

1969

A Brief Statement

Migration Sunday 1969

23rd February

Bishops' Committee for Social and Charitable Works

23 February 1969

By this annual commemoration of Migration Day we are reminded of the innate oneness and unity of the human race and of the bonds that bind us as the people of God. These require us to have concern for the well-being of others, so that, in the everyday relationships of human living we shall observe and apply the principles of mutual collaboration and brotherhood. A particular purpose of today's commemoration is to encourage a wider acceptance and practice of these principles where migration and migrants are concerned. [2791]

With all migration, since it is movement, an uprooting, disruption and dislocation, there are stresses and strains of varying intensity and duration. Invariably it puts the migrant in the condition of a fellow-being in much need. And *"He that shall see his brother in need and shall shut up his heart from him, how doth the charity of God abide in him?" (7 Jn. 3-17).* [2792]

A migrant's need is only partially met with his admission into a country: indeed it is then that he is really in moral as well as material need. He is a stranger and must remain so legally until naturalised. To those, however, around him, where he lives and where he works, he is not to be thought of as a stranger.— *But let him be among you as one of the same country, and you shall love him as yourselves: (Lev. 19-34).* [2793]

Our personal involvement, above all else, is called for in an exercise of Christian concern in another's need and in fulfilment of our duties towards the stranger in our midst. Involvement of this quality not only meets the migrants' need of moral support, guidance and encouragement, facilitating adjustment to a new life, but, as well, in the vast field of national relationships, establishes closer links between peoples, nations, races and social classes; it thus provides a real contribution to the attainment of world peace, a basis for which is personal security and contentment, with harmony in everyday life. [2794]

Officially, as you know, the Church here, as elsewhere, through Bishops' Committees, International Affiliates and rather particularly, a hundred and more National Chaplains, participates actively in Australia's vast programme for growth by migration. [2795]

Your prayers are needed and active co-operation by friendship and neighbourliness [2796]

towards our immigrants. Your help by means of the Annual Collection to meet the very considerable costs associated with our widespread activities in this field will be gratefully received.

A motive and reason of services to our fellow-men is our love of Christ, Redeemer and Savior of all men, through [\[2797\]](#)

“Whom there is access in one Spirit to the Father . . . and therefore no more are there strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens, with the Saints and the Household of God.” (Eph. 2: 18-19).

P. M. O’DONNELL,
Archbishop of Brisbane
Deputy for Migration.

Source: Archives of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO), Canberra, Australia.
