

Keynote Address:
Migrant Communities as Missionaries of Hope in a Synodal Church

Dr Trudy Dantis | ACMRO Conference 2026 | 26 August 2026

Introduction

Thank you for that generous introduction, and good morning, everyone.

It is a great privilege to be with you at this 8th ACMRO National Conference as we gather to celebrate the faith, gifts, resilience and witness of migrant communities, and the extraordinary richness they bring to our Church in Australia.

The theme entrusted to me today is *Migrant Communities as Missionaries of Hope in a Synodal Church*. This theme speaks not only to the pastoral care of migrants, but to the renewal of the whole Church. Migrant communities are not simply communities to be welcomed, assisted or integrated. They are also communities through whom our Church is evangelised, renewed and sent out again in hope.

Pope Leo has described migrants as among the "privileged witnesses of hope." He reminds us that migrants demonstrate hope daily through their resilience and their trust in God as they face adversity while seeking a future in which human flourishing and happiness remain possible. These words resonate deeply with me, because migration has been a defining feature of my own life.

So today, I would like to reflect through several themes on how migrant communities become witnesses and missionaries of hope, drawing on two experiences that have profoundly shaped my life: first, my own journey as a migrant, and second, my experience as a participant in the Synod on Synodality in 2023 and 2024. Both experiences have taught me something about hope. Both have taught me something about listening. And both have shown me that the Church is most faithful to the Gospel when it walks with people in humility, reciprocity, mercy and love.

In focusing on these experiences, I do not intend to diminish the importance of other aspects of migrant and refugee ministry. Rather, I wish to speak from the realities I know most intimately and from the lessons they have taught me about faith, hope and mission. I also want to acknowledge an important distinction: my own migrations, though difficult, were chosen. I do not presume that my experience is equivalent to the forced displacement of people fleeing persecution, war, violence or catastrophe.

Pope Francis repeatedly insisted that a synodal Church is not a parliament or an opinion poll, nor merely an exercise in ecclesial administration. Synodality is a process

of spiritual discernment: a space for the action of the Holy Spirit, in which the Church listens attentively, receives the gifts of others and allows itself to be changed by encounter.

This is why migrant communities have so much to teach us. Migrants know what it means to live between worlds, to carry memory and loss, to build belonging in unfamiliar places, and to walk toward a future not yet fully visible.

In that sense, migrant communities are not at the margins of a synodal Church. They are at the centre. They show us how hope can survive adversity, how faith can travel across borders, how the Gospel of mercy and love can renew relationships and how a culture of encounter can contribute to the unity of peoples.

I. Migrants as witnesses of hope

My story is marked not by one migration journey, but by four.

I was born in Mumbai, India, but over the years my path has taken me to New Zealand (2002), then to Australia (2008), back to India (2015), and finally home once again to Australia (2018).

Each move involved far more than a change of address. Each was a one-way ticket with no hope of return. Each required a profound rupture with what was familiar. There were jobs to leave behind, friendships to farewell, homes to sell, communities to grieve, and cherished plans to surrender. Each journey demanded that I step into uncertainty and trust that something new and life-giving lay ahead.

Migration is rarely a single, linear event. For many people, it is an ongoing journey marked by risk, vulnerability and optimism. It requires learning to live with uncertainty while holding on to hope. I still remember the insecurity, exhaustion and deep sense of dislocation that came with starting over, not once, but four separate times.

In the Church, we often understand the migrant experience through the story of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. Jesus, Mary and Joseph experienced the fear, uncertainty and displacement familiar to migrant and refugee families throughout history. Later, Jesus continued to identify himself with the stranger, declaring, *"I was a stranger and you welcomed me"* (Matthew 25:35). He knew the experience of vulnerability and exile, becoming a man who had "nowhere to lay his head."

Yet when I reflect on my own story, I find myself drawn even more strongly to another biblical journey: that of the Israelites making their way towards the Promised Land.

Like them, I often could not see clearly what lay ahead. The future was uncertain. There were no guarantees of success, security or belonging. What sustained me was the

conviction that God was already present in the journey, guiding, protecting and providing, even when the destination remained hidden from view.

The Israelites moved forward not because they knew exactly where they were going, but because they trusted in God's promise. In many ways, that has been the experience of my own migration journeys as well. Time and again, I have been called to leave behind what was familiar and to step forward in faith, trusting that God's providence would accompany me into an unknown future.

Of my four migration journeys, the move from India to New Zealand was perhaps the most difficult. It was the first great leap into the unknown, the first time I had to leave behind everything that was familiar, not knowing when I might return or what awaited me on the other side.

And perhaps that is one reason migrants can become such powerful witnesses of hope. In my own journeys, I have come to know something of what it means to stand between what has been left behind and what has not yet arrived, to live in the space between loss and promise.

Through these experiences, I have come to appreciate more deeply the Christian understanding of hope. Hope is not optimism. Optimism depends upon circumstances. It assumes that things will probably work out well. Christian hope is something deeper. It is a theological virtue grounded not in favourable circumstances, but in trust in God and in his promises.

For many migrants, hope takes precisely this form. Leaving behind family, employment, security or familiarity offers no guarantee that everything will work out as expected. The future is uncertain. Yet Christian hope allows us to move forward trusting that God is already present in the future to which he calls us.

Hope, therefore, is not wishful thinking. Hope is the courage to keep moving forward because we trust that God is faithful even when the destination remains hidden from view.

II. The Synod as a school of listening, reciprocity and humility

In 2023 and 2024, I had the privilege of serving as a full voting member of the Synod on Synodality, in the first Synod in the Church's history in which women participated as full voting members.

The Synod became, for me, a laboratory of encounter. It was characterised by a synodal culture of attentive listening, reciprocity and humility. People from every continent, culture, vocation and generation gathered together, often carrying very different

experiences and perspectives. Yet we committed ourselves to a process that ensured every voice could be heard.

At the heart of this experience was the practice of *Conversations in the Spirit*. More than a methodology, it is a discipline of listening. It creates space for people, regardless of age, ecclesial role or cultural background, to speak honestly and to be received with respect.

I experienced the value of this very personally during one of the *Conversations in the Spirit*. We were discussing a particularly complex matter. I found myself listening to a bishop whose experience of Church life differed greatly from my own.

At first, I disagreed with parts of what he was saying. If I am honest, I found myself thinking, "Here we go again."

Yet as I continued to listen, I began to understand not only his position, but also the experiences that had shaped it. More importantly, I began to think about the people he accompanied in his ministry and the realities they faced each day.

I left that conversation not having abandoned my own perspective, but with a much deeper appreciation of his.

That, for me, became one of the most powerful lessons of the Synod.

Listening does not always lead us to agreement. But it can lead us to understanding—and understanding is often the first step towards communion.

The Synod also brought into focus another dimension of the migrant experience: the complexity of belonging.

As one of ten members representing Oceania, I was conscious throughout the Synod that I had not been sent to represent India, the country of my birth. I had been asked to represent Australia and the wider Oceania region. I carried with me the voices that had emerged through our national and continental consultations, as well as my experience as a woman and a layperson.

Interestingly, I did not initially think of myself as representing migrants at all.

Yet one moment during the Synod brought home to me just how deeply migration had shaped my sense of identity.

At the conclusion of the first session, participants were invited to wear their best clothing from their countries and cultures for the closing Mass. In the days beforehand, several people asked whether I would be wearing a sari.

The question immediately brought to the surface a dilemma I had been carrying with me from the moment I packed my bags.

A sari is part of my heritage and remains deeply meaningful to me. In many ways, it was what I most wanted to wear. Yet I was also conscious that many people at the Synod did not know my story. If I arrived dressed in a sari, I worried that people would naturally assume I was there as India's representative.

But I was not there representing India. I was there representing Australia and the wider Oceania region. In fact, I had deliberately chosen not to pack a sari because I knew I would face this dilemma.

In the end, I chose to wear a dress rather than a sari. It was a painful choice, because it felt as though I was choosing between two parts of myself, both deeply integral to my identity and ones I was proud of.

Yet that experience taught me something important about migration. For many migrants, belonging is not a matter of leaving one identity behind and adopting another. We carry multiple loyalties, histories and loves within us. We remain connected to the land of our birth while also developing a deep attachment to the country that has become our home.

Migration does not diminish belonging. It expands it.

Yet the very possibility of belonging is increasingly challenged by forces that encourage division, suspicion and misunderstanding.

In a world increasingly shaped by division, the skills and dispositions of attentive listening, reciprocity and humility matter now more than ever.

Responding to Social Division

The urgency of this approach is reflected in the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference's 2026 Social Justice Statement, *Living the Gospel in Times of Social Division*. The statement observes the increasing tensions within our communities and warns of a growing normalisation of abusive and hostile behaviour.

Polarisation diminishes us all. It undermines the dignity of every person and is often fuelled by antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism and other forms of prejudice.

Increasingly, these divisions are amplified in online environments where algorithms shape what we see, hear and believe. In doing so, they can create disembodied experiences that detach us from one another and from reality itself.

At the 70th Anniversary Dinner of Catholic Social Services Australia, the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull AC described today's media environment as an "attention economy" in which algorithms reward what captures our attention, often through outrage.

Using the term "angertainment", he warned of content designed to provoke anger and division. The danger is that our digital worlds can narrow rather than broaden our horizons, reinforcing grievance and making measured voices harder to hear.

A Personal Encounter with Polarisation

I experienced this reality personally earlier this year.

On 29 April 2026, the Australian Bureau of Statistics announced that people born in India had overtaken those born in England to become Australia's largest overseas-born migrant group for the first time in the nation's history.

When I heard the announcement, my reaction was not celebration but apprehension.

Only a few months earlier, on Australia Day, a "March for Australia" anti-immigration rally had taken place at Parliament House in Canberra. The tensions surrounding that event were significant enough that my family made the decision not to go into the city. For the first time in my life in Australia, I felt a sense of fear. I worried not about whether people would disagree with me, but whether simply being visibly Indian might make me a target of hostility.

You might think this an exaggerated fear. But I lived through civil unrest and violence before. In 1993, the city of Mumbai was engulfed in communal riots. Neighbours became enemies overnight. Houses were burned, properties looted, people were slaughtered brutally on the streets. When you live with such experiences, they never really leave you.

So, when the ABS figures were released, I feared what might follow. Would Australia be led down this track as well?

Unfortunately, some of those fears proved well-founded. My social media feeds quickly filled with posts suggesting that people like me were a threat to Australia, a disappointment, or somehow did not belong here. Some of these messages were framed as humour or satire, but their underlying anger, prejudice and hatred were unmistakable.

The experience was confronting. The hostility made me question whether I wished to remain active on those platforms at all. Thankfully, the intensity of the commentary eventually subsided, but the experience left me with a deeper awareness of how quickly online environments can normalise attitudes that would rarely be expressed face-to-face.

The Hidden Power of Algorithms

The danger of these digital echo chambers became even clearer to me during a conversation with my niece, who recently turned twenty.

We were discussing a political event in India that she had been debating with one of her closest friends. They attended the same school, shared many of the same experiences, spent considerable time together, and came from broadly similar social and economic backgrounds. Yet as they compared the information appearing in their social media feeds, they discovered they had been presented with entirely different narratives of the same event.

The algorithms had curated two distinct realities.

What struck me most was how much effort and honest conversation it took for each of them to understand the other's perspective. If that challenge exists between two young women who know each other well, how much greater is the challenge between people of different cultures, faith traditions, generations and life experiences?

Some Questions for Us

I often wonder what would happen if we conducted that same exercise in this room today.

If a major world event occurred this afternoon, what stories would appear in each of our social media feeds? How would the algorithms shape, tailor and filter that story for each of us? Would we encounter a range of perspectives? Would we see thoughtful and moderate voices? Or would we be presented with a single dominant narrative designed to confirm our existing assumptions and provoke a stronger emotional reaction?

This leads me to ask further questions:

What stories are we being fed about migrants in Australia today?

What grievances are being reinforced?

What fears are being amplified?

What prejudices are being nurtured?

And perhaps most importantly:

How do we move beyond them?

The answer, I believe, begins with the same practice I witnessed at the Synod: attentive listening, genuine encounter, and the courage to engage with those whose experiences differ from our own.

In an age of polarisation, listening may be one of the most radical acts of hope available to us.

III. Migrants Renew the Church

But listening is never an end in itself.

The purpose of listening is encounter. The purpose of encounter is to build communion. And the purpose of communion is to engage in mission.

During the Synod, I was repeatedly reminded that when people genuinely listen to one another, something unexpected happens. We begin to move beyond stereotypes and assumptions. We discover gifts where we expected differences. We recognise that the Holy Spirit is often speaking through experiences very different from our own.

Migrant communities understand this reality in a unique way. For generations, migrants have crossed borders, learnt new languages, adapted to unfamiliar cultures and built relationships across difference. They know what it means to create connections where none previously existed and to build belonging in places that once might have felt foreign.

That is why migrant communities have so much to teach a synodal Church. They are not only privileged witnesses of hope. They are also missionaries of hope.

Through their faith, resilience and capacity to build bridges across cultures, they help our Church discover anew what it means to journey together as the People of God.

This is one of the great blessings of the Church in Australia today. The diversity of our Catholic communities is not a problem to be managed, but a richness to be received. In our work at the National Centre for Pastoral Research, we encounter parishes and communities whose life is being shaped and renewed by Catholics from many

countries, cultures and traditions. Migration has changed the face of the Catholic Church in Australia, but more than that, it has deepened its heart.

The story of the Church in Australia has always been shaped by migration. Earlier generations of migrants from Ireland, Italy, Malta, Croatia, Poland and Vietnam enriched our parishes, schools and communities with their faith, traditions and sacrifice. We might also be familiar with the waves that came from India, China, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. Today, newer migrant communities from South Sudan, Nepal, Myanmar, Latin America, the Middle East and across Africa are bringing fresh vitality and new gifts to the Church through their faith, resilience and rich cultural traditions.

I experienced this diversity very personally when I first arrived in Australia from New Zealand. We assumed the move would be easier than our earlier move from India because it was only "across the ditch." Yet migration has a way of humbling our assumptions. We still had to begin again with new jobs, new friendships and new communities.

What struck me most, however, was the diversity I encountered in everyday life. I remember standing outside Flinders Street Station in Melbourne and watching the crowds pass by. I could hear different languages, see people from every corner of the world and encounter an extraordinary range of cultures and traditions. There was something deeply comforting about that experience. Difference was not something that had to be hidden or overcome. It was simply part of everyday life.

In that moment, I realised that belonging did not require uniformity. I could belong without having to become exactly the same as everyone else.

The Church in Australia is not becoming multicultural. It has been multicultural for generations. What is changing is our appreciation of the richness that this diversity brings.

The presence of migrant communities reminds us that the Church is Catholic not only in name, but in reality. The gifts of migrants do not dilute the Church's identity. They reveal more fully the catholicity that already lies at the heart of the Church.

We are a Church of many peoples, many languages, many histories and many forms of faithful witness. Migrants are not at the edges of the Church's mission. They stand at the centre and remind us of its true nature. They remind us that the Gospel is always crossing borders and that the Church is most fully itself when it receives the gifts of all peoples.

A synodal Church recognises that these gifts are not peripheral to its mission. They are among the ways the Holy Spirit continues to renew the Church in every generation.

IV. The Gift of Belonging

When I reflect on my journeys to New Zealand and then Australia, I can see how God sent “Good Samaritans” along the way.

One of the first New Zealanders I encountered after arriving in 2002 was a neighbour. What I remember most was not some extraordinary act of generosity. She simply noticed me. She recognised that I was new to the neighbourhood and took the time to stop, talk and welcome me.

Through those early conversations, she helped me understand something of New Zealand culture and gave me a sense of confidence as I began navigating an unfamiliar environment. Looking back, I realise that she gave me something much more important than information.

She gave me a sense that I belonged.

Over the years, there were many others. People welcomed me into their homes. Friends helped me navigate unfamiliar systems. Priests and parishioners opened the door to community life. Organisations gave me opportunities to work and contribute—the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference perhaps has been the greatest example.

Through them, welcome became more than a word. It became a lived experience.

Hospitality often begins in very ordinary ways. Someone notices you. Someone learns your name. Someone invites you to a conversation, a meal or a community gathering. Yet these simple acts can have extraordinary consequences.

They transform strangers into neighbours and neighbours into friends.

And that is often how hope arrives.

Hope often comes through people before it arrives through circumstances. A meal shared. A lift offered. A job opportunity. An invitation to parish life. A person who remembers your name. A community that says, in word and action, “You belong here.”

For migrants, belonging is about more than being present in a place. It is about being seen, known and valued. It is the experience of discovering that you are not merely living in a community but becoming part of it.

I remember a non-Catholic friend once saying to me, “You are so lucky to have your Church.” What she envied was not our buildings or our institutions. It was the sense of community.

She could see that the Church gave us opportunities to form friendships, build connections and participate in community life in ways that many people long for but struggle to find. It gave us a place where we were known, welcomed and valued.

Her words stayed with me because they captured something I have experienced throughout my migration journeys. In every country where I have lived, the local parish has helped turn an unfamiliar place into a community. It has given me friendships, support and, most importantly, a sense of belonging. That has been one of the greatest blessings of my life.

And perhaps that is one of the Church's greatest gifts.

Not simply services.

Not simply programs.

But communities where strangers become neighbours, neighbours become friends, and people discover that they belong.

V. From Welcome to Reciprocity

Research into the difficulties many migrants face in building social connection reminds us that loneliness and isolation can persist long after someone has settled in a new country.

I know something of that experience myself.

One of the most difficult migrations in my life was not moving from India to New Zealand, nor from New Zealand to Australia. It was our decision to leave Australia and return to India for family reasons.

Many people assume that returning to your country of birth is easy. In reality, it can be one of the most challenging migrations of all.

By that stage, we had built lives in Australia and New Zealand. We had jobs, homes, friendships, communities and a deep sense of belonging. We had begun to feel truly settled.

Returning to India meant leaving all of that behind once again. We sold our house, left our jobs and said goodbye to communities that had become part of our lives.

What surprised me most was that I did not simply return to the person I had once been. Migration had changed me. The years I had spent overseas had shaped my expectations, habits, outlook and way of living. In many ways, I felt like a stranger in the country of my birth.

Even among people I had known for many years, there were times when I felt different. I spoke differently. I approached things differently. Migration had changed me in ways I had not fully recognised, and experiences that had shaped me were not always experiences others could understand.

It took a long time to feel settled again, and in some ways, I never fully felt at home there.

Of course, I know now that was not the end. God had one more journey planned for me. In 2018, my current job brought me once again back to Australia, this time to Canberra.

But that experience taught me something important. Belonging is not created simply by geography.

It is created through relationships, community and connection. A person can be in their country of birth and still feel alone. Equally, a person can be far from home and experience a profound sense of belonging when they are welcomed, accompanied and included.

A person may have a house but not yet a home; employment but not yet belonging; legal status but not yet community. If migrant communities are to flourish as missionaries of hope, then the wider Church must become a community that notices isolation, creates connection and accompanies people beyond the first moment of arrival.

This is where synodality becomes deeply practical.

For many years, the Church's conversation about migrants has rightly focused on welcome: welcoming the stranger, providing support, meeting practical needs and helping people settle into a new society. These remain essential responsibilities. A Church faithful to the Gospel must always be a welcoming Church.

Yet synodality calls us beyond welcome alone. It invites us to move from welcome to reciprocity.

Welcome says: *"You have a place among us."*

Reciprocity says: *"We need the gifts you bring."*

Welcome offers a seat at the table.

Reciprocity recognises that the table itself is enriched by those who gather around it.

Welcome can sometimes remain a one-way act of generosity.

Reciprocity creates a relationship of mutual giving and receiving.

This was one of the profound lessons of the Synod. Every person arrived carrying experiences, insights and gifts that others needed. Nobody entered simply as a recipient. Everyone gave and received. Everyone had something to learn and something to contribute.

The same is true of migrant communities.

A synodal Church does not simply ask migrants to adapt to existing structures, cultures and ways of doing things. It listens to their stories. It receives their wisdom. It learns from their experiences of faith, resilience and perseverance. Most importantly, it allows itself to be changed by the encounter.

This changes the way we think about migrant ministry. Migrants are not merely recipients of pastoral care. They are active participants in the Church's life and mission. They are evangelisers as well as those being evangelised. They are builders of communion, witnesses of hope and partners in discerning how the Holy Spirit is leading the Church into the future.

In that sense, reciprocity is more than a pastoral strategy. It is an expression of the Church's catholicity. It reflects the truth that the Holy Spirit distributes gifts across all peoples, cultures and communities. When we receive those gifts with humility, the whole Church is enriched.

VI. Missionaries of Hope in A Divided World

When we begin to see migrant communities in this way, a profound shift takes place.

We no longer view them primarily through the lens of need, vulnerability or settlement. We begin to recognise them as active participants in the Church's mission and renewal.

But we need to say something equally important: the dignity of migrants and refugees does not depend on what they contribute. Their dignity comes first, before resilience, productivity or service. A person who is exhausted, traumatised, isolated or unable to contribute visibly is no less a gift and no less the image of God.

And this is precisely why migrant communities are missionaries of hope.

They bear witness to hope tested by uncertainty, loss and transition. Many know the cost of leaving home and the courage required to begin again; many also know the pain of being misunderstood or reduced to a stereotype. Across our communities, we see people building families, serving society and contributing to the common good: quiet signs that fear need not have the final word and that new beginnings remain possible.

But migrant communities offer more than an inspiring example of resilience. They also possess experiences and capacities that are especially important in a society increasingly marked by polarisation and division.

Many migrants acquire particular capacities for navigating difference: learning new languages, adapting to unfamiliar cultures, building relationships across social and cultural boundaries, and discovering how to belong without losing the richness of where they have come from. These experiences can illuminate what synodality asks of

the whole Church: listening across differences, encountering people whose assumptions differ from our own, and building communion without demanding uniformity.

These are not simply migration skills. They are human skills. And increasingly, they are missionary skills.

At a time when public discourse often encourages people to retreat into ideological camps, migrant communities remind us that difference does not have to become division. Their lives demonstrate that people from different cultures, languages and histories can live, work, worship and flourish together.

Their witness challenges the fear that diversity inevitably threatens social cohesion. Instead, it shows that when diversity is received with humility, respect and openness, it can become a source of mutual enrichment.

A synodal Church is not called to eliminate differences. It is called to journey faithfully through them. It is called to become a community where people encounter one another not as opponents to be defeated, but as brothers and sisters from whom something can be learned.

This is a message our society needs to hear.

It is also a message our Church needs to hear.

In Magnifica Humanitas, Pope Leo XIV returns to the Church's call to build what St Paul VI called a "civilization of love". He points toward communication that does not dehumanise, peace grounded in justice, solidarity with those who experience exclusion and prejudice, and dialogue renewed by placing encounter at the heart of our common life.

Migrant communities embody many of these same values. Through their daily experience of crossing cultural, linguistic and social boundaries, they demonstrate that difference need not become division. They show us that human relationships can be built across diversity and that belonging can be created without demanding uniformity.

For this reason, the Church's commitment to migrants must always be more than an act of generosity. It is also an act of discipleship.

When we welcome migrants, we do not simply offer something to them. We place ourselves in a position to receive something from them. We receive their faith, their resilience, their witness and their hope. Through that encounter, our whole Church is renewed.

This is also why the Church must continue to be a voice for justice and human dignity. A Church that listens must also advocate. A Church that welcomes must also defend. A

Church that accompanies must also speak whenever people are reduced to stereotypes, subjected to prejudice or denied their fundamental dignity.

Our advocacy is not rooted primarily in politics. It is rooted in the Gospel and in the conviction that every person is created in the image of God.

As Pope Leo XIV reminds us in *Dilexi te*, "The Church, like a mother, accompanies those who are walking... Where walls are built, she builds bridges."

Where suspicion grows, the Church is called to create encounter. Where fear grows, the Church is called to foster trust. Where walls are built, the Church is called to build bridges.

And migrant communities help show us how.

In a divided world, that may be one of the most important missionary witnesses the Church can offer.

So I would like to leave those of us who lead parishes, dioceses and migrant and refugee ministries with three practical questions. Are migrants and refugees only welcomed, or are they trusted with real responsibility? Are their cultures visible only at multicultural celebrations, or are their voices present in ordinary pastoral decisions? And do we measure belonging by attendance and service provision, or by whether people are known, heard and able to exercise their gifts? Those are tests of reciprocity.

Conclusion

Ultimately, migrant communities reveal something essential about the Church itself.

They remind us that the Church is a pilgrim people.

That faith is a journey.

That encounter changes us.

That the Gospel is never confined by boundaries.

And that hope is never passive.

Hope moves.

Hope crosses borders.

Hope learns new languages.

Hope starts again.

Hope builds homes in unfamiliar places.

Hope gathers people into communion.

And if we are willing to listen, migrant communities will continue to show us how the Gospel of mercy can renew relationships, transform humanity and contribute to the unity of peoples. They are not simply recipients of mission. They are bearers of mission.

Today I have reflected on two journeys that have shaped my understanding of hope: my journey as a migrant and my journey through the Synod.

Both taught me the same lesson.

Hope grows when people listen.

Hope grows when strangers become neighbours.

Hope grows when diversity is received as a gift rather than a threat.

Hope grows when the Church walks together in humility, reciprocity and love.

Across migrant communities, we see this lived in countless ways.

And so may we have the courage to listen, the humility to learn, and the generosity to receive the gifts each migrant community brings.

For when we do, our Church becomes more synodal, more missionary and more faithful to the Gospel.

Migrant communities are not simply welcomed by the Church. They help the Church remember what it means to be sent.

Thank you.