three generations as a matter of fact. The mix in generations is at its inception, but the differences are clear and hence we emphasis on many factors such as family and its importance as well as focusing on two factors:

1. Teaching faith in a way that is customised to all ages, old and young, and practicing this teaching in an easy and simple way to remove any burden on the faithful.

2. Community traditional customs and events. Two examples are weddings and funerals as they build stronger community ties. Chaldeans are known to be a closely connected community and hence building these values into the new generations which in turns brings them and ties them closer to the church.

Community Expansion

We have noticed in the recent years that many members of the community are moving to different cities and regions in Australia for various reasons and this presents us with a new challenge. The church does not have the financial and human means to connect and be part of the community in new cities or regions. Moving to new cities or regions requires building new churches, and providing priests. This is not easily achievable given the fact that migration of the Chaldeans around the world has led to shortage in Chaldean priests. The reduction was been quicker than it takes for priests to complete their studies. It is worth mentioning that all current priests in our parish in Australia are from Iraq. There is however some good news. On 1st of September the first Chaldean priest from Australia will be ready to serve the community. Though he was born in Iraq, he studied here in the seminary and we believe there will be more Chaldean men that will take the call of being priests.

Homeland Belonging

Our Community here in Australia and due to the fact that they are recent arrivals still have families, relatives and friends still in Iraq and witnessing what is still happening back in Iraq and surrounding countries such as Syria has impact on them. Chaldeans here still have concerns and worries about their loved ones and naturally think about how they can support them financially or work towards helping them to leave and come to safer countries. It is clear that having divisions of the families in many countries impacts their stability and the strong ties that they work hard to achieve.

Furthermore, the majority of the Chaldean community came from areas where its members were ethnically and religiously discriminated against. This has led them to be a separated community with the aim of staying closer to their own community members, which in turn has formed an opinion to protect their values and traditions, to protect their identity, as change can be seen as a threat and a challenge. Having this situation can be seen in a positive and negative way: positive where the Chaldean community is protecting its faith, identity, values and traditions of which they are very proud, and negatively where they have isolation and not opening to other community points of view.

Culture Differences

Chaldeans are Eastern Christian group and have their way of living their social life, family values and virtues of life and we have protected them while leaving in the Middle East, but this has proven to be difficult given that living in Australia is an open and secular society and are not base on the Christian values.

This culture shock can be viewed from different angles and perspectives, those that are opening up to their surrounding environment and still maintaining their cultural and family values and try to balance the difference in cultures. Those who are changing completely to the new open society and those who have isolated themselves and don't accept the new way of life. I'm happy to see that majority of the community are following the first perspective despite the fact it is not an easy way to manage and live.

The church works actively to create the balance between the two cultures and avoids collision or ignores one group over the others which is a challenging task which in turn places us in a position to speak and preach in different ways that is appealing to all to promote inclusiveness.

Faith and the Challenge of new society

In our homeland, faith is the core value of life and all aspect are looked at from a faith perspective and it is not based on theories or conclusions from a scientific

perspective and proves which is what is currently been witnessed in Australia. Given the different nature of lifestyle that is based on Christian values and faith or secular and scientific approach of life, which requires constant discussion and teaching to create the balance of the two theories about faith in Christ. The Chaldean community is working to keep their values and faith and also adapt the new values and way of living by finding the balance to be a active members of the Australian community.

Key points

Majority members of the community are still strongly holding on their faith and receive the secrets of Catholic faith of Baptism, Holy Communion, Marriage and Death. Chaldean migration from Iraq to Australia is assisting in keeping the strong ties of Cultural, Social and Spiritual connection which project positive image and impact to the Australian Community and in turns benefits to our homeland such as multicultural values that are not based on secular point of view.

Conclusion:

Like other ethnic groups and communities who have immigrated to Australia, Chaldeans are adopting the Australian customs, values, and lifestyle, even as they retain pride in their heritage and family values.

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Eastern Catholic Traditions – Syro-Malabar Eparchy

Most Rev Bosco Puthur

Eparch of Syro Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle

Introduction

As the Syro-Malabar Bishop in Australia I am grateful to the organizers for inviting me to speak about the challenges and successes of the Syro-Malabar community emerging within the Church in Australia.

In the Australian 'diaspora', the Eastern Catholics, including the Syro-Malabarians, are cultural and ecclesial minorities, struggling to maintain their identity, survival, and relevance. The following basic principles and fundamental rights of the Churches based on the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Codes of Canon Law would be helpful to moderate the ecclesial life of different Churches *sui iuris* and ensure peaceful co-existence and beneficial collaboration among them on the basis of justice, truth and charity. They are:

1) Right to Existence;
2) Right to Equality;
3) Right to Legitimate Diversity in Unity;
4) Right to Autonomy;
5) Right to the Preservation and Observation of One's Own Rite;
6) Right to Growth and Development;
7) Right to Pastoral Care in One's Own Rite; and
8) Right to Evangelization.[3]

I am very grateful to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference for its booklet Eastern Catholic Churches in Australia (2016). "The faithful (of the eparchies

[3] (Cf. Fr. Paul Pallath, "The Fundamental Rights of the Churches in the Catholic Communion of Churches", Justitia, Vol. 3, No. 2, December 2012, PP.169-191)

established in Australia) are *ipso facto* excluded entirely from the jurisdiction of the Latin Church bishops, and subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of their own eparch" (5.1). Unfortunately, maybe due to lack of authentic ecclesial awareness, there are a few faithful of the Eastern churches, and several priests and even a few bishops in Australia, who are unwilling to recognize such a canonical provision.

Unlike other Eastern Catholic communities, migration to Australia (the land of opportunities) of members of the Syro-Malabar Church, fruit of the Apostolate of St. Thomas the Apostle in India, (hence the community is also called St. Thomas Christians) in significant numbers is a recent phenomenon, especially from 2005. A vast majority of the Syro-Malabarians hail from the Indian state of Kerala. Kerala has, in comparison with other states of India, the highest number of educated and skilled people, without proportionate job opportunities. They came to seek better labour opportunities mainly in the health and IT sectors. Density of population in Australia is 2.91 persons per square kilometre, which makes Australia the 3rd least densely populated country in the world, after Namibia and Mongolia. Whereas, the density of population in Kerala is 860 persons per square kilometre. This is another reason for migration from Kerala. Now the Syro-Malabar Catholic population in Australia is around 50,000.

Some of the Syro-Malabar priests, mainly from the religious congregations, already working in the Australian Latin dioceses, helped, with the patronage of the local bishops, the Syro-Malabar communities in the formative period in Australia. On 23 December 2013 Pope Francis established the Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle of Melbourne for the Syro-Malabar faithful in Australia, with me as its first Bishop. The inauguration of the Eparchy and installation of the Bishop took place on 25 March 2014. Ever since, we are in the process of strengthening the communities especially with sacramental life, Sunday catechesis for children and youth, daily family prayer and monthly family prayer.

Father Placid J. Podipara CMI, one of the most respected authorities on the history and theology of the Syro-Malabar Church, has the following catchy formulation regarding the church's identity: "The Saint Thomas Christians are

Indian in culture, Christian in religion and Oriental in worship."[4]. They succeeded in blending well with the ecclesiastical world of the Eastern Churches and with the changing socio-cultural environment of their homeland.

When asked about his expectation of the Synod on the family, Cardinal George Pell said in 2016, "What do I expect? What I would like is a list of the best practice examples from all around the world of strategies and practices that help the church. For example, in the Syro Malabar church so much of their family life over the years is celebrated with prayers in the family". I consider this as a best compliment and a challenge to the Syro-Malabar community in Australia and all over the world. In general, the Syro-Malabar families strive to bring up their children in an atmosphere of family prayer, to be respectful to elders and religious leaders, to excel in studies and art, to be amiable among peers, to be well-versed spiritually and culturally, to bring honour to parents, and to keep a pure reputation in preparation for marriage.[5].

But migration of the faithful of the Syro-Malabar church outside the boundaries of India challenges the community's identity on all three dimensions, i.e., Indian in culture, Christian in religion and Oriental in worship. First because we live in a multicultural Australian society, unlike the close-knit tradition-based Indian culture. Second because we live in a predominantly secular atmosphere, unlike the general religious milieu of India. Finally, as many of our people live far away from the oriental worshipping facilities, the availability and convenience of neighbourhood Latin churches often becomes more attractive.

Indian in culture

Syro-Malabar Catholics usually felt at home in the Kerala, Indian culture and language. But the migration into a country with strong undercurrents of the western culture challenges the younger migrants, especially of the second

[4] Cf. George Menachery (ed.) The St. Thomas Christian Encyclopedia of India, vol. 2,1973
[5] Cf. Jaisy Joseph, "Living In-Beyond the Margins", Reenvisioning Christian Identity and Relationships, p.28

generation, about their cultural identity. Unlike the migrating generation, the second generation has not adequately imbibed the deep cultural roots of their ancestors and have only second-hand information of the rich Indian heritage through their parents. The same is the situation of their proficiency in Malayalam language. Although the Australian society is now generally called multicultural and secular, its predominant cultural and linguistic influence is Anglo-Celtic. Hence youth of our community have to face several barriers, challenges, and struggles, at the level of culture, faith-life, and mode of worship.

In-Between Identity

In multicultural societies, there is this risk of living in two different cultures yet feeling like one belongs to neither. Adult immigrants can become part of this cultural in-between, but younger ones are more affected. In more homogeneous societies, ethnic identity can strongly dictate one's cultural identity, but in multicultural societies like Australia, ethnicity influences but doesn't determine cultural identity. The Syro-Malabar Church in this new context has to accommodate people in this wide range of cultural identities from more Indian to more Australian and everything in-between. Migrant youth may live in a sense of rootlessness and disconnect themselves with their heritage and experience a profound confusion regarding the relevance of the Syro-Malabar Catholic faith in their search for meaning and truth in the new context. The Church has to be a bridge builder, facilitating the youth to get out of isolating themselves from both.

Cultural tradition and Faith Tradition

Then, there is the problem with distinguishing the characteristics of the cultural tradition and faith tradition. The first sometimes is inconsistent with the cultural values of Australia, but the Faith Tradition should never conflict nor have reason to conflict. The problem seems to be when we conflate the two together.

In-Both Identity

The Syro-Malabar youth in Australia should not live in the margin, belonging neither to the Indian nor to the Australian culture. I understand it as "multicultural" in a positive and inclusive sense. There is room to be an authentically Syro-Malabar Australian. Being in both worlds must be complemented by the self-affirming, transcending experience. It does not at all mean a hybrid identity. Marginality in the positive and inclusive sense is to exist at the 'margin that connects both world" and yet to transcend and live in-beyond. Jesus (divine and human) is a great example of one who lived in the margin and in-beyond. We are challenged to create an authentic Syro-Malabar Indian-Australian identity.

In-both Cultures

Being in both situations allows the cultures to fine tune the good values present in the other through creative encounter and fruitful dialogue. By living between two centres of power, things are negotiable and not set in stone. The combination of the negative in-between and the positive in-both allows for the possibility of in-beyond. This possibility, I believe, is actually the migrant identity of every Christian – to be in this world, but not of it, to live in and beyond. It is the Christian double-consciousness. In this lies the future of the Eastern Churches in the diaspora, including that of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Conclusion

The Mission of the Syro-Malabar Church in Australia is to accompany the Syro-Malabar communities in their pilgrimage of faith following Jesus Christ, by helping them to acquire greater awareness of their Oriental Catholic Ecclesial Identity, leading them by the power of the Spirit to Christ-like maturity, and equip them for their evangelizing ministry in the Church and in the multicultural and secular Australian society.

*****

Vocations from Migrant Communities – The Divine Word Missionaries

Kylie Cullen

Divine Word Missionaries





THE VDMF IS AN INSTITUTE OF CONSECRATED LIFE...COMPOSED OF THREE BRANCHES:

- **Missionary women**
- **Missionary men**
- **Missionary married couples**

Contemplative-active, fully apostolic and missionary



WE ARE IN THE FIVE CONTINENTS, WITH THREE COMMUNITIES IN AUSTRALIA....
SYDNEY, WOLLONGONG, BRISBANE

International Catholic Community

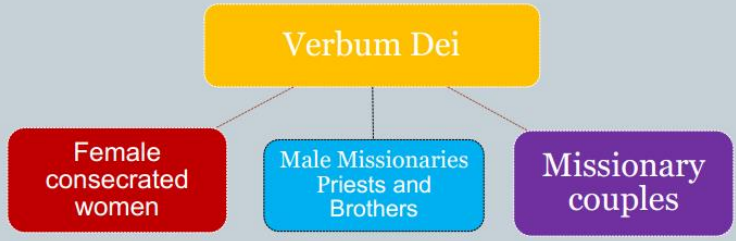


We dedicate ourselves full-time to prayer and ministry of the Word.

Acts 6:4



3 Missionary Branches:



…who consecrate their lives to God through the profession of vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and missionary couples who consecrate themselves to God.

We are all dedicated to EVANGELISATION through PRAYER and MINISTRY OF THE WORD

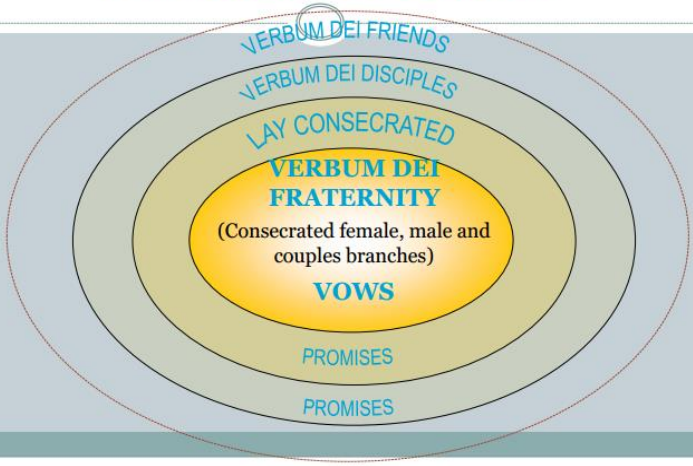


We all centre our specific mission in the WORD OF GOD through the dynamism of the WORD:

To pray with the word
Live/practice the word
Share the word…



VERBUM DEI FAMILY







Verbum Dei Missionaries seek to be a **clear and joyful expression** of the **Kingdom of God** by building Christian communities of living faith wherever we are through the means of **PRAYER**, **MINISTY OF THE WORD**, and **WITNESS OF LIFE**

Prayer:

Prayer with the Word of God is an integral and vital part of the community's daily life.

"It is in this intimate dialogue with the Word, or prayer, that our calling and mission to preach the gospel is rooted"

(Verbum Dei Constitution #15)





WITNESS OF LIFE

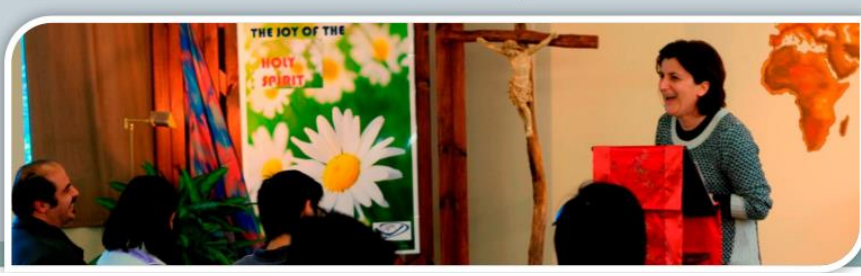


- *Our aim is that our preaching is always preceded and accompanied by a witness of life that makes it credible.*

Ministry of the Word

Preaching the Word of God for us is transmitting God's life that we receive in prayer. Essential to our mission is to enable others to do the same.

(II Tim 2:2)



OUR MISSION



There is a thirst in every heart that cannot be quenched by material things, it is the thirst for an unconditional MERCIFUL LOVE
which gives meaning to life.

.



"Our hearts are restless until they rest in God."
(St Augustine)

Through prayer we invite people to experience this great love and be transformed in his LOVE AND MERCY





HOW DO WE REACH OUT TO OTHERS?

- Advertise in Parish Bulletins
- Personal contact/ Word of mouth
- CYS (Catholic Youth Services)
- Website
- Social Media/ Facebook





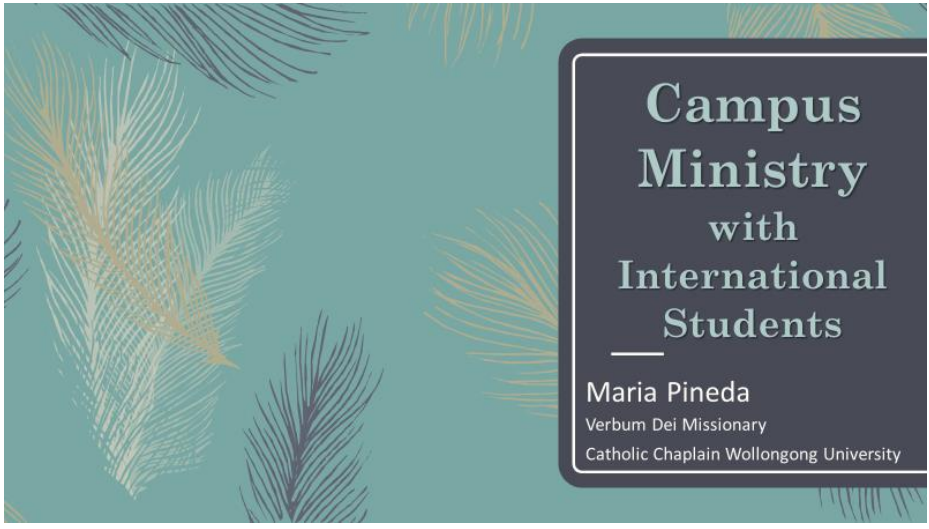
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International Students – University of Wollongong Catholic Chaplaincy

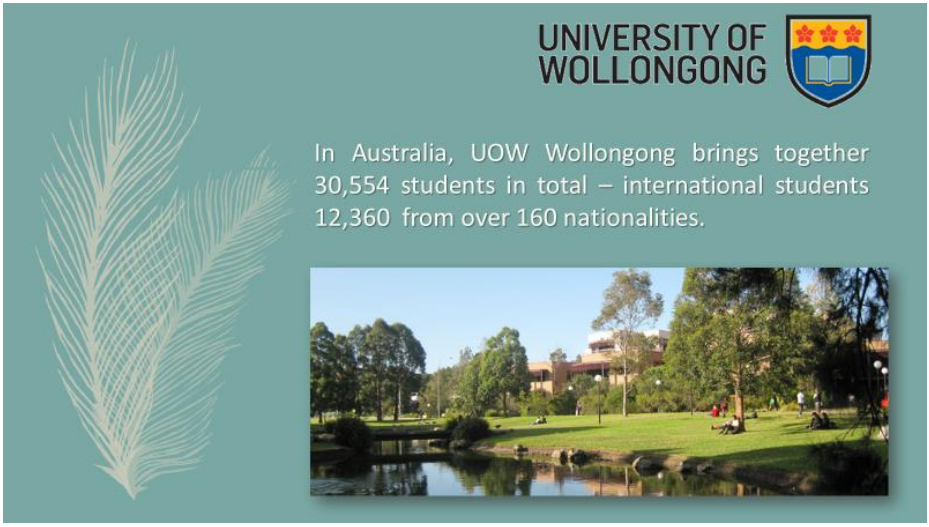
Maria Pineda

Catholic Chaplain, University of Wollongong

My name is Maria Pineda and I belong to the Verbum Dei Missionary Community. Together with Louise Byrne, we form the chaplaincy team at the University of Wollongong (UOW).



The University of Wollongong is in Wollongong, one hour south of Sydney. It has over 12,000 international students and over 160 nationalities.





What is our pastoral care to the international students of the University of Wollongong?

For international students who leave their country for the first time to study overseas, the first months can be quite daunting. English is usually not the students' main language and unfortunately the lack of English fluency limits their integration to Australian culture. Making friendships is difficult due to the lack of time with busy and different timetables. Overseas students also find challenging the impersonal exchange between lecturer and students compared to their high school experience.



The University offers students the opportunity to belong to a club or society at the start of each session. During this time, the Catholic Society enrols new members. Most of them would be first year students at UOW and from different parts of the world.



The Catholic Society is a faith community and as chaplains, we endeavour to connect, not only students with one another, but also, to connect with God. We offer various activities on campus to establish “church” on campus: prayer with the Word, weekly Mass, the sacrament of reconciliation, and faith formation.



Our social activities such as video nights, sports, outings, or excursions also aim to strengthen the community outside of university.



As chaplains, we take any opportunity or meeting to practice “Evangelization of encounters” as Pope Frances once described how to Evangelize. By connecting to students, and connecting students with each other, and with God, we build up a faith community on campus.



We deal with many pastoral issues and often need to direct students to the right help and especially make it known to them that there are services available to them: e.g. counsellors on campus, doctors, student advocacy, accommodation, employment issues, etc.





There are two sides to this question....

The challenge for the **international students**

and

The challenge for the **parish community**



- **interview to international students: their challenges: (first time away)**

  -- English is not their main language
  -- language limits their involvement in uni life and off campus
  -- missing home, need a sense of belonging
  -- on campus, the limitation of coinciding to spend time together with friends
  --- Inculturation

The challenge for the international students

- Helping the students find a parish community in the area that they live. Where to go? Who to go with?

-- providing leaflets with all mass times / parish locations
--- first Sunday of the month, Mass at the Cathedral



- Encourage students to offer themselves and their gifts and talents to the parish community.

-- catechists
-- parish choirs
-- playing piano, guitar
-- volunteering for diocesan events





We have been blessed to be in this ministry and blessed to be placed in the lives of these students. We pray that our life can make a difference in their time on campus.



*****

International Students – The Australian Catholic University

Maria Valastro

ACU Counselling Service, ACU McAuley Campus



Challenges*

'Core Themes'

1. Personal and interpersonal challenges

2. Meeting basic needs

3. Risks to psychological and physical wellbeing

* Drawn on Judy Wright's and Melinda Gollan's research, *The Psycho-Social Needs of International Students* (2008).

Core Theme 1

Personal & Interpersonal Challenges

- Experiences of loneliness, isolation, lack of connectedness and belonging
- Life/work/study balance and stress
- Communication / language difficulties
- Academic difficulties / pressures (self and others)
- Cross cultural issues (culture shock, reduced supports)
- Transition/adjustment issues to study and Australia

Core Theme 2

Meeting Basic Needs

- Financial needs / difficulties
- Accommodation and housing
- Employment issues
- Transport issues (cost / reliance on public transport)
- Navigating cultural differences – 'Aussie' culture, different foods and lifestyle

Core Theme 3

Risks to Psychological & Physical Wellbeing

- Personal safety (assault, theft)
- Experiences of discrimination on and off campus
- Childcare and parenting issues
- Exploitation (workplace, housing, sexual safety)
- Health concerns (physical, psychological)

Determined to Succeed Research*

'Resilience'

What supports students to stay and succeed at university despite challenges?

- Self-belief and determination
- Having support from family and friends
- Community and faith connections
- Accessing university support services
- Making contact with academic staff
- Maintaining a positive outlook

* ACU Counselling Service 2011 research project

Supporting International Students

What role can we play in addressing these challenges?

- Research shows there are strong links between connection and a sense of wellbeing
- Universities play a significant part in providing a sense of community where connection and belonging can occur
- Fostering positive engagement early in student career > motivates students to engage in campus & wider communities
- Community engagement opportunities which foster connection and inclusion eg. Volunteering, programs, social events

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Spirituality, Identity, and Culture – Anglo-Celtic Spirituality in Australia

Fr David Ranson

Diocese of Broken Bay

I have been asked to share a few very brief reflections on the importance of culture to the shaping of our spiritual identity – and particularly how this may present in our own Australian context. That culture shapes religious consciousness is a theme that was at the heart of the 20th century scholar of spirituality, Michel de Certeau. As he wrote,

> *Experience is always defined in cultural terms, even when it is religious…it is in the very cultural situation that [a person's] yearnings and [their] predicament 'take flesh', it is through this medium that [they] find God yet ever seek him, that [they] express [their] faith, that [they carry] on simultaneous experiments in colloquy with God and with [their] actual [fellows]…A culture is the language of a spiritual experience…[Spiritual experience] is therefore expressed in terms of the experiences, ambitions, fears, sicknesses and greatnesses proper to [people] who are caught up with contemporaries in a world conditioned by a particular kind of exchange and a particular type of consciousness.*[6]

[6] Michel de Certeau, "Mystic Speech," in Heterologies: Discourse on the Other, translated by Brian Massumi, Theory and History of Literature, Volume 17, (Minneapolis/London: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 83.

This recognition of how context shapes religious imagination is something, however, relatively new in our reflection in Australia. Geoffrey Lilburne noted this when he wrote,

> *Brought to these shores as part of a larger European colonial enterprise, Christianity in both its Catholic and Protestant variants has prided itself on being the religion of civilization. And, for most of its recent history, Australia has been so absorbed in its European roots and culture that it has taken little notice of what is here, in this place and among these people. We have allowed ourselves to be co-opted into some versions of world history with scant regard for our actual context. As Australians we are only now beginning to take a hard, critical look at our actual setting and to ask ourselves that we may learn from the people with whom we share the continent and the region.*[7]

One of the primary lessons that, indeed, we have absorbed from our aboriginal people is the importance of the landscape which is the principle experience that unites us all in Australia, irrespective of when we have arrived on these shores. The geography in which we live deeply affects consciousness, and therefore furnishes aspects of spirituality which are not universally shared, but which are particularly experienced. As Carl Jung – albeit using the language of his time – observed,

> *The soil one stands on transmits its morphology into one's soul. Just as, in the process of evolution, the mind has been moulded by earthly conditions, so the same process repeats itself under our eyes today. …Certain Australian primitives assert that one cannot conquer foreign soil, because in it there dwell strange ancestor-spirits who reincarnate themselves in the new-born. There is a great*

[7] Geoffrey Lilburne, "Contextualising Australian Theology: An Enquiry into Method," Pacifica 10 (1997), 350-351.

psychological truth in this. The foreign land assimilates its conqueror…Everywhere the virgin earth causes at least the unconscious of the conqueror to sink to the level of its indigenous inhabitants.[8]

Such an insight is given recognition in a comment such as that afforded at the very beginning of the 20th century by A. G. Stephens:

Our fathers brought with them the religious habit as they brought other habits of elder nations in older lands. Upon religion, as upon everything else, the spirit of Australia – that undefined, undefinable resultant of earth and air and conditions of climate and life – has seized, modifying, altering, increasing or altogether destroying. In the case of religious belief, the tendency is clearly to destruction. [This due to] a skeptical and utilitarian spirit that values the present hour and refuses to sacrifice the present for any visionary future lacking a rational guarantee.[9]

Christian faith was introduced into both the Australian landscape and its unique cultural context nearly 250 years ago. It first arrived on our shores as an extension of the European Enlightenment and within the context of English penal colonialism. This has meant that the religious imagination in Australia has rarely presented as part of a grand narrative. Rather,

In fact, Australia was always more a country of Christians than a Christian country. European settlement was not motivated by some noble cause, far less by any notion that it was part of God's grand design. There is no foundational myth for Australia, let alone a religious one, no equivalent of America's Pilgrim Fathers…What religious

[8] Carl Jung, "Mind and Earth" in Civilisation in Transition, Collected Works Volume 10, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul,1970)
[9] A. G. Stephens, 1904, quoted by Veronica Brady, "Land of the Spirit: A Review," Pacifica 4 (1991), 330-331

beliefs were brought out with the first settlers came as personal baggage, an emotional comfort from a world abandoned rather than a spiritual resource for conquering the new frontier. The first official chaplains were regarded – and regarded themselves – as accessories to colonial administration. Their job was to keep the convicts in line by reminding them that a virtuous life endured in this world would bring rewards in the next. A censorious style, rather than a prophetic one, has been a hallmark of religious leadership ever since. In this climate it is no surprise that it took five years for the first church to be built at Sydney Cove. It took only another five before it was burnt down by its disgruntled congregation…There was a boom in church construction some years later when the Government began subsidizing the costs. But the effort to catch up had the effect of cocooning religion behind walls instead of letting it loose in the land to shape a culture. Another effect was to encourage the idea that faith was best expressed in bricks and mortar. Indeed, religion in Australia became a building project. Muscular Christianity meant rolling up the shirt sleeves at parish weekend bees rather than imagining the nature of God's Kingdom and bringing it into the here and now.[10]

Catholic Faith, itself, was introduced to Australia through the lens of English Benedictinism by the appointment of John Bede Polding, monk of Downside, as first bishop in 1835. Establishing St. Mary's Priory in 1843, Polding's dream was of a Benedictine archabbey, a national Benedictine Church. However, Polding's Benedictine spirituality more significantly afforded a vision of Christian civilization based on justice and friendship. As he wrote in his Lenten Pastoral of 1856:

[10] Chris McGillion, "O Ye of Little Faith," Sydney Morning Herald 11 April 1998

> *Before everything else we are Catholics: and next, by a name swallowing up all distinctions or origin, we are Australians; from whatsoever land we or our parents have arrived hither, be it from Ireland, from France, from England, from Scotland, from Germany, we are no longer Irishmen, and Frenchmen, and Englishmen, and Scotchmen, but Australians, and the man who seeks by word or writing to perpetuate invidious distinctions is an enemy to our peace and prosperity.*

Polding died in 1877. His successor, Archbishop Vaughan, sought from Rome the dissolution of the Benedictine foundation. For by this time, the Irish presence in the Church in Australia had superseded English foundations. The presence of the displaced Irish had been heavily shaped by the 19th century Irish ecclesiasticism of Cardinal Paul Cullen who, upon his return from Rome to Dublin in 1850, had sought to reinvigorate the depressed Church in Ireland through a 'devotional revolution' by which a new sense of Catholic identity might develop. It was Cullen who introduced into the Irish Church the rosary, Forty Hours perpetual adoration, novenas, blessed altars, the Way of the Cross, Benediction, Vespers, devotion to the Sacred Heart and Immaculate Conception, shrines, processions, parish missions, the month of May for Mary, the litanies, votive candles, statues and pictures, and holy cards. Given that Cullen chose the first generation of Irish bishops in Australian, culminating in his nephew Cardinal Moran as Archbishop of Sydney, Australia became a colony of the Irish Church. The Irish formed an enclave despised or alienated in an English colony. To assuage this alienation and to assert their identity they turned to the one institution that was available to them, the Church. The parish became the way the Irish continued to be socialized. The buildings they constructed gave the people something to look at and be proud of; and the gathering of the money for them kept the people together and gave them a social life within the parish. The consequence was a spiritualty that was entirely pragmatic.[11]

[11] See Andrew Hamilton, "200 Years on Australian Theology," Compass 22 (1988:1-2), 32-38.

More positively, however, when such a spirit delved deeper into the vastness and isolation of the landscape itself, a pioneering spiritual framework began to emerge, evidenced especially in the Josephite initiate introduced by Julian Tenison Woods (1832-1889) and Mary MacKillop (1842-1909). Such is a study of inheritance and innovation in the shaping of the Australian religious consciousness. The outcome is a simple kind of spirituality, individual and homespun, never far removed from that of people in whatever circumstances they live.

The Church in Australia remained essentially Irish through to the 1960s. For only a very brief period in the 1960s to the 1980s did the Church experience itself as an autochthonous entity. By the 1990s a new multicultural Church has become our reality, and it will remain our future.

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Spirituality, Identity, and Culture – Spirituality of the Syro-Malabar Church (St Thomas Christians)

Fr Mathew Kochupurackal

Syro Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle

Introduction

The Syro-Malabar Church believes that the Christ-Experience of the Apostle Thomas forms part of its original patrimony and hence of its spirituality. The risen Lord touches the heart of Thomas telling, “do not be faithless but believing” and then the Apostle has no more the need of any tangible experience but answers in deep faith, “My Lord and My God”. This spirituality of Thomas is the very life-breath of the Thomas Christians. It is nothing other than the spirituality of Jesus Himself, that is, to keep the commandment of the Father, abide in His love, and to do all that is pleasing to Him. This heredity is lived on in the tradition of the St Thomas Christians.

Passionate Attachment of the Christians to their Father in Faith

A few examples are: people and parishes named after him and pilgrimage to the tomb of St Thomas and to the churches dedicated to his name. The spiritual heritage designated by the term ‘Law of Thomas’ comprises the whole of their Christian patrimony, of faith, liturgy, ecclesiastical system, ascetical practices, Church discipline, customs, and laws. It refers to their specific mode of living as a Church community with a spirituality and identity of its own, distinct from the ‘Law of Peter’ followed by the Latin missionaries who arrived in Kerala in the 16th century. This term ‘Law of Thomas’ was employed to prove their stand against Latinization forced upon them by the western missionaries.

Certain Traits of St Thomas Christians' Spirituality

The basic trends of Eastern spirituality as biblical and liturgical, ecclesial and sacramental, practical and experiential, mystical and ascetical, can be seen in the spiritual life of St Thomas Christians.

Spirituality based on Liturgy and Sacraments

With the Chaldean Church St Thomas Christians share the East Syriac liturgy perhaps from the 4th or 5th century. They have a Eucharist centred spirituality. Attendance at the Eucharistic celebration (Holy Qurbana) on Sundays and feast days belongs to their life norms. It has been testified by a number of western missionaries who visited India in the 16th century. Participation in the Divine Liturgy and frequent reception of the sacrament of penance form a strong basis for their spirituality. Solemn recitation of the divine praises (liturgy of the hours) especially in priestly and religious formation centres is one of the most important schedules of the day.

Catechetical instruction to children and youth are an inseparable part of Sunday observance. We have catechism classes from preparatory to grade 12 with a well-planned syllabus.

Spirituality built upon the culture of the land

Interiority, importance of the heart, sense of the sacred, love of nature, emphasis on self-renunciation, ascetical practices, importance of a Guru (teacher), life based on dharma (duty), concept of nonviolence, etc. are some of the characteristics of Indian spirituality. These spiritual and cultural elements of the home land have played a great role in the formation of the spirituality of the Thomas Christians. Indian culture integrated with the Christian faith is the uniqueness of the St Thomas Christian spirituality.

Spirituality rooted in the rigorous life of fasting and penance

The western missionaries who visited India in the 16th century have testified to the life of fasting and prayer of the Thomas Christians. They used to abstain from delicious food articles like meat, fish, egg, milk, and milk products during the seasons of fast chiefly twenty-five days before Christmas and fifty days before

Easter. They joined fasting with long prayers and almsgiving. These practices are still very strong among us even in Australia.

Spirituality outpouring in the acts of charity

Mercy and kindness towards the poor has always an important place in the life of the Thomas Christians. There have been poor families supported by the rich with shelter and food. Now, an organized way of doing charity exists in all dioceses and parishes.

Spirituality enshrined in the devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary and saints

Devotion to Mary has always been very strong among the Thomas Christians. A majority of the churches of the Thomas Christians are dedicated to Mary. All the Marian feasts are celebrated with great solemnity. Eight days of fasting and prayer are observed before the feast of the Nativity (September 8th) and fifteen days of fasting before the feast of the Assumption (August 15th). Later, the feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8th) was also introduced.

Feasts of saints, especially of the patron saint of the parish, are celebrated with great enthusiasm. Long prayers and colourful processions carrying the relic of the saint are accompanied by the playing of musical instruments are still kept alive.

Thomas Christians including the laity are very much interested in participating frequently in spiritual retreats like Bible conventions, residential retreats, tapas (fasting) retreats, Jesus youth camps, Eucharistic adorations, novenas, night vigils, etc. There are 3 canonically declared Saints, 2 Blesseds, 2 Venerables and 13 Servants of God from the Syro-Malabar Church.

Spirituality following in the footsteps of the saints

The Thomas Christians are very much interested in making pilgrimages after due spiritual preparation. Their main pilgrim centres are dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Thomas, the Apostle. Visiting the churches dedicated to St George is also an ancient custom. Now, pilgrimages to the tombs of St Alphonsa, St Kuriakose Elias, St Euphrasia and those of the blessed have become very common.

Spirituality outshined in the vocation to priesthood and consecrated life

The number of the Syro-Malabar faithful all over the world is 4.5 million. There are 7,945 priests (4,205 diocesan & 3,740 religious), 34,147 religious sisters and 1,214 major seminarians in this Church.

Spirituality Practised in the Family

Faith filled Family Events

For the Thomas Christians, home is the place where faith is born, nourished and transmitted. They give a religious dimension to every event in the family. The name of Jesus Christ is recited while the new born child is fed. Children are initiated into the letters of the alphabet with special prayers. In order to strengthen family ties, infants are given the names of their paternal and maternal grandparents. The relation between the husband and wife is considered very sacred and, therefore, divorce is not very common among them. Remarriage after the death of a young partner is very rare. The remaining partner leads an ascetical life praying for the departed person.

When death is imminent, the names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph are whispered into the ears of the dying person. After the death and burial of a person, there are some fixed dates such as 7th, 9th, 11th, 41st, etc. of prayer for the departed one. The close relatives of the dead practice penance and abstain from food materials like meat, fish, milk, etc. during those days. The anniversary of death is commemorated as a feast in the family to which all close relatives are invited, and the priest officiates with special prayers. They give alms and food to the poor in the name of the departed person.

Family prayer

In the evenings all members of the family gather to pray. Now, the main item of the prayer is rosary. The prayers are concluded with the reading of the gospel. Then all children greet the parents first and then each other with folded hands saying, 'praise be to Jesus Christ". Every major event in the family is begun with prayer. People start living in new houses only after getting them blessed by priests.

Conclusion

The spirituality of St Thomas Christians emerging from the mingling of the Catholic faith, the Oriental form of worship and the Indian culture appears to be an ideal one. It is the fruit of the biblical and patristic synthesis of the Catholic faith which came through the Apostle Thomas and the East Syriac fathers. It maintains the vertical and horizontal relations of man in balance, in the sense that, through fasting and prayer man purifies his heart, makes his relationship with God very close and intimate. Through the works of mercy, almsgiving, and righteousness he regulates and strengthens his relations with his fellowmen.

Now, the Syro-Malabar Catholics in Australia learn to live in the culture of this land with our Catholic faith, oriental worship, and Indian heritage. It is our mission and challenge. Our community is not very old in Australia, say 10 to 15 years. The first generation takes great interest to live the spirituality which they have acquired from India. We succeed to great extent in providing pastoral care to them. Our second generation is being trained to adopt the spirituality of our Church and to adapt it to their life situations in Australia. Liturgical services and catechetical instruction in English, youth retreats, participation of the youth in family units, debates on faith related issues, formation of Syro-Malabar youth movements, catechism day organized by the kids, etc. are some of the activities for the second generation.

We firmly believe that we have much to contribute to the vast Australian community and to receive from it which is multicultural. When our children share of their religious practice to their peers in schools they receive manifold response. Certain kids are inspired to practice their faith and persuade their

parents. A few ridicule them on being religious. Some maintain an indifferent attitude. Experience of our adults who work with the wider Australian community is also almost the same. We try to fulfil our two-fold mission: one to keep our faithful in the faith handed down to us by our forefathers and another is to transmit this spirituality to the wide Australian community. We humbly acknowledge that it is no easy task in a country like Australia where the number of people who claim “no religion” has overtaken Catholics.

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PRESENTATIONS DELIVERED AT THE SEVENTH BISHOP JOSEPH GRECH MEMORIAL COLLOQUIUM ON ETHICS AND MIGRATION

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY,
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

24 AUGUST 2017

Migration and Freedom of Religion: The Perspective of the Universal Church

Fr Fabio Baggio CS

Co-Under Secretary, Migrants and Refugee Section

Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development

Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development – Migrants & Refugees Section

I would like to start my presentation by thanking the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO), and particularly Fr. Maurizio Pettenà, for the invitation to contribute to this important gathering. It is not my first time, but this year I am representing the Migrants & Refugees Section of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development, a section which is directly guided by the Holy Father pope Francis. The theme of the 2017 edition of the Bishop Joe Grech Memorial Colloquium is *"Freedom of Religion in a Multi-Religious Society: The Contribution of Migration."* It is another very important topic to be considered from the perspective of the ethical and migration nexus. This gives me another good reason to commend this annual initiative of ACMRO. In my contribution I would like to present the perspective of the Universal Church on the special nexus between migration and freedom of religion.

On 21st August, just few days ago, Pope Francis released his Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018, titled *"Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees"*. To welcome, protect, promote, and integrate are the four verbs which the pastoral action of the Catholic Church towards migrants and refugees should be translated into. Under "promoting", the Holy Father underlines that religion constitutes an essential dimension of the Integral Human Development, whose quest represents the main reason of most of contemporary migration flows.

> *"Promoting essentially means a determined effort to ensure that all migrants and refugees – as well as the communities which welcome them – are empowered to achieve their potential as human beings, in all the dimensions which constitute the humanity intended by the Creator. Among these, we must recognize the true value of the religious dimension, ensuring to all foreigners in any country the freedom of religious belief and practice."*[12]

During the first half of 2017, the M&R Section, in collaboration with the Secretariat of State, several Bishops' Conferences and Catholic Organizations, prepared 20 Action Points to be considered in the process leading to the 2018 Global Compacts, one addressing migrants and the other addressing refugees. The Points have been approved by the Holy Father and are now offered to all men and women of good will as the basis for the advocacy work towards the Global Compacts. The 17th Action Point recites:

> *"Encourage States to adopt policies and practices that guarantee the freedom of religion, in both belief and practice, to all migrants and refugees regardless of their migratory status."*[13]

Nonetheless, the relevance of the nexus between migration and freedom of religion is not a new topic for the Catholic Magisterium. Focusing on the last 15 years, I would start with the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Oceania*, issued by Pope St John Paul II in 2001. Speaking about Oceania, Pope St John Paul II highlighted that although it is *"…geographically very large, its population is relatively small and unevenly distributed, though it comprises a large number of indigenous and migrant peoples."*[14] In such a multicultural setting, the Holy Father strongly states that,

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[12] Francis, Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018, (15 August 2017).

[13] Migrants & Refugees Section, 20 Action Points for the Global Compacts, 2017.

[14] John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia*, (22 November 2001), 6.

> *"Basic to all human rights is the freedom of religion, which includes the right to be instructed in the faith. …This requires that governments and school authorities ensure that this right is effectively respected. …Men and women religious, lay people and clergy have laboured to achieve this end, often with prodigious effort and many sacrifices. Their work needs to be consolidated and extended to ensure that all the baptized grow in faith and in understanding of the truth of Christ."*[15]

As a corollary of the recognition of the freedom of religion, envisioning a peaceful and enriching co-existence in a multicultural environment, Pope St John Paul II encourages all relevant actors to engage in ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, trying to avoid any kind of fundamentalism.[16]

In 2002, Pope St John Paul II decided to dedicate his Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees to "Migration and Interreligious Dialogue." Referring directly to the Second Vatican Council, Pope St John Paul II presented the respect for freedom of religion and conscience as essential requirements for dialogue among different people in a multicultural setting.

> *"This sincere effort to dialogue presupposes, on one hand, the reciprocal acceptance of differences, and sometimes even of contradictions, and also a respect for the free decisions that people make according to their own conscience. It is therefore indispensable for each one, to whatever religion he may belong, to take into account the essential requirements of freedom of religion and of conscience, as stated so well by the Ecumenical Council Vatican II (cf. Dignitatis humanae, 2)."*[17]

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[15] *Ibidem*, 22.

[16] Cf. *Ibidem*, 23-25.

[17] John Paul II, Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, (25 July 2001).

The Holy Father claims such respect also for Christians minorities, which have been resulting from the massive inflows of migrant workers:

> *"I would like to express the wish that this kind of living together in solidarity may also take place in countries where the majority profess a religion different from Christianity, but where Christian immigrants live and where they unfortunately do not always enjoy a true freedom of religion and conscience."*[18]

In 2004, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People issued the Instruction *Erga migrantes caritas Christi*. In response to the different challenges of contemporary migrations. The document introduced concrete pastoral orientations on different issues, including freedom of religion. According to the Instruction, the respect of freedom of religion is a crucial element of integral human development, aiming at keeping alive the necessary connection between immanence and transcendence;

> *In the case of non-Christian immigrants, the Church is also concerned with their human development and with the witness of Christian charity…. In any case the migrant of another religion should be helped insofar as possible to preserve a transcendent view of life."*[19]

For Catholics, the respect for other's belief and religious practice doesn't represent a threat to their faith and identity. Rather, interreligious dialogue requires the deepening of one's own convictions, in the profound understanding that every encounter with the "other" is an occasion to announce and witness the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Catholic communities receiving immigrants are required,

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[18] Ibidem.

[19] Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Instruction *Erga migrantes caritas Christi*, (3 May 2004), 59.

> *"…to appreciate their own identity even more, prove their loyalty to Christ, know the contents of the faith well, rediscover their missionary calling and thus commit themselves to bear witness for Jesus the Lord and His gospel. This is the necessary prerequisite for the correct attitude of sincere dialogue, open and respectful of all but at the same time neither naive nor ill-equipped."*[20]

The same Instruction clarifies that respect for others' religion should not lead to misunderstanding and confusions. It is not deemed opportune to make Christian churches, chapels, and places of worship available for non-Christian religious practices. Christian schools should not relinquish their evangelizing mission because of the presence of students of other religions. Any kind of relativistic teaching should be avoided.[21] The document also clearly states the principle of reciprocity as a,

> *"…relationship based on mutual respect and on justice in juridical and religious matters. …an attitude of heart and spirit that enables us to live together everywhere with equal rights and duties."*[22]

In 2012, Pope Benedict XVI, addressing the Catholic leaders and communities in the Middle East, highlighted that the lack of religious freedom, particularly when accompanied by humiliation and persecution, constitute one of the causes of forced migration. Christians,

> *"…experience frequent humiliation. They know from experience that they are often the victims when trouble breaks out. After taking an active part for centuries in the growth of their respective nations and helping to forge their identity and prosperity, many Christians are now seeking*

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[20] *Ibidem*, 60

[21] Cf. Ibidem, 61-62.

[22] Ibidem, 63.

more favourable horizons and places of peace where their families will be able to live a dignified and secure life, and spaces of freedom where they can express their faith openly without fear of various constraints."[23]

At the beginning of 2011, Pope Benedict XVI indicated religious freedom as the "path to peace": "

"Religious freedom expresses what is unique about the human person …. To deny or arbitrarily restrict this freedom is to foster a reductive vision of the human person; to eclipse the public role of religion is to create a society which is unjust, inasmuch as it fails to take account of the true nature of the human person; it is to stifle the growth of the authentic and lasting peace of the whole human family. For this reason, I implore all men and women of good will to renew their commitment to building a world where all are free to profess their religion or faith, and to express their love of God with all their heart, with all their soul and with all their mind (cf. Mt 22:37)."[24]

I would like to conclude my contribution with a quote from Pope Francis' address to the leaders of other religions and other Christian denominations, gathered in the Catholic University of Tirana in September 2014:

Religious freedom is not a right which can be guaranteed solely by existing legislation, although laws are necessary. Rather religious freedom is a shared space, an atmosphere of respect and cooperation that must be built with

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[23] Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Medio Oriente* (14 September 2012), 31.

[24] Benedict XVI, Message for the World Day of Peace 2011, (8 December 2012).

everyone's participation, even those who have no religious convictions."[25]

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[25] Francis, Address to the leaders of other religions and other Christian denominations, (21 September 2014).

Migration and Freedom of Religion: The Church in Australia

Most Rev Julian Porteous

Archbishop of Archdiocese of Hobart

The precious gift of freedom

In December 2014 I was part of a delegation of bishops – both Catholic and Orthodox – who visited the Christian refugees in Iraq and Lebanon. We went to Erbil in the north of Iraq not far from Mosul. It was there that many of the Christians from Mosul sought refuge after being driven from their homes by ISIS soldiers in June 2014. They had to leave everything and flee, many forced to walk to sanctuary in areas controlled by the Kurdish forces. In Erbil the Christians sought help from their co-religionists. Catholics arrived in numbers at Catholic parishes. The parishes quickly had to find accommodation, food, and basic supplies for these refugees.

When we were there many were still living in tents, and the cold winter had arrived. Some were living in partly completed buildings which were made available to them. Some were able the live in apartments or homes, often three or four families together each reduced to living in one room.

Their plight was desperate. At that time, ISIS was in the ascendency. They were advancing across Iraq. The families felt that they had no future. They were desperate. They had lost everything. As one woman said to me, “They have taken everything, but not our faith”. The families saw no future where they were. The resources of the town were stretched to the limit. The children, for example, had no prospects of education. I met some young men who said that they were university students, but they saw no opportunity to continue their courses.

The lives of these people were shut down. Their hopes and dreams were shattered. It was enough just to survive on a daily basis, to have basic accommodation, to have food, to have clothing, to have medical services. There

was no prospect of work or education. There was no opportunity to build a stable family life.

As the delegation of bishops went among them, speaking with them, assuring them of our concern for their wellbeing, there was one desperate cry that we heard time and time again. In broken English, the people looked into our eyes, raised their eyes to heaven and said, “Visa, Australia”. This desperate cry for help seared my heart. I knew the reality of the processes involved in coming to Australia. I knew of our migration policies. I knew I was powerless to assist them in any practical way.

The blessings we enjoy

It also caused me to think. What did they imagine life in Australia was like? How is our culture viewed in the Middle East? How much did the people know of what life is like in Australia? I don’t know the answer to this. But I know what life in Australia is like in comparison with what I witnessed in Iraq. I had also been with Syrian refugees in Lebanon and heard of their own plight, and the intense struggles going on – and still going on – in that ancient land.

What do we have in Australia? We all know, though we probably take it for granted. It is only when we are in places like the Middle East that we see in clearer relief the enormous blessings we enjoy. Most evidently, our standard of living. Visitors from poorer countries coming to Tasmania where I live have commented to me on simple things: everything is so clean. Our roads are tarred, our streets are curbed and guttered. Our traffic is orderly. Pollution is low, and the air is clear. Water is clean and our rivers free of pollution. Rubbish is routinely collected. Society is calm and ordered.

While there are pockets of poverty in Australia and while our first peoples are socially depressed, the general life available to us is so good, so very, very good. We have a high standard of accessible health care. We have a social security safety net. There are a vast range of social service agencies available to assist anyone in need or experiencing disability.

Australia is a land of great opportunity. We have high levels of education. Employment prospects are reasonably good. Wages are carefully supervised.

Work standards are high. Our open society allows for anyone to move up the social ladder. People are able to succeed if they work hard. They can build a good life in a stable political and financial environment. People can have a good standard of nutrition. There are many opportunities for health and recreation. People can live healthy and long lives.

We are a people who enjoy political freedom. Our governments are elected through a popular vote and are therefore responsive to community concerns. The transition of government is calm and violence free. Politicians are aware of their public accountability and there are very strict controls on their use of power. We have a judiciary which is independent of government, and our system of law has a presumption of innocence. We have a police force which is essentially free of corruption and acts in protection of the community. The list of our benefits and blessing could go on and on. In essence we live in a free society where the rights of the individual are respected.

The contribution of Christianity

We can rightly attribute the freedoms we enjoy to the Christian culture which has shaped our nation, in particular the Christian understanding of the nature of the human person. As Christians we believe that each human person is a unique creation of God and possesses an immortal soul. We believe that we human beings have the dignity of being created in the image and likeness of God. We believe that social interaction should be characterised by the exercise of the cardinal virtues; justice, courage, fortitude, and temperance. We aspire to foster what we call the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. We as a society, influenced by Christianity, have learnt that mercy, forgiveness, humility and self-sacrifice are the keys to human flourishing and harmony and peace among people.

Apart from the first peoples, the contemporary nation of Australia is a nation of migrants who have come principally from Europe and have brought with them the Christian culture. Christianity has made an enormous contribution to the quality of individual and social life that we enjoy. Our society and the freedom we enjoy is due in no small part to Christianity.

Threats to our freedom

However, there are dark clouds appearing on the horizon. As the recent census showed Australians are increasingly abandoning Christianity. In the place of Christian influence is an increasingly aggressive and intolerant secularism. There are forces at work in Australia that are intent on dismantling the very bedrock elements of our society – marriage and family. These forces want to redefine what it means to be human and propose that even the biological sex identity we are born with is open to change. In the name of equality, diversity, and inclusion there are those demanding that the society abandon what they refer to as heteronormativity.

The desire of a minority group has so effectively been promoted through a social and political campaign that we now lie at the precipice of a fundamental social change unprecedented in human history. The attempt to change the legal definition of marriage and with it what it means to be a man or woman, and what it means to be a family. There are efforts to allow assisted suicide, and of course abortion is permitted in all states and territories with few if any enforced limitations.

There is a striking intolerance among those who are promoting tolerance. There is a strange denial of diversity among those who advocate diversity. There is a lack of inclusiveness among those who demand inclusion. Christians, who are still a majority in our nation, are being increasingly targeted. The media has become more and more strident in finding fault with Christians. Legislation is being designed to prevent Christians expressing their faith. Anti-Discrimination laws are being used to silence any Christian who dares speak out against these efforts and give expression to what has been universally accepted up to the most recent times. There has been a swift shift in the way cultural forces treat Christianity.

It is here that I make a plea to those who have come from other countries seeking freedom and the chance for a future, you must stand for what you know to be true and good. Migrant families understand the dignity of marriage and the vital importance of family. Migrant families do not want to be forced to deny what they know is true. Migrant families, like those in Erbil, look to Australia as a place

of peace and promise. We cannot fail those who come to our country seeking the simple right to live in freedom. We are fighting to preserve the truth about the human person. We are fighting for the real meaning of marriage and family.

And we are fighting for freedom of religion and freedom of speech. We are fighting for the soul of our nation. Freedom is often challenged, and it is something we can never take for granted. Migrants know this. They know what it is like to lose freedom. They know what it is like to be oppressed. As they seek refuge in a country like Australia, we on our part must make every effort to preserve this freedom.

Conclusion

Tonight, my mind goes back to Erbil and to the plight of the displaced people there. I think of their desperation. I hear again the cry from their anguished hearts, “Visa Australia”. Our land, our nation, must remain a country willing to embrace migrants who want to live in freedom and to find a future. Our nation must remain a place where people are able to enjoy a full freedom, particularly the freedom to live the Christian life with its deep beliefs about the nature of the human person, the nature of marriage and the nature of family.

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MEDIA RELEASES FROM 2018

ACMRO Media Release – 19 July 2018

Manus Island: Five years on

On 19 July 2013, the then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, and Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Peter O'Neill, signed the regional resettlement agreement between Australia and Papua New Guinea. The agreement, a follow-up on the Joint Partnership Declaration signed in May 2013, was for any future maritime arrivals entering Australian waters to be transferred to Manus Island for processing and resettlement in Papua New Guinea.

Today marks five years since the Australian and Papua New Guinean governments signed this agreement. In this time, we have heard and seen many tragic consequences of our government's harsh policy of indefinite and inhumane detention of asylum seekers at Manus Island, and the subsequent transit centres in Lorengau.

In these five years, we have seen riots take place and have seen the death of seven asylum seekers on Manus Island – with some taking their own life. The deteriorating mental health of these men is of the utmost importance. Inadequate access to healthcare as well as substandard living conditions have all added to the hardships endured by these men. The indefinite nature of their situation continues to negatively impact their mental wellbeing.

In 2016, we saw some hope with the announcement of the agreement between Australia and the United States, which would see around 1200 refugees relocated to the US. However, this avenue will not be available for all. For many, it remains a protracted situation. Permanent and durable solutions, respecting the dignity of the human person, must be found, exploring and enacting alternative humanitarian channels.

This date reminds us that the history of migration has now reached dramatic and tragic heights. Every day, we witness the flight of millions of people, many of whom are children and youth. Every day, we witness their rejection. This may

still have the power to move public opinion; above all, this shows the limits of the systems of protection of the international community.

The Catholic Church has always advocated for and insisted on the importance of taking a holistic and integrated approach, focusing on the dignity of the human person. The human rights and dignity of these refugees must always be respected, and be the first consideration, for decision-makers. Australia must also look at adopting national policies that prefer alternatives to detention.[26]

Pope Francis echoes the words of the Gospel: "Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age". (Matthew 25:35-43).[27]

The Holy Father qualifies this "encounter" with four verbs and actions: "Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees"[28] and calls on all people to promote the culture of the encounter.

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[26] Point 3.d, Towards the Global Compacts on Migrants and Refugees 2018: 20 Action Points, Migrants and Refugee Section, Integral Human Development, Vatican City.
[27] Francis, Message, 104 World Day of Migrants and Refugees.
[28] *Idem.*

ACBC Media Release – 6 July 2018

Seafarers' welfare must be supported: Cardinal Turkson

As the Catholic Church in Australia and many other countries prepares to celebrate Sea Sunday on July 8, Cardinal Peter Turkson has called for international labor agreements aimed at supporting those who work on the seas to be upheld.

Cardinal Turkson, prefect of the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Human Integral Development, said some companies are not allowing seafarers time ashore when their vessel is in port, while others aren't allowing chaplains and other support personnel to visit the ship.

He said that such behaviour is in breach of the spirit of aspects of the Maritime Labor Convention aimed at improving the wellbeing of seafarers.

"Crews should not be denied the freedom of coming ashore likewise chaplains and ship visitors should not be denied the right to go on board of vessels," Cardinal Turkson said.

Cardinal Turkson said those who work on the seas — on merchant, fishing, passenger or war vessels — are also often subject to considerable dangers, not least from piracy.

He said piracy is inevitably related to political instability, but added that changes in a number of maritime industries, including fishing, had allowed "unscrupulous individuals" to convince people who were unemployed to become pirates.

Cardinal Turkson also lamented statistics that point to an increase in the number of seafarers who are abandoned. Statistics show more than 1,300 people were abandoned for a variety of reasons in the five years till 2017 — often without having been paid their wages, without food and without supplies for an onward journey.

In many such cases, Cardinal Turkson explained, the Church's ministry to seafarers through its Stella Maris centres has been critical in providing material, spiritual, legal and psychological support.

Sea Sunday, celebrated on July 8 this year, includes an appeal to support the work in those centres and the chaplains and managers who work in Australian ports.

Many parishes will hold special collections on Sea Sunday for that purpose, or people can visit the Apostleship of the Sea website for information on the ministry and how to support its work.

Last month, Bishop Bosco Puthur, the Bishop Promoter for the Apostleship of the Sea in Australia, spoke about the critical work carried out in and from the Stella Maris centres.

"The men and women who spend weeks or months on end travelling the oceans have often left family and other loved ones behind, and they often don't have access to their religious practices," Bishop Puthur said.

"For those people for whom faith is integral to their life, being helped to access the sacraments after a long journey is a source of great comfort and joy."

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ACBC Media Release – 3 July 2018

Bishops back efforts to eliminate modern slavery

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has supported new legislation to help eradicate the scourge of modern slavery.

The ACBC has been advocating legislation to combat slavery for a number of years. The bishops acknowledged the long-term and expert work of Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH) and the Archdiocese of Sydney's Anti-Slavery Taskforce to achieve this outcome.

The Government introduced the Modern Slavery Bill 2018 into the Australian Parliament last week. The Bill will require large organisations in Australia with annual revenue of at least $100 million to report annually on their efforts to detect and eliminate slavery from their supply chains.

The Catholic bishops see the legislation as a first step in national efforts against slavery, with further work needed both to establish an independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner with the resources to drive efforts to eradicate modern slavery and hold large organisations accountable and to introduce human rights due diligence on all public sector procurement.

"Human dignity is the dignity unique to human beings and the basis of all human rights," said Archbishop Mark Coleridge, president of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

"This human dignity is possessed by each and every human being, irrespective of their age, sex, race, abilities, or any other quality. Slavery destroys that dignity."

Archbishop Coleridge said Pope Francis has provided international leadership – inside and outside the Catholic Church – as a powerful advocate for the eradication of modern slavery.

Pope Francis has said “modern slavery — in the form of human trafficking, forced labour, prostitution or the trafficking of organs — is a crime ‘against humanity’. The victims of this are from every walk of life, but most are found among the poorest and the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters.”

Two years ago, under Pope Francis’ leadership, the Vatican committed to take action against human trafficking by slavery-proofing its own supply chains.

Last year, the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney made a similar commitment, announcing it too would slavery-proof its supply chains.

The Archdiocese has undertaken significant work to this end, developing expertise in this area. Other dioceses in Australia will be able to consult representatives of the Archdiocese of Sydney to support their own efforts to rid their supply chains of slavery.

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ACBC Media Release – 15 June 2018

Spirit of welcome imbues 2018 Sea Sunday celebration

Dozens of Catholic chaplains and managers who work in Australian ports – and the tens of thousands of people who support their work financially – are being reminded of the scriptural imperative to "always welcome a stranger" in the lead-up to Sea Sunday next month.

On July 8, the Catholic Church will celebrate the work of those men and women who work on the seas and those Catholics across the country who minister to seafarers by providing spiritual, social and material support. The modern history of Catholic outreach to those who work on the seas, whether on merchant, fishing, passenger or war vessels, dates back to the 1890s, with port ministry beginning in earnest almost 100 years ago in Scotland.

The Apostleship of the Sea, centres of which are called Stella Maris, is present in many countries and was backed by Pope Pius XI in 1922.

The Scripture verse that is central to this year's Sea Sunday comes from the Letter to the Hebrews (13:2): "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that, some have entertained angels without knowing it."

Bishop Bosco Puthur, the Bishop Promoter for the Apostleship of the Sea in Australia, said while many of those who come ashore have been surrounded by others, they can arrive feeling isolated.

"The men and women who spend weeks or months on end travelling the oceans have often left family and other loved ones behind, and they often don't have access to their religious practices," Bishop Puthur said.

"For those people for whom faith is integral to their life, being helped to access the sacraments after a long journey is a source of great comfort and joy."

Bishop Puthur said the annual Sea Sunday Appeal provides much-needed funding for this Catholic ministry – to seafarers of all faiths and none – in ports across the country.

Apostleship of the Sea national director Roslyn Rajasingam said when one considers the fact that the total of 130,000 seafarers who arrive at Australian ports each year is roughly the same number of people who live in Darwin, it gives some insight into the importance of the work.

“For some of the men and women, it’s the listening ear or the kind word or the shared prayer that reminds them of home and their spiritual centre,” Mrs Rajasingam said.

“Like other chaplains in other important ministries, those who seek to show the face of Jesus at our ports are reliant on and grateful for the generosity of Catholics and other supporters who help us continue this critical outreach to seafarers.”

For more about the Apostleship of the Sea and Sea Sunday Appeal, visit: http://aos-australia.org/

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ACMRO Kit Launch – 12 June 2018

Presentation on the Holy Father's message for Migrant and Refugee Sunday 2018

Fr Maurizio Pettenà cs

"Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age (Matthew 25:35-43). The Lord entrusts to the Church's motherly love every person forced to leave their homeland in search of a better future. This solidarity must be concretely expressed at every stage of the migratory experience – from departure through journey to arrival and return. This is a great responsibility, which the Church intends to share with all believers and men and women of good will, who are called to respond to the many challenges of contemporary migration with generosity, promptness, wisdom, and foresight, each according to their own abilities." […]

In this regard, I wish to reaffirm that "our shared response may be articulated by four verbs: to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate". (Francis: Message 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees).

The message puts forward an action-oriented initiative and a template for a shared response based on the four key concepts: to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate, as distinct from their contrary: rejecting, neglecting, demoting, and separating. In each of these areas, the Holy Father offers practical suggestions for a close collaboration with state institutions and other agencies as well as for individuals.

Emerging Types of Migration: Growing numbers of undocumented immigrants or so-called illegal aliens, best described as irregular migrants, who are looking for a better future they see each night on their television screens are hopping across sea and land borders to work and reside in the rich countries of the North; in the future, there will be environmental refugees as sea levels rise and small island nations, especially in the South Pacific, endure their version of

the Great Flood as told in the Old Testament. Also, to be noted is the rise of international marriages, a very accurate barometer of inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations, led in Australia by the influx of Filipino brides since the 1970s. And part of these population movements is the tragic phenomenon of human trafficking, facilitated and financed by international crime syndicates – the trafficking of men mainly for the purposes of exploitative work and the trafficking of young women and children into sexual servitude.

Mass migration is, of course, not a new phenomenon, but it is morally and politically problematic for two key reasons. It is politically problematic because it involves crossing borders between different nation-states and therefore it involves the re-negotiation of the fundamental political and legal status of the individual concerned.

It is morally problematic because current immigration policies adopted by all nation-states favour the needs of the strong, economically productive, over the weak and vulnerable (we could include children, those who are sick and the elderly…).

The reality today is that: we have closed borders with tight immigration controls and large-scale deportation of the so-called illegal immigrants in the hope that this will deter further immigrants.

The mantra, in Australia is: because there is no way that those who came by boat "across the sea" will ever settle in Australia, hence, we do not have boat arrivals; hence we do not have death at sea… etc.

What is the question? Either we support a policy of closed boarders or we support one of totally open ones.

At the heart of the question lays the narrative of national borders: can we offer an Christian narrative to the predominantly political one?

In his message the Holy Father argue in favour of a Christian narrative: that is to employ verbs that are proper to the Christian vocabulary and use them first

as an auto-exploring of where I am with my relationship with God and then, how do I make it relevant in my real life and beyond.

In other words: can we Christians offer an acceptable and realistic alternative way to shape a response to mass migration without being unreasonable?

So, what we need to do is to start by asking us the question: am I open to welcome in my home the first person that knocks at my door, even though, I do not know him/her, I know nothing of his/her background? And invite him/her to stay with me, eating at my table, sharing my earnings etc? Can we challenge ourselves at individual level, at the level of Christian community, before we challenge the Government and its Leaders?

So: to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate" it is about my duty of care for my neighbour: we all know the parable of the Good Samaritan: we all get moved and inspired by the Samaritan who goes out of himself to protect the unknown vulnerable on the way and he enables him to become better. This is not love in theory, this is love that unsettles me, my plans for that day, what to do with my savings…

The end of the parable is both unforgiving and disturbing: "you go and do the same!". Where is our Achilles' heel? That in this argument we often articulate love for migrants and open borders very well, but we are not that good to articulate what it means in practice to open the door of my own home and family to a stranger.

So, first: Christian approach: we do not love in theory: we love in concrete; we do not love migrants: we love this one and for this one we do something.

The right to migrate is coupled with the right not to migrate: we need to consider carefully the so called 'pushed factors' and hold Nations that force their people to emigrate accountable.

It seems to me that insisting on generic slogans and actions such as chaining oneself to the fence of Parliament House enhances old -never dead - racist rhetoric. Who pays the consequences of this? Migrants and refugees!

Catholic social teaching is clear in saying that all Nations have the right to regulate migration across their borders. This right ought not to contradict the duty to afford protection to innocent victims and to those fleeing for their lives.

The right of Nations to regulate their borders is an extension of the right of all person to live a dignified life in their own community.

The Catholic Church teaches that all people have the right to be a part of a community. Consequently: borders are for the protection of people not for the exclusion of people from protection.

Finally, Borders and all other means to regulating migration are a means of creating a relationship of welcoming, protecting, promoting, and integrating" rather than rejecting, neglecting, demoting, and separating the vulnerable ones.

Welcoming, protecting, promoting, and integrating also require that we move beyond the borders of mere humanitarian concern and protectionism toward authentic long-term attitudes that treat people not like strangers but belonging to the one family.

To settle for anything less jeopardizes the intrinsic nature and vocation of the Disciples of Christ: to be one body.

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ACMRO Kit Launch – 12 June 2018

Presentation on the Contents of the ACMRO Kit 2018

Mr George Nulley-Valdés

Your Grace, distinguished guests, ladies, and gentlemen – good evening – my pleasure to present and expand on the contents of the Migrant Kit 2018.

Each year we begin with the message from the Holy Father – this year, Welcoming, Protecting, Promoting and Integrating Migrants and Refugees– it is our job to relate this to the Australian content.

Working as an office and alongside Bishop Vincent Long, Bishop Delegate for Migrants and Refugees, a message is written focusing these four points to the Australian context.

To Welcome – "Welcoming migrants and refugees in Australia begins with an open heart and an open mind. As the history of our nation has shown, there is mutual benefit for both new comers and host communities as they grow in strength and solidarity."

But for us in Australia, it also means, "to be open to look at options such as expanded family reunification, simpler humanitarian visa processes, and community sponsorship programs."

To Protect – First of all, and before anything else, "People should have the right to be able to live in their home country in peace and prosperity. We must encourage, where possible, that people living in poverty, war, or persecution, be able to find peace in their homeland. We must work with governments and organisations to promote peace and prosperity in areas of poverty and conflict." Closer to home, and more locally, "Identifying and challenging racism or discrimination can be the beginning of protecting migrants and refugees in our communities."

To Promote – Taking inspiration from Gaudete et Exsultate "…a thirst for justice and righteousness must extend into practical and concrete actions. To become holy, we must care for the material and spiritual welfare of our migrant brothers and sisters. We need to encourage them in becoming part of our communities, both our faith and social communities." The spiritual and corporal works of mercy are at the heart of bringing this about.

Finally, to Integrate – we are challenged not to remain behind our walls but to reach out and greet the stranger. By making those in the peripheries feel welcome, we can begin to positively encourage deeper unity within our communities.

We have also devised a guide to understanding the kit – in order to give an Australian context to the global migration phenomenon. Here we look at the global picture; how Australia is affected by migration, and how the catholic church in Australia has responded to this phenomenon.

"In 2015, the most recent statistics released by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated that there were 244 million international migrants." "The latest statistics from the UNHCR estimate that there are currently 65.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, 22.5 million refugees, and 10 million stateless people. These are the largest numbers ever recorded by the UNHCR."

"The Catholic Church is continuously redefining and implementing pastoral models for the care of migrants and refugees." "In 2016, with the establishment of the Migrants and Refugee Section of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, assumed personal responsibility for the care of migrants and refugees."

"The catholic Church in Australia has benefited in many ways from migration. We have come to experience through migration that geographical barriers between people can disappear. "

We asked Fr Fabio Baggio co-undersecretary for the Migrants and Refugee Section, to write about the response and work of the Catholic Church Global

Compacts on Migrants and Refugees; putting together 20 action and pastoral points, as the response from the Catholic Church.

Continuing on the Pope's theme, from a global perspective we have focused on the work of Aid to the Church in Need. Contained are two stories highlighting the hardships, but also brightening futures of our Christian brothers and sisters in Syria and Iraq.

Locally, we have invited three people to write stories about welcoming, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees in our community. I must highlight the work of Percy from the Archdiocese of Brisbane and her contribution. She highlights the challenges and growth of the Filipino community in the Archdiocese. We also have stories from refugees and their difficulties with accommodation and dealing with racism in Victoria; and the challenges and successes of the South Sudanese catholic community in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

We also collaborated with Jesuit Social Services in Victoria to highlight two successful programs. Firstly, we have the African-Australian Inclusion Program; a joint initiative of Jesuit Social Services and the National Australia Bank. The program involves a six-month paid internship to African-Australian migrants to develop their work experience, connecting those who are seeking opportunities to obtain corporate experience and launch their careers.

On a smaller scale there is the Jesuit Social Services homework club, in which volunteers assist migrant children with their homework, giving them the best opportunity to do well in school.

Finally, we have put together some pastoral resources for the Migrant and Refugee Sunday Mass. Fr Ciril Bozic Episcopal Vicar for Migrants in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, a migrant chaplain for over 30 years, has shared his experience of chaplaincy work with various communities. He shares his hopes and challenges, and how the ministry to migrants has changed over time.

Also prepared are suggested prayers of the faithful. We have prepared these for your, but you are invited to change and adapt them to the needs and circumstances of your various communities.

I invite you to take a copy of the Migrant Kit 2018; to read and reflect on its messages with your school and parish communities, in preparation for Migrant and Refugee Sunday on 26 August 2018.

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ACMRO Kit Launch – 12 June 2018

Presentation on the ACMRO Kit Poster

Mr Louis Barcelona

I was asked by Fr Maurizio to design a cover for this year's kit that would reflect the message of his Holiness Pope Francis for the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, which is, *"Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees"*. Every year, we strive to attract more audience into reading our booklet. We attempt do so by making our booklet eye-catching yet well-balanced without affecting the integrity and the purpose of the booklet.

The Pope's message is extremely broad and can be visualized in many different ways, which is why it was challenging to create an illustration that would easily translate the message of the Pope in one single image. I started by including Pope Francis' image. I then visualized the first of the four verbs that the Pope has emphasized in his message, which is Welcoming.

Welcoming

Pope Francis mentioned that "*offering broader options for migrants and refugees to enter destination countries safely and legally. This calls for a concrete commitment to increase and simplify the process for granting humanitarian visas and for reunifying families. At the same time, I hope that a greater number of countries will adopt private and community sponsorship programmes and open humanitarian corridors for particularly vulnerable refugees."*

I was able to translate this part of the message into a picture by including an image of two hands clasped together that simply gives the impression of welcoming people in need regardless of their ethnicity, gender, social status, age and skin colour.

Protecting

Pope Francis stated "*it may be understood as a series of steps intended to defend the rights and dignity of migrants and refugees, independent of their legal status. Such protection begins in the country of origin, and consists in offering reliable and verified information before departure and providing safety from illegal recruitment practices. This must be ongoing as far as possible in the country of migration, guaranteeing them adequate consular assistance, the right to personally retain their identity documents at all times, fair access to justice, the possibility of opening a personal bank account, and a minimum sufficient to live on."*

I visualised this part of the message by incorporating an image of a family with parents holding their newborn close to their heart in order to portray the sense of protection and new beginning, which is how migrants and refugees want to feel when they depart their birth country and come to a new home.

Promoting and Integrating

The third and fourth verbs are promoting and integrating, which is about ensuring that migrants and refugees, as well as communities that welcome them, are empowered to achieve their potential as human beings and accepting them - free of financial or linguistic requirements and offering the possibility of special legislation to migrants who can claim a long period of residence in the country of arrival. I visualized the last two verbs and their message by including an image of a group that appears to be opening their arms and gives the impression of openheartedly receiving and welcoming people from different parts of the world regardless of their background.

Hopefully this will be enough to attract new readers and increase our audience this year that will use our resource effectively. Once again, thank you all for taking the time to attend our launch

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ACMRO Media Release – 20 April 2018

World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2018

Fr Maurizio Pettenà cs

National Director

On Sunday 22 April, the Holy Father and the Universal Church will gather in prayer on occasion of the 2018 World Day of Vocations. Pope Francis reminds us that "We are not victims of chance or swept up in a series of unconnected events; on the contrary, our life and our presence in this world are the fruit of a divine vocation". In His letter, He points out that Jesus, after his time of prayer and struggle in the desert, did three things before beginning his mission: he listened to the word, discerned the content of the mission entrusted to him by the Father and proclaim that he came to accomplish it "today" (Lk 4:16-21).

This model – listening, discerning, and living – can be followed by all of us as we try to live out our vocation. "Vocation is today! The Christian mission is now! Each one of us is called – whether to lay life in marriage, to the priestly life in the ordained ministry or to a special consecration – in order to become a witness of the Lord, here and now" (Pope Francis, Message 2018).

The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office invites all catholic communities and especially migrants and refugees to join the Holy Father in praying for vocations in Australia and around the world. Many migrant communities within our Parishes are young and vibrant. It is from here that many vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life will come. We encourage all communities to pray for their Priests and Religious and for a generosity of spirit and heart from our young men and women to take up the call and follow Jesus Christ. We also pray for families who are the seedbed for vocations.

I encourage you all to pray for vocations especially among migrant communities.

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ACMRO Media Release – 23 March 2018

2018 Palm Sunday Rally for Refugees 25 March 2018

Across Australia, on Sunday 25 March 2018, people from all faith groups, community groups, and organisations will join the Palm Sunday Rally for Refugees, bringing banners and other messages of support to express their concern about the treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum.

Join the Palm Sunday Rally at one of the events below.

Capital cities

- Sydney, Belmore Park, 2pm
- Melbourne, State Library, 2pm
- Brisbane, King George Square, 1pm
- Perth, St. George's Cathedral, 1pm
- Adelaide, Victoria Square, 2pm
- Hobart, Parliament House lawns, 2pm
- Darwin, Nightcliff Swimming Pool, 5pm
- Canberra, Civic Square, Amnesty International, 1pm

Regional locations

- Armidale, Central Park, 11am
- Ballina, Lennox Head Bus Station, Beachfront opposite the shops, 11am
- Bendigo, Rosalind Park, 12:30pm
- Denmark, Strickland Street, 11am
- Launceston, Princes Square, 12.30pm BYO picnic and 2pm march to City Park
- Lennox Head, Bus Shelter at Lennox Head, 11am
- Margaret River, Reuter Park, 1pm
- Newcastle, Wheeler Place, 3pm
- Townsville, Rockpool The Strand, 4pm

- Wollongong, Crown Street Mall, 12pm
- Whyalla, Corner Hincks Ave and Nicolson Ave, 2:30pm

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ACBC Media Release – 29 January 2018

Feast day highlights realities of modern slavery

The Catholic Church in Australia and around the world will recommit to fighting slavery and human trafficking in the coming days as it celebrates the feast of St Josephine Bakhita.

Pope Francis, who has continued the papal tradition of clear denunciation of human trafficking and slavery, has designated February 8 as a day of prayer, reflection and action to end the injustice of human trafficking.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and Australian Catholic Religious Against the Trafficking of Humans (ACRATH) are encouraging parishes and other Church communities to mark the feast day at weekend Masses on February 3 and 4 and on February 8.

St Josephine Bakhita, the patron saint for victims of slavery, was born in the west Sudanese region of Darfur in 1869. As a young girl, she was kidnapped for slavery in both Sudan and Italy. Following her delivery from slavery, Josephine became a Canossian Sister and dedicated her life to sharing her story and to supporting the poor and suffering. She died on February 8, 1947 and was canonised in 2000.

A 2016 United Nations report uncovered more than 500 different human trafficking routes across many parts of the world. It is estimated that millions of women, girls, men and boys are trafficked annually into domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, pornography, forced marriage and forced labour. Almost 80 per cent of detected victims of trafficking are women and girls.

“These forms of exploitation flourish because of society’s greed for cheap goods and services and because it is easy to forget that those who meet these needs are human beings with their own innate God-given dignity,” Parramatta Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen wrote in 2016 in a paper for the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council on human trafficking and slavery.

ACRATH and the ACBC are calling for a fourfold commitment to: slavery prevention, victim protection, legal prosecution of perpetrators and partnerships for change. This commitment begins with awareness-raising and action at a diocesan, parish, school, family or personal level to eliminate slavery in all its forms.

Bishop Greg O'Kelly SJ, chairman of the Bishops Commission for Justice, Ecology and Development, said support for the commemoration of the feast day continues the Australian Church's focus on this important issue. Last November, the ACBC endorsed the "Statement of Support for an Australian Modern Slavery Act" prepared by the Human Rights Commission Roundtable earlier in 2017.

"St Josephine Bakhita's feast day is an opportunity to raise awareness about human trafficking," Bishop O'Kelly said.

"Pope Francis has called us to make a difference. Our steps may be small, but together we can achieve a great deal, especially when we work with others to stop human trafficking."

ACRATH president Sr Noelene Simmons SM said: "Our joint statement supports the Worldwide Network of Religious Life Against Trafficking in Persons in calling on governments, religious and civic organisations to unite, and to increase their commitment to reduce the crime of human trafficking.

"In this age of unprecedented mass migration brought on by conflict and natural disaster, women and children are particularly vulnerable to being trafficked and exploited. Through our prayer and our actions, let us be advocates for their freedom and dignity."

Parish resources have been developed to mark this day and can be accessed at: https://acrath.org.au/take-action/world-day-of-prayer-against-human-trafficking/

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MEDIA RELEASES FROM 2017

ACMRO Media Release – 6 November 2017

Closure of Manus Island Regional Processing Centre

By Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv

Bishop Delegate for Migrants and Refugees

The safety and wellbeing of over 600 asylum seekers on Manus Island are at risk following the closure of the regional processing centre. These men, most of whom are proven refugees were held in mandatory and indefinite detention under an agreement between the Australian and PNG Governments. Now after more than 4 years, this agreement has not worked. It has failed to provide welfare and safety to the detainees. Furthermore, very few have been resettled elsewhere.

Australia, which authorised the detention of these asylum seekers in the first place, cannot abrogate its responsibility. The situation on Manus Island is turning into a humanitarian disaster and it is a direct result of our governments' failed policy. As a nation that prides itself on its respect for the rule of law and its globally responsible citizenship, we must find a workable and principled solution.

It is time for us to deal with the issue of asylum seekers and refugees according to this nation's proud tradition and the best nature of its citizens. We can do a whole lot better, just as we did welcome "those who've come across the seas" after the wars in Europe and in Southeast Asia. The concern for maritime border security does not have to make us into a mean-spirited people. This is not who our First Peoples are, nor should it be the characterisation of all Australians today.

The policy of offshore detention has cost Australia dearly. But it has cost the detainees and their families even more. I appeal to the government and political leaders to act in accordance with our honourable tradition. It is time to find an alternative and conscionable solution, including accepting New Zealand's offer of resettlement and bringing the remaining detainees on Manus Island to Australia. Those who are not refugees can be held here in secure detention until they are

returned home. Those refugees accepted for entry to the US can migrate when their vetting processes are complete. The other refugees need to be able get on with their lives here in safety.

People seeking asylum are some of the most vulnerable members of our global community. It is imperative that they are treated humanely and with dignity. I urge the Australian Government to honour its international obligations, and continue its work within the region and with non-government organisations to ensure the safety of those seeking asylum.

END.

Summary for Parish Bulletin: Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFMConv, Bishop Delegate for Migrants and Refugees has issued a statement on behalf of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, following the closure of the Manus Island Centre. He states: “The policy of offshore detention has failed and it is time for us to deal with the issue of asylum seekers and refugees according to this nation’s proud tradition and the best nature of its citizens. We can do a whole lot better, just as we did welcome “those who’ve come across the seas” after the wars in Europe and in Southeast Asia. The concern for maritime border security does not have to make us into a mean-spirited people. The policy of offshore detention has cost Australia dearly. But it has cost the detainees and their families even more. I appeal to the government and political leaders to act in accordance with our honourable tradition. It is time to find an alternative and conscionable solution, including accepting New Zealand’s offer of resettlement and bringing the remaining detainees on Manus Island to Australia for further processing.”

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ACMRO Media Release – 28 Sep 2017

Pope Francis Launches Share the Journey Campaign

Fr Maurizio Pettenà CS

National Director, ACMRO

On 27th September 2017 Pope Francis launched Caritas' *Share the Journey* campaign during the Wednesday General Audience in St Peter's Square.

Share the Journey has at its heart the vision of a united global human family. The focus is on our joint journey as people on the move in departure, transit, and host communities. We want to contribute to the building of stronger communities and more inclusive societies. The campaign promotes "the culture of encounter". The aim is to increase the spaces and opportunities for migrants and communities to come together and learn about each other. *Share the Journey* starts on 27th September 2017 and runs until September 2019.

Pope Francis has made numerous appeals to promote the culture of encounter in an effort to combat the culture of indifference in the world today. It means seeing through the eyes of others rather than turning a blind eye. "Not just to see but to look. Not just to hear but to listen. Not just to meet and pass by, but to stop. And don't just say 'what a shame, poor people,' but allow ourselves to be moved by pity." – Pope Francis. Caritas Internationalis' *Share the Journey* campaign will encourage people to rethink their preconceptions, by bringing migrants, refugees and communities closer together to change hearts and minds.

Pope Francis is lighting up the path for us, illuminating our journey to creating his 'culture of encounter,' a culture of welcome. In response to Pope Francis' call to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate migrants and refugees, we are asking you to support the global Caritas *Share the Journey* campaign.

In the lead up to the launch, Cardinal Luis Tagle, President of Caritas Internationalis, released a video with the goals of the campaign. Cardinal Tagle

encourages us to look at those people around us, in our families and communities, who are migrants. Those who are often right in front of us but fail to see. Throughout the campaign, let us talk to these people. Let us listen to their stories, and let us journey with them.

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ACMRO Media Release – 31 August 2017

Withdrawal of Refugee Support

Most Rev Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv

Bishop Delegate for Migrants and Refugees

It is of great concern that we have heard of the Australian Government's plans to withdraw support to refugees who have come to Australia for medical treatment. These men, women, and children were brought to Australia from offshore detention centres, to remove support for them leaves them vulnerable to exploitation, and risks leaving them destitute.

As refugees, these men, women, and children, are under the care of the Australian Government. To deny them appropriate support is to leave them at a risk of further harm.

These people, some with history of mental health largely due to prolonged detention by the Australian Government policy, have been searching for safety and a better life; they deserve more than this treatment.

I urge the Australian Government to continue to provide support services for these men, women, and children, who are awaiting a resolution to their current situation. As a well-resourced nation with a long tradition of caring for migrants and refugees, we can do better than to throw a small number of refugees out onto the streets. It is a bridge too far. It is cruel and simply un-Australian.

People seeking asylum are some of the most vulnerable members of our global community. It is imperative that they are treated humanely and with dignity. I urge the Australian Government to honour its international obligations, and continue its work within the region and with non-government organisations to ensure the safety of those seeking asylum.

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Migrant and Refugee Week – August 2017

Migrant and Refugee Week in the Catholic Church: 21-27 August 2017

On 21-27 August 2017, the Catholic Church in Australia celebrated the contribution migrants have made in our communities. This week-long celebration culminated with Migrant and Refugee Sunday, 27 August.

On Tuesday, 22 August, the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, held a morning tea to bless a cross, generously made and donated by Majid Rabet.

Majid is an accomplished inventor, engineer and artist who made an arduous journey from Iran to Australia seven years ago and was detained in Villawood detention Centre for two years.

Majid made an elaborate cross to express gratitude for the Christians who visited him in detention, who were some of the few people who treated the detainees with dignity and recognised them as human beings; bringing food, flowers, playing music, and knowing them by name.

Majid now has an art studio in Western Sydney, his work is displayed in public by Blacktown City Council, and he has contributed pop art to the Parramatta Laneway Festival. Majid draws upon his experience in Iran as an engineer, where he designed a portable (by helicopter) seismic oil drilling system, engineered film production equipment, and designed, programmed, and built Iran's first street-based multimedia kiosk.

In attendance at the morning tea were representatives of the various offices of the Catholic Bishops, friends of Majid, as well as the Apostolic Nuncio to Australia, Archbishop Adolfo Tito Yllana, and Fr Fabio Baggio, Under-secretary to the Migrants and Refugee Section of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development.

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ACMRO Media Release – 18 August 2017

Migrant & Refugee Sunday

Fr Maurizio Pettenà

National Director, ACMRO

Next week the Catholic Church in Australia will be celebrating the contribution Migrants have made in our communities. This week-long celebration culminates with Migrant and Refugee Sunday, on 27 August 2017.

Each year the Universal Church commemorates the contribution migrants have made to our communities. The Catholic Bishops of Australia have selected the last Sunday in August each year to be the date where Masses are celebrated for the enrichment these communities have provided in the Church.

Every year, for over 100 years, the Holy Father has chosen a theme to be the focal point during these celebrations. For 2017, the message for the 103rd World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis chose the theme, “Child Migrants, the Vulnerable and the Voiceless”.

Pope Francis draws our attention to the needs of child migrants globally. He encourages by pointing out that, “Each person is precious; persons are more important than things, and the worth of an institution is measured by the way it treats the life and dignity of human beings, particularly when they are vulnerable, as in the case of child migrants.”

In Australia, schools and parishes have many successful programs that have assisted in the integration of migrants. The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO) has produced a Migrant Kit, a parish and school resource to assist in the celebrations. Contained are stories of resilience and success in the integration of migrant communities in Australia. Copies of the kit have been sent to schools and dioceses, and electronic copies are available for download on the ACMRO website, www.acmro.catholic.org.au.

As part of the week-long celebrations, the ACMRO and Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, have organised a free public lecture on “Freedom of Religion in a Multi-Religious Society: The Contribution of Migration”, at the Philippa Brazill Lecture Theatre, ground floor, Daniel Mannix Building, 8-18 Brunswick St, Fitzroy Vic. at 7:00pm.

For media enquiries, please contact Fr Maurizio Pettenà, National Director ACMRO, on info@acmro.catholic.org.au

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ACMRO Media Release – 10 August 2017

Manus Island Refugee Death

Most Rev Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv

Bishop Delegate for Migrants and Refugees

"It is with sadness that we have heard of yet another death of a refugee on Manus Island. This death could have been prevented. The Australian Government has been removing support services on Manus Island since the announcement of the closure of the detention centre."

"Those in the care of the Australian Government whilst in offshore processing, who have come to Australia for safety and a better life, deserve more."

"I urge the Australian Government to provide support services for those who are on Manus Island, awaiting a resolution to their current situation. The Australian Government needs to listen to the concerns of these people and treat them with dignity."

"People seeking asylum are currently some of the most vulnerable members of our global community. It is imperative that they are treated humanely and with dignity. These people must be provided with options for settlement in safe countries free from further persecution."

"I urge the Australian Government to be committed to its international obligations and continue its work within the region and with non-government organisations to ensure the safety of those seeking asylum."

"Whilst it is important to prevent the loss of life at sea, it is equally important to provide adequate care for those in offshore detention. The Australian Government needs to provide adequate amenities and provide quick resettlement options."

“I urge the Australian Government to provide adequate amenities to those on Manus Island and to endorse programs that both protect lives at sea and in its care.”

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ACMRO Media Release – 25 July 2017

Call for Australia to ensure safety of those seeking asylum in our region

Most Rev Terence Brady

Chairman, Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life

Mr Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, yesterday made the statement that, 'Australia's policy of offshore processing in Papua New Guinea and Nauru…has caused extensive, avoidable suffering for far too long.'

Those remaining in offshore processing in Papua New Guinea and Nauru, attempting to come to Australia for safety and a better life, deserve better.

People seeking asylum are often vulnerable members of our global community. It is imperative that they are treated humanely with options for settlement in safe countries and where no one is sent to a country or place where they may face further persecution.

Australia, if it is to be committed to its international obligations, must work with countries in the region and non-government organisations to ensure the safety of those seeking asylum in our region.

Whilst it is important to prevent the loss of life at sea, it is equally important to provide adequate care for those in offshore detention. Australia needs to take responsibility for those in offshore detention and provide them adequate amenities, and provide quick resettlement options.

I urge the Australian Government to assist in the quick resettlement of those in Papua New Guinea and Nauru, provide options for families to reunite, and to endorse programs that both protect lives at sea and in its care.

Media Enquiries:

Please contact Fr Maurizio Pettenà, National Director ACMRO, on info@acmro.catholic.org.au

For the UNHCR media release,

http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/news/press/2017/7/597217484/unhcr-chief-filippo-grandi-calls-australia-end-harmful-practice-offshore.html

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ACBC Media Release – 5 July 2017

Supporting Seafarers working "in the midst of the storm"

Parishes across Australia are called to support the work of Seafarers as part of the annual Sea Sunday Appeal on 9 July. Every dollar raised will help to provide pastoral support for seafaring men, women and their families through the works of Stella Maris centres across Australia.

Seafarers commonly face mental health challenges such as, depression, anxiety, or thoughts of suicide given the nature of their work; long hours in highly pressured environments with quick turnarounds at port before heading back out to sea.

Working as crew on board a cruise ship or industrial container tanker can involve long journeys being away from home and unable to see family for weeks and months at a time. As a result, seafarers often experience isolation, cultural barriers with fellow crew and fatigue.

The Bishops of Australia and sea chaplains recognise that loneliness and the mental health of seafarers is a serious concern and a recurring theme amongst those working in the industry. Therefore, the theme of this year's Sea Sunday Appeal is 'In the midst of the storm' focusing on the importance of addressing mental health concerns and providing the necessary emotional, psychological and spiritual support to Seafarers who may well be experiencing 'stormy times' mentally.

In advance of Sea Sunday, Bishop Bosco Puthur, Australian Catholic Bishops Delegate for Seafarers highlighted the importance of supporting Seafarers who may be experiencing mental health challenges, 'Our sea chaplains know that many seafarers struggle with mental health conditions. In many cases, loneliness and isolation can be contributing factors to feelings of anxiety, depression or thoughts of suicide. It is important that our Sea Chaplains are resourced to support those working on board. The Sea Sunday Appeal helps us to provide some of the necessary support.'

Currently, ninety per cent of Australia's trade involves shipping with more than one million Seafarers on the world's oceans at any one time. While life at sea can be exciting, seafarers can encounter poor and dangerous working conditions, mental health issues, family isolation, and piracy with crews and ships being held hostage.

There are 25 ports operating across Australia supported by 15 Apostleship of the Sea Chaplains or centre managers. The Apostleship relies heavily on generous volunteers, of which there are approximately 160, who live out their faith by welcoming the stranger.

To make a donation supporting the Sea Sunday Appeal, simply transfer funds online to: Stella Maris Seafarers Centre, BSB: 083-347 and Account Number: 649518680 with the reference, 'Sea Sunday Appeal'.

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ACBC Media Release – 5 May 2017

Destroy human trafficking by 2030, Catholic Bishops say

Australia's national policy should be directed to destroying human trafficking by 2030, Bishop Terry Brady told a parliamentary inquiry today.

Bishop Brady was giving evidence on behalf of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement in Sydney at their hearing on human trafficking. Bishop Brady is Chair of the Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life.

'Australians have a moral imperative to eradicate the injustice of human trafficking and modern slavery,' Bishop Brady said. 'If we know that the human dignity of people is being harmed in this way, we should do what we can to free them from that ill-treatment.

'As an example to others and to spur reform in Australia, the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney announced in March that it would slavery-proof its supply chains.

'This announcement is significant as the Catholic Church is one of the largest purchasing groups in Australia after government.'

Bishop Brady called for a Modern Slavery Act that would include an Anti-Slavery Commissioner and require all large organisations operating in or doing business in Australia to provide an annual public statement on steps they are taking to eradicate slavery from their organisation and supply chains. This should apply not just to businesses, but also to governments and not-for-profit organisations.

'The Australian Parliament has an important role ensuring governments commit to eradicate human trafficking and modern slavery from their supply lines,' Bishop Brady said.

‘Australia adopted the goal of eradicating modern slavery, human trafficking and forced labour by 2030 as a participant in the unanimous General Assembly vote for the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals on 25 September 2015.

‘Goal 8.7 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals commits all UN members to “take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms."'

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ACBC Media Release – 30 March 2017

Australia's Catholic bishops speak out for persecuted people

Christians are the most persecuted religious group in the world, Australia's Catholic bishops have told a Parliamentary inquiry.

More than 100,000 Christians are killed each year because of their faith and the bishops highlighted how Christians had been driven from the cradle of Christianity in the Middle East.

The Australian Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade is holding an 'Inquiry into the status of the human right to freedom of religion or belief'. The inquiry this week published the Bishops' submission.

But Christians are by no means the only people suffering for their faith, with the submission also condemning the persecution of Yazidis, Baha'is, Jews, Muslims and others.

"Understanding and recognising the full complexity of the right to freedom of religion or belief will be increasingly important to Australia negotiating its way in the world," said Australian Catholic Bishops Conference president, Archbishop Denis Hart.

"The proportion of the world's population who have a religious faith is increasing at the same time as it is decreasing in Western countries like the United States and Australia.

"If Australian governments want to understand the world - and the majority of Australians who proclaim a religious faith - they need to understand and accommodate religious belief.

"Across the world, religious belief is under challenge, both from violent attacks or government restrictions on people who have a faith but also,

particularly in the West, from a more aggressive atheism that does not tolerate dissenting views and tries to exclude religious beliefs from the public square," said Archbishop Hart.

"Yet religious belief provides the origin of human rights. In the Judeo-Christian tradition people are made in the image of God, which is the basis of the recognition of their human dignity. It is from this universal and inherent human dignity that derives the human rights of all people.

"Governments must recognise that when talking about people of faith, they are talking about their own citizens, whether from a Christian, Jewish, Muslim or other faith tradition. Religious believers are in fact the great majority of Australians.

"Most people who adhere to a religious belief exercise their religious freedom in the service of the common good. Overwhelmingly they do so in a spirit which respects the rights and liberties of others, and as Australian citizens, they expect in fairness that they will be accorded equal respect in the exercise of their rights to practice and manifest their religious beliefs.

"Australia has an important role to play in recognising and respecting religious freedom and in promoting dialogue and other initiatives internationally to protect people who are persecuted because of their religious beliefs, including Christians as the most persecuted religious group in the world."

You can find a copy of the submission here:

https://www.catholic.org.au/about-us/public-policy-office-contact

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ACMRO Media Release – 22 March 2017

How should we care for migrants and refugees?

Fr Maurizio Pettenà

National Director, ACMRO

The care of migrants and refugees coming to Australia is one of the most divisive issues in Australian public debate.

Pastoral care of migrants and refugees will be top of the agenda for the Church in Australia later this year as Cardinal Peter Turkson of Ghana and Cardinal Orlando Quevedo from the Philippines arrive in Melbourne to give keynote addresses at a national conference on the issue.

The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, an agency of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, will host this timely conference at the Australian Catholic University, Melbourne Campus, on July 19 and 20.

Cardinal Turkson will deliver a keynote address focusing on his role as Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development within the Roman Curia. The Dicastery is in effect a department to promote the care of vulnerable and marginalised people. The Ghanaian Cardinal will also reflect on his work with Pope Francis.

Cardinal Quevedo will describe the pastoral models of care for migrants and refugees in our communities. He will also join a panel discussion about the pastoral care of migrants in a multi-ethnic church and whether one size fits all.

'Cast Into the Deep' is the theme of the Conference highlighted by Pope Francis' call to go out to the margins of society and "cast into the deep" (Luke 5:4).

Fr Maurizio Pettena, Director of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office said, "The dignity of the human person is central to our work as a Church

agency. I hope that this conference will put the pastoral care of migrants and refugees firmly on the political agenda here in Australia. Over the two-day event, there will be many opportunities for debate with key stakeholders about the best way forward on this issue".

Early bird registrations are now open until April 20 at, https://ors.eventsair.com/acmro-2017

The Conference provides an opportunity for delegates to reflect on the vital issue about how we treat people moving between countries. It will be of particular interest to overseas clergy, religious, migrant chaplains and those who work in the area of pastoral care within migrant communities.

A multi-cultural Mass and the launch of the annual migrant and refugee parish kit will be among the highlights during this two-day conference.

All those who are passionate about our migrant communities are warmly invited to attend the Conference.

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ACBC Media Release – 8 February 2017

Human Trafficking – Be Informed about its reality and consequences

On the Feast of St Josephine Bakhita today, 8 February, bishops and religious leaders across Australia support the call from Pope Francis to end the injustice of human trafficking against all people, in particular children.

'They are children! Not slaves!' is the theme for Bakhita Day this year. Pope Francis has designated today a world day of prayer, reflection and action against human trafficking.

St Bakhita is the Patron Saint for victims of slavery. The United Nations estimates that one in every three victims of human trafficking is a child. It is estimated that 30 million children have lost their childhood through sexual exploitation over the past 30 years. Annually, millions of children are trafficked into domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, pornography production, forced marriage, illegal adoption, forced labour, and to become child soldiers.

The bishops of Australia and religious leaders call for a fourfold commitment to: prevention, victim protection, the legal prosecution of perpetrators, and partnerships for change. This commitment starts at home by raising awareness and preventing exploitation of children in all aspects of Australian society.

Bishop Terry Brady, Chairman of the Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life said, 'St Josephine Bakhita's feast day is an opportunity to raise awareness about human trafficking involving children. Pope Francis has called us to make a difference. Sometimes our steps are small, but together we can achieve a great deal especially when we work with others to stop human trafficking'.

Sr Anne Tormey rsm, President of the Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH) said, 'This day can be an opportunity to learn

about trafficking locally and globally, to advocate for legislation and pray for the protection of children who become victims of human trafficking'.

St Josephine Bakhita died on 8 February 1947. She was born in Southern Sudan in 1869 and kidnapped for slavery in Sudan and Italy. After regaining her freedom, Josephine Bakhita dedicated her life to sharing her story and to supporting the poor and suffering. Later, she became a Canossian Sister and was canonised in 2000.

Today's statement supports a global movement declared by Pope Francis three years ago and known as the Worldwide Network of Religious Life against Trafficking in Persons.

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ACMRO Media Release – 18 January 2017

ACMRO Joins Migrant and Refugee Section of the New Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development Launch First Media Campaign

Fr Maurizio Pettenà

National Director, ACMRO

On the occasion of the 103rd World Day for Migrants and Refugees, 15 January 2017, the Migrant and Refugee Section of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development is launching its first media campaign to raise awareness about the issues of its concern.

The Holy Father's theme for the 2017 World Day of Migrants and Refugees is "Child Migrants, the Vulnerable and the Voiceless". The media campaign will focus on the situation of young refugees and of migrants, displaced and trafficked children and adolescents.

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- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/MandRSection/
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We invite you to follow these social media channels and to share the messages with your friends and co-workers.

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