Embracing the Sojourner: A Faithful Response to Migration

> *"[T]he issue of migration is not simply one of* numbers*, but of* persons*, each with his or her own history, culture, feelings and aspirations… our brothers and sisters. … Their fundamental rights must be protected."*
>
> Pope Francis, Message for the "Second Holy See-Mexico Conference on International Migration," Vatican City, 14 June 2018

Migration is an inextricable part of our human story, deeply embedded in our genetic memories. For millennia, people have transplanted themselves in the hopes of improving their lives and those of their families. Today, an estimated 258 million persons are living as international migrants[1]. While international migration has become increasingly difficult, expensive, and perilous—6,163 deaths is a conservative estimate for 2017—the flow of migrants is expected to rise due to the increase in global conflicts and persecution, the disastrous impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, and economic and food insecurity[2]. For those arriving in foreign lands or in different regions within their own countries, proactive policies and community support and outreach can help migrants successfully transition to the benefit of both the migrant and the receiving community.

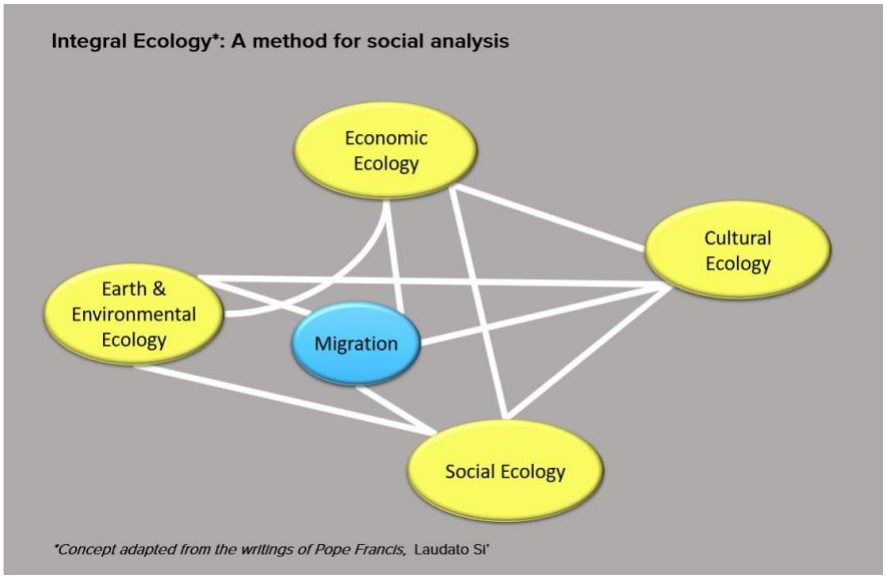

Figure 1: Integral Ecology

In this reflection booklet, we examine the realities of migration—the human faces behind the numbers, the push and pull factors that lead to migration, the political response, and ultimately Pope Francis's articulation of the call to the faithful to respond by welcoming, protecting, promoting, and integrating our migrant brothers and sisters into our communities. Each of the following sections will examine Pope Francis's four actions in greater detail, providing an example of how the Family of Holy Cross is responding to this call. Each section is written as a standalone piece, containing reflection questions, prayer, and a suggested action. We recommend that you allow time for separate periods of personal and/or group reflection, gathering with others to share insights, commitments to action, and prayer.

Integral Ecology: A Method for Social Analysis

> *"[It cannot be emphasized enough how everything is interconnected. … [F]ragmentation of knowledge and the isolation of bits of information can actually become a form of ignorance, unless they are integrated into a broader vision of reality."*
>
> Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*: On care for our common home, paragraph 138

To address a social problem in a manner that moves us toward a more just society, we must first recognize that the issue does not exist in isolation. Rather, it is one part of an interconnected web of dimensions that comprise our whole social system. As such, we must seek to understand the issue as it relates to all other parts of the system in order to shape policies and practices that will affect real change. Pope Francis refers to this idea as *integral ecology*.

The integral ecology method of social analysis—adapted from the writings of Pope Francis—helps us to explore issues in the context of four key dimensions (See *Figure 1*): social (institutions, policies, etc.); Earth and environmental (natural and built environments); cultural (beliefs, traditions, values, practices); and economic. Social analysis is important because this is where we examine the relationships that create or contribute to social problems, identify root causes to be addressed, and articulate actions that will have the greatest impact on the issue.

Table 1: Integral Ecology and Migration Factors

	Push Factors	Pull Factors
Earth and Environmental	Natural disasters and extreme weather phenonmena (floods, droughts, hurricanes, typhoons, fires); Land loss; Lack of clean water; Pollution; Agricultural loss; Climate change	Safer environment; Land access; Access to clean water
Economic	Limited opportunities for work or to improve livelihoods; Low wages; Food insecurity	Better employment opportunities; Better wages; Access to food; Improved quality of life
Cultural	Persecution and prejudice; Violence and extremism; Gender-based violence and discrimination; Racism	Freedom of cultural expression; Religious freedom
Social	Discriminatory, oppressive, and isolationist policies; Lack of educational opportunities; Poor access to health care; Conflict/war; Family separation	Freedom from oppression; Educational opportunities; Access to health care; Political freedom; Political stability; Reunification of family

In looking at migration, we begin by asking, "What propels people to leave their countries of origin (i.e., *push factors*), and what attracts them to destination countries (i.e. *pull factors*)? *Table 1* provides a number of examples within each of the integral ecology dimensions. To illustrate this process of analysis, consider the following example of the plight of a farmer in Bangladesh (see *Figure 2*).

Climate change has produced greater numbers of tropical storms, rising sea levels, and changes in the rain patterns in Bangladesh,[3] leading to land and agricultural losses, as well as a lack of access to clean water [*Earth/environmental*]. Without a livelihood, the farmer and his family will have to move for better opportunities [*economic*]. Each year millions of people are displaced due to environmental factors[4], but such cases are not protected under the 1951 Refugee Convention, and environmental problems can lead to scarcity and conflict between segments of society, leaving many to engage in irregular migration if legal pathways are blocked [*social*]. Depending on their destination, this family may experience discrimination and prejudice or be vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation [*cultural*] and are unlikely to have access to care or legal protection [*social*]. These conditions are exacerbated by vulnerabilities related to gender, race, and religion [*cultural*]. Such patterns persist in many places throughout the world.

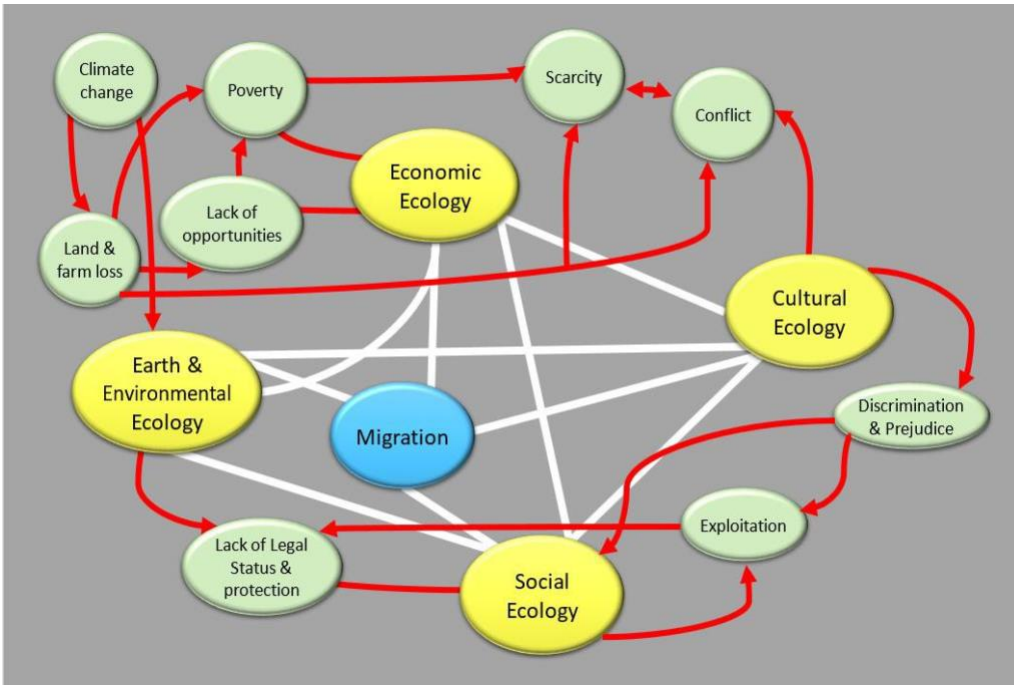

Figure 2: Making Connections and Finding Avenues for Action

In the interest of clarity, the migration scenario included here has been simplified. However, in practice, many more circumstances of migration should be taken into consideration when performing integral ecology analysis, and many more connections could be made among the dynamics depicted in *Figure 2*. As connections are made among the dynamics (e.g. red arrows in *Figure* 2), clusters of these linkages appear—as in the upper, left corner of the figure. These clusters suggest areas where new policies and practices might have the greatest impact on the social problem—in this case, migration. *What other connections could you make?*

Consider the combined linkages between environmental and economics factors. One possible interpretation would be that economic and agricultural policies should include safety nets to help farmers and others recover from environmental disasters and adapt to climate change. As this example shows, there are many areas for policy intervention to address root causes that force people to migrate and to promote and protect migrants and refugees in countries of origin, transit, and destination. Individuals, then, can impact these issues through political advocacy. *What kinds of individual/communal actions might you take to further impact these areas?*

To this end, the United Nations has put forward instruments to be formally approved by the end of 2018. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and Global Compact on Refugees provide national and international policy and practice recommendations. Encouraged by this international cooperation to extend humanitarian compassion to migrants and refugees, Pope Francis proposed support for the compacts and urged the faithful to advocate for concrete steps towards "welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees."[5]

Toward a Faithful Response

> *"I encourage you in your work and your efforts to ground responsibility for the shared global management of international migration in the values of justice, solidarity and compassion."*
>
> Pope Francis, Message for the "Second Holy See-Mexico Conference on International Migration," Vatican City, 14 June 2018

In his address to the International Forum on Migration and Peace (2017), Pope Francis spoke of his great concern for the forced nature of modern migration. Forced migration often leads to irregular migration—depriving migrants and refugees of their dignity, security and fundamental right to remain in their countries of origin if they so choose, and creating resource pressures on destination countries that must struggle to accommodate an unplanned influx of vulnerable migrants. The political response to this complex issue, then, must improve migration management to the greater benefit of society. It must address the conditions that violate basic human rights by forcing people from their homelands, yet restricting their ability to move to

improve their lives. It must ensure that people who wish to return to their countries of origin have the support needed to successfully reintegrate back into their communities, and that those who wish to remain in their new destination countries have the tools and support to make the transition successfully. Perhaps most importantly it must ensure that migration and migrants are discussed in very human terms, not as numbers or criminals, not as statistics or specters. As people of faith, we are called to "welcome, protect, promote, and integrate" our migrant brothers and sisters so that they will be strangers no longer.

Suggested Reflection

Consider the place where you live and work or volunteer. Using the *integral ecology* method, identify some factors that contribute to migration to/from your area.

- *What challenges or problems do you see? How might you have personal impact on these issues?*
- *What opportunities does migration present to your community? How might you support migrants?*
- *How does your faith inform your response to migration?*

Cover photo: "Displaced Haitians Settle at New Camp in Croix-des-Bouquets," 5 Apr. 2010, UN Photo/Sophia Paris.

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[1] GMDAC. (2018, Oct.). *Global Migration Indicators 2018: Insights from the Global Migration Data Portal*.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Raw Cinematics and UNDP. (2016). *Thirty Million*, film.
[4] GMDAC. (2018, Oct). *Global Migration Indicators 2018: Insights from the Global Migration Data Portal.*
[5] Pope Francis. Message on the World day of Migrants and Refugees, 14 January 2018.

HOLY CROSS INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE OFFICE

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on Welcoming

"Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ."

Pope Francis, Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees
14 January 2018

In his 2018 Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis called on all persons of good will to concretely express their solidarity with migrants "at every stage of the migratory experience." This necessarily begins with the act of welcoming the sojourner in our midst. We encounter migrants with an invitation of the heart, recognizing their inherent worth and dignity as human beings.

Welcoming takes place at many levels. At the level of government, policies and programs that welcome offer safe and legal means of entry and provide adequate accommodation. Such policies are founded on a fundamental recognition of the primacy of human rights for all persons. They include provisions for humanitarian visas and ensure that vulnerable migrants and refugees will not be returned to unsafe places and that the enforcement of national policies will be conducted in a compassionate and nonviolent manner. They create programs and services that give migrants and refugees tools for success in their new communities.

Governments and community service organizations also provide access to basic services such as health care, education and legal support.

Sisters of the Holy Cross:
Welcoming with attentive hearts

In Ghana, the sisters' two local communities are both located in towns filled with immigrants, those fleeing from wars and political upheavals in neighboring countries and those fleeing from the harsh economic conditions of the rural villages. Close by Kasoa is a small village called Budumburam. This town is now popularly known as a Liberian camp because refugees fleeing the Liberian civil war in the early 1990s settled there. Even though the sisters do not have a formal ministry for migrants, we encounter refugees every day, at church, at our school and even in our convent. There have been quite a few Liberian refugees who have been offered employment at Our Lady of Holy Cross.

One story that readily comes to mind is a story of a young man who showed up at our doors one morning looking for a job. When we probed about his life, we discovered that Gapsi was an Ivorian and had found his way to the Liberian camp seeking help. This was during the post-election conflict in Ivory Coast. He was battered and molested. The sisters decided to offer him something to do, first at the convent and later in the school. He turned out to be a very generous and hard-working person.

Gapsi worked in the school for about two years. During the period of his stay, his gentle and calm nature endeared him to all the staff of the of the school, including the sisters. He felt free

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As the story from the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Ghana demonstrates, communities and individuals have a great capacity to welcome migrants and refugees. Doing so can have a profound impact on both the giver and the receiver. When we extend ourselves to our migrant neighbors, we build relationships that awaken our spirits and our consciousness.

Suggested Reflection Questions:

- *What struck you about Gapsi's story? How does his journey impact your thoughts about migration and migrants?*
- *How might you welcome the stranger in your midst?*

Prayer:

O God, give me the courage to reach out to the strangers in my midst with a compassionate heart and an attentive ear. Help me to see the inherent value and beauty in the faces that surround me, to be humbled by their journeys and awed by the similarities of our hopes and dreams. Let me respond to their needs with a generous spirit.

Action:

Resolve to befriend migrants in your midst; create welcoming space for their personal stories.

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to share his life story. Even though his vulnerability was evident in the way he expressed his life story, he always demonstrated graciousness. He was always joyful.

He talked about how the sisters had changed his life by their generosity towards him. From the few encounters I had with him I realized that, even though he felt vulnerable, he trusted and was hopeful because he could count on the sisters for support. I learned from him that leaving home is never an easy choice, not even for those who have the luxury of choice. For many, there is no choice.

Gapsi later decided to migrate to Europe. Even when he moved on, he never forgot the sisters, occasionally contacting one sister or the other. Gapsi's story particularly expanded the scope of my compassion toward strangers and made me more willing to at least listen to the story of a person who approaches me in trust. I have also learned that, in the midst our incessant desire to protect our space and preserve our lives, we can at least spare a welcoming heart and a listening ear to hear the life-transforming stories of the people we encounter every day.

SUBMITTED BY: Sr. Callista Tetteh, CSC

BELOW: Sr. Esther Entsiwah, the headmistress of Our Lady of Holy Cross School in Ghana engaged in conversation with Mr. Plus, a Liberian Refugee who works in the school.

The Sisters of the Holy Cross joyfully participate in Jesus' mission by proclaiming God's transforming love for all creation. Sisters live and minister in eight countries on four continents, serving peoples of many cultures. For more information, visit https://www.cscsisters.org/

on Protecting

"[P]rotecting may be understood as a series of steps intended to defend the rights and dignity of migrants and refugees, independent of their legal status."

Pope Francis, Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees
14 January 2018

Protecting migrants and refugees requires a response in countries of origin as well as places of destination. Pope Francis asserts that countries of origin must ensure that their citizens have accurate and current information about their rights prior to emigrating to another country. This includes providing public education about labor recruitment practices that could place them in danger or make them vulnerable to trafficking. Government leaders must also ensure that sufficient policies and social programs are in place to aid returning citizens to reintegrate in their communities.

For destination countries, it is essential that migrants and refugees have access to legal protection and documentation, regardless of their legal status. This, Pope Francis argues, is a moral imperative. Such protection empowers migrants and refugees "to leverage their skills and competencies in order to improve their own wellbeing and the prosperity of their communities."[1] Communities and individuals can have impact in this area through advocacy work, as well as providing direct services to migrants and refugees such as education and cultural encounter.

Marianites of Holy Cross:
Protecting with "simple acts of love"

A preschool child sits before a multitude of colored blocks. His questioning eyes call to her for help. She whispers, "green." After a brief moment, he confidently says "Ah, verde. Verde!" Her gentle smile assures him that he is correct.

Scenes such as this play out daily as Sr. Juanita works with immigrant children. As a native Honduran, she understands intimately the importance language plays in understanding culture and adapting to life in a new country. She is acutely aware of the fact that her students' ability to speak English is foundational for their success academically. More importantly, her students' ability to speak and communicate using the English language is essential for their voice to be heard and their needs to be met.

Amid the many other components of her ministry are seemingly simple acts of love that address her students' basic needs and sense of belonging—buying school supplies, uniforms, and school jackets; helping parents navigate the school system; offering food and clothing assistance. However; Sr. Juanita believes that the most important aspect of her ministry is simply letting the children know that they are seen and cared for. With her, they are not invisible. The dignity of their person is noticed and celebrated.

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In seeking to protect migrants, it is critical that we remember those among them who are most vulnerable. Children in particular require compassionate support. As the Marianites of Holy Cross story illustrates, engaging migrant children through education fosters capacity building that enhances the lives of the children and their parents as well. Through this process, the seeds of cultural exchange bear fruit that nourishes our communities and our lives.

Suggested Reflection Questions:

- *What evidence do you see of migrants' contributions in the place you live? How do migrants benefit your community?*
- *What gifts do you have to offer migrants and refugees?*
- *What are the benefits of engaging in cultural exchange with migrants? What challenges do you see?*

Prayer:

Lord of life and love, you speak to us daily in the depths of our hearts. You call us to be instruments of peace and hope in our world today. May the witness of our lives reveal your love, your peace, your mercy. May our presence be a source of hope for all who you send into our lives this day. May each of us be a true reflection of your compassionate love in our hurting world.

Action:

Gift everyone you encounter today with a smile, a prayer, a word of encouragement and hope. Let no one be invisible in your presence.

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In gratitude for the gift of being able to express themselves and have their voices heard, the children become translators for their parents. In giving their parents an avenue through which their voice is heard, they are no longer invisible. Sr. Juanita's ministry with the children is truly a gift that keeps on giving.

SUBMITTED BY: Sister Keri Burke, MSC

BELOW: Sister Juanita works with students.

United with Mary, standing at the foot of the cross, the Marianites of Holy Cross, are apostolic religious, women of prayer and compassion. Called to be a prophetic presence in an ever-changing world, the Marianites, headquartered in Covington, Louisiana, resolutely stand with those who are excluded. For more information, visit https://www.marianites.org/

[1] Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, Responding to Refugees and Migrants: Twenty Pastoral Action Points

on Promoting

"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."*

Pope Francis, Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees
14 January 2018

At the heart of promoting is the prospect that all human beings have a basic right to authentic development wherever they may be. This requires "providing fair access to fundamental goods for all people and offering the possibility of choice and growth."[1] In this way, both countries of origin and countries of destination bear responsibility for creating the conditions for human flourishing, so that no one should be forced from his/her homeland due to a lack of opportunities or freedoms.

Promoting requires cooperation and action at every level: international, national and local governments; civil society organizations; communities; and individuals. To ensure that all people can meet their basic needs in the places where they live requires the political and economic engagement of all levels of government. It requires a concerted effort among governments and civil society to protect basic human rights and to provide access to quality education and social services.

In receiving countries, migrants and refugees need tools for success, such as programs that foster cultural exchange and facilitate civic and language

Sisters of Holy Cross: *Promoting people and communities through education*

Jacqueline Verville, CSC, realized her dream of teaching refugees and immigrants when the **Holy Cross Family Learning Center** opened in 2010. There, volunteer teachers provide English, computer and sewing classes and, with their students, explore and integrate cultures and customs from various nations and peoples. Summer classes include social activities and field trips, sharing the richness of the surrounding areas.

At the Center, teachers and students work collaboratively - developing close bonds, embracing diversity, and strengthening families. Muslims and Christians and Buddhists become friends; students from Kurdistan to Brazil support one another as they strive for similar goals.

A former student captured the Center's spirit perfectly: "I have such pleasant memories of the Center and miss the family atmosphere, the good times and your kindnesses. You taught us the highlights of American history, so we would understand what citizenship is about. We discussed cultures, customs, laws, living in the U.S., *and* we learned English. Thank you!"

learning. Religious communities and social services organizations are key partners in this work. As exemplified in the stories from the Sisters of Holy Cross, education and skills training programs benefit both migrants and the communities in which they live and work. Migrants and refugees acquire skills that help them to be engaged and effective, while the opportunity for interfaith and intercultural exchange leads to greater understanding and peace in our communities.

Suggested Reflection Questions:

- *Which aspects of your culture promote or frustrate authentic human development?*
- *Where you currently live, which governmental policies or social programs promote authentic human development?*
- *Separation and reunification of migrant families is a global concern. How does this impact authentic human development?*

Prayer:

Creator God, you have gifted us with this beautiful and bountiful planet home. Open our eyes that we might be awed and grateful for its incredible abundance. Open our hearts that we may be moved to care for creation and equitably share your gifts with one another to promote authentic human development for all.

Action:

Explore an organization or program in your area that promotes authentic human development within the migrant community. Consider volunteering your time or supporting its work in other ways.

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[1] Pope Francis, Address to Participants in the International forum on "migration and peace," 21 February 2017.

In 1995, **Petite-Mains**, a project for socially marginalized, principally immigrant women, initiated by Denise Arsenault, CSC, and her associate Nahid Aboumansour, was officially recognized in Canada. In her design, Sister Denise saw far beyond charity. Her plan was to teach immigrants skills, to empower them to support themselves and their families and to deepen their sense of self-worth and grow in self-reliance.

Petite-Mains began with sewing classes for just seven women, but within a few years expanded its program offerings to French classes and pre-employment programs. Today, Petites-Mains offers trainings well suited to diverse interests and abilities of women: industrial sewing, fashion design, diner management, catering services, day-care services, and training office clerks. Petites-Mains now has twenty-five employees who have made this project their own, while Holy Cross influence is maintained on the Board of Directors.

SUBMITTED BY: Sr. Denise Turcotte, CSC

BELOW: Volunteer, Sr. Noëllie Ouédraogo, a Junior Professed from West Africa, points to the picture of Sr. Denise Arsenault at "Petites-Main".

The Sisters of Holy Cross, an international congregation of women religious, arrived in Montreal, Canada in 1847 and presently minister in Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Haiti, Mali, and Peru. As faith filled apostolic women religious, rooted in the spirituality of our founder, Blessed Basile Moreau, we, the Sisters of Holy Cross dedicate ourselves to "Education for Liberation" among children, youth, women and those who are underserved in our society.

on Integrating

"Integration …is neither assimilation nor incorporation, [rather it is] a two-way process rooted essentially in the joint recognition of the other's cultural richness."

Pope Francis, Address to Participants in the International Forum on "Migration and Peace," 21 February 2017

In his 2018 Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis explained that integration is a long-term process in which societies and culture are shaped anew through encounter. Based on mutual respect and enrichment, integration is rooted in appreciation for the value of each individual and his/her cultural and faith traditions. It is a coming together that enables community-building and cultivates interpersonal growth.

Integration necessarily requires that we move away from policies and practices that isolate migrants and refugees and serve to separate them from their families. To this end, world leaders and governments can encourage solidarity with migrants and refugees by promoting respectful narratives and facilitating family reunification. Communities also have a responsibility to be inclusive, to create space in which migrants and refugees may live and participate fully.

We can foster inclusion by creating opportunities that invite intercultural exchange and dialogue. As persons of faith, we must make personal encounter a priority. As these examples from the Congregation of Holy Cross illustrate, when we reach out to our migrant brothers and sisters in a spirit of

Congregation of Holy Cross: *Integrating through interfaith and intercultural exchange*

Since last year, over 700,000 Rohingya refugees have fled to neighboring Bangladesh, escaping persecution in Myanmar. Recently, the U.N. Human Rights Council voted to set up a body to prepare evidence of human rights abuses in Myanmar—including possible genocide against the predominantly Muslim Rohingya—for any future prosecution. Wading into the controversy during his December 2017 pastoral visit to Bangladesh, Pope Francis met with some Rohingya refugees and said, "In the name of all of those who have persecuted you, hurt you, I ask forgiveness."

In September 2017, Holy Cross Cardinal Patrick D'Rozario, Archbishop of Dhaka, visited several Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazaar to assess how the Catholic Church could respond to this humanitarian crisis. Speaking of his visits, the Cardinal said, "I wanted to be with them, to be together with them, to share in my own way, their pain; and importantly, to prepare a way for Caritas to go to serve them."

As of June 2018, with the help of the Cardinal and the sponsorship of Archbishop Moses Costa, C.S.C., and Bishop Lawrence Subrata

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accompaniment, we are ourselves transformed and renewed.

Suggested Reflection Questions:

- *When you think about migrants and refugees, what kinds of images come to mind? How do you think public media might shape your perception?*
- *In what ways does your culture promote solidarity with migrants and refugees? Do you perceive barriers to inclusion?*

Prayer:

O God, you call us to love one another. Give us also the grace to reach out to our migrant brothers and sisters that we might accompany them on their journeys. In your mercy, imbue our leaders with the wisdom to promote solidarity and inclusion through respectful dialogue and humane policies. Grant us, Compassionate God, the courage to stand with migrants and refugees, ever seeking justice in your name.

Action:

Gather in a small group to discuss diversity and inclusion in your community. Consider the needs, as well as your community resources. Then, together, commit yourselves to one or two immediate actions that would foster solidarity and inclusion with the migrant community locally.

Howlader, C.S.C., Caritas had helped build 12,000 small houses, distributed 12,000 gas cylinders, fed 46,000 refugees, and installed 250 solar panels in the camps. Collaborating with Caritas, the government of Bangladesh provided quick approval of such projects with additional assistance promised in the future.

Going to the "periphery," be it to the Rohingya of Bangladesh or to the rejected outcasts in our neighborhoods, gives us a clarity and vision we would not have if we remained in the comfortable center. It enables us to see the demands constantly made on us by the cries of the poor.

In the Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross, we read: "Our concern for the dignity of every human being as God's cherished child directs our care to victims of every injury: prejudice, famine, warfare, ignorance, infidelity, abuse, natural calamity…." Thank you Cardinal Rozario, Archbishop Costa, and Bishop Howlader for incarnating the Holy Cross mission in your leadership

SUBMITTED BY: Brother Paul Bednarczyk, CSC

The Congregation of Holy Cross consists of over 1,200 perpetually professed religious brothers and religious priests. Through our vowed religious life, our apostolic work, and our conviction that "the cross is our only hope," we strive to be men with hope to bring in the 16 countries in which we live and serve. For more information, visit http://www.holycrosscongregation.org/

Cover Photo: "Rohingya refugees in the Kutupalong Rohingya Refugee Camp in Cox's Bazar," 2 July 2018, UN Photo/KM Asad

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