THEOLOGY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH IN RELATION TO MIGRATION

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.G. Ad Gentes
C.D. Christus Dominus
G.S. Gaudium et Spes
Instruction: Instruction on the Pastoral Care of People who Migrate
L.G. Lumen Gentium
N.Ae. Nostra Aetate
O.A. Octogesimo Adveniens
P.M.C. Pastoralis Migratorum Cura
P.O. Presbyterorum Ordinis
P.P. Populorum Progressio
Voiceless Injustices: Document of Synod I, 1971
On 17 October Paul VI received participants in the European Congress on pastoral work for migrants, in the presence of the members of the Pontifical commission for migration, with the President, Cardinal Sebastiano Baggio. Paul VI delivered the following address.

My Lord Cardinal,
Dear Brothers in the Episcopate,
Dear Sons,

Your visit and the words that have just been spoken fill us with seriousness and hope. Through you, we join the immense multitude of migrants. Is there not talk of about twelve million in West Europe alone? And if the vast majority are manual workers, we cannot forget all the refugees for political or religious reasons, the students, technicians, the personnel of international organizations.

But your presence also bears witness to the work carried out in your respective countries by so many national, regional, diocesan or other teams, in the service of uprooted populations. We are aware how delicate, obscure, often misunderstood, this work is. We hope with you that this Roman Congress will bring about a bold and realistic advance in pastoral work for migrants. We need not multiply, in this talk, references to the documents which remain the charter of a real presence of the Church in the world of migrants. You have meditated, commented and circulated “Pastoralis Magnum Cura”, “Apostolicae Caritatis”, “Populorum Progressio”, “Octogesima Adveniens”. It is a necessary stage, and we congratulate you on it. It calls for concrete achievements, which we invite you to continue and which we would like to stimulate with all our strength.

Assumes gigantic proportions

It is a fact that in the most industrialized European countries, the migration of workers has taken on gigantic proportions. Has not one of them as many as 28 per cent of immigrants among its workers? This situation creates such problems that some people wonder: would it not be better to export factories rather than import men? Even so, it would be necessary for these implantations to be constantly concerned with the real advancement of the local workers. In any case, the conditions of the present migratory phenomenon, which will certainly continue in the future in one form or another, call for a reform.

While it is not the business of the local Churches to take the place of governments, which have their own responsibility with regard to this kind of modern nomadism, they have a specific contribution to make to the solution of the serious problems to which it gives rise. Without giving up their own personality, these local Churches are called to live their universal vocation more and more. We would like reflection on the meaning of migration, and more widely of mobility, to be studied more deeply and to nourish more the pastoral action of the Church today.

We encourage in the first place the Churches affected by the exodus of their populations to develop, renew, create, if necessary, pastoral services to prepare and accompany workers and their families. There sometimes exist surprising disproportions between the figures given for such and such an ethnic group and the figures for missionaries, laymen, Sisters, dedicated to their evangelization. Should not the dioceses of origin revise further the use of their apostolic forces and material resources to direct them towards strategic points, before it is too late? Present-day mobility must find a corresponding pastoral mobility in the Church.

Then, too, we again invite the host
Churches to cooperate humbly and sincerely to meet the various pastoral needs of immigrants. Work that is often admirable is being accomplished. Many evangelical workers, however, could be called, prepared and sent to these new harvests. The initial reception and the early period after arrival are so important for the insertion of the ethnic groups, temporarily or definitively! It remains very difficult for the inhabitants of countries that consider themselves advanced, to become poor with the poor, to learn to look at them, listen to them, receive from them. It is this fundamental attitude, however, which will allow migrant persons and communities to be themselves, to express themselves, to understand their problems with regard to insertion, to acquire confidence in themselves in order to solve them gradually. Purely directive or demagogical methods are to be banished absolutely. We also make a special appeal to the spiritual leaders of the different ethnic groups and to the local clergy to collaborate more. This unity of pastors is absolutely indispensable for the unity of each migrant community and the unity of the communities with one another.

Statutes for migrant workers

We still hope that this solidarity, educated in a healthy way, will hasten, on its part, the coming of a real statute for migrant workers. This statute, which might contain variations from one country to another, would guarantee the rights of migrants to respect of their personality, security of work, vocational training, family life, schooling for their children adapted to their needs, social insurance and freedom of speech and association. As has rightly been said: the industrialized countries call or accept cheap labour, but it is men they receive, men with a head and a heart. Let us not forget that Christ identified himself with the foreigner: "I was a stranger, and you made me welcome" (Mt. 25, 35).

All this cooperation in the real development of migrants is directly in line with the Gospel of justice and peace. But we hasten to add, are equally in need of spiritual life. The immigrants, furthermore, are nearly all bearers of religious values. To criticize too rapidly or to ignore systematically this religious element, on the pretext that it is not sufficiently lived, is a grave lack of respect and trust. What is more, it is the door open to indifferentism or dechristianization. We earnestly beg all those in charge of the religious life of migrants to show great patience in bringing about the convergence of traditional religious customs and commitments expressing a living faith. It is a question, in short, of helping the migrants to make their faith more mature. If the Churches or origin and the host Churches intensify their frank and trusting dialogue, share to a greater extent their human and material resources, we will still see the Light of the Lord shining above the Nations.

Together, dear Brothers and dear Sons, let us maintain serenity and hope. Can it not be said that through the migratory phenomenon, worrying though it is, God invites us to pull down the barriers of racism, and to do away with economic and political selfishness? Should not Christian communities that fear to lose their homogeneity see in migration an urgent appeal to build real communities, more mature and more ecumenical, in which recognition of the other, sharing with the other, will become the rule of life? Could we not propose as the ideal for such relations the short and pithy words of the Gospel of the Apostle John, intended in the first place to characterize the fellowship of the Father and the Son, in the Spirit: "All I have is yours and all you have is mine" (Jn. 17, 10)?

This we have great joy in sharing with you. And it is with these sentiments that we impart the Apostolic Blessing to you, and to the immense family of migrants so near to our heart.
INTRODUCTION

"Today more than ever before it is impossible to announce God's Word and to understand it, unless it be accompanied by witness of the power of the Holy Spirit, working through the action of Christians at the service of their brothers, where their existence and their future are at stake" (O.A.51).

This phrase of Pope Paul VI in his letter of May 1971 to Cardinal Roy, applies also to the theology of the local Church in relation to migration. The local Church will only be credible to the extent to which it carries out its mission in the service of migrants according to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

We cannot be satisfied, then, to present a theological synthesis based on Scripture and Church documents, but by facing up to the contrast between the ideal we should reach and the actual reality as lived in the world and in the Church, we can come to see what the Lord expects from each Church, both as regards conversion of heart and structural changes.

People also expect from us a living theology, a dynamic theology which will be the light of the world and the salt of the earth (Cf.O.A.42).
CONTRAST BETWEEN THE IDEAL WE OUGHT TO REACH AND THE ACTUAL REALITY AS LIVED IN THE WORLD AND IN THE CHURCH

1. BASIC THEOLOGICAL DATA

We cannot, however, enter into this dynamic orientation without recalling the basic theological principles on which it rests.

Universal Church and Local Church

We must dismiss absolutely from our minds any idea of the universal Church considered as a federation of local Churches or as a centralizing State which ensures unity between various provinces and imposes itself upon them.

Moreover, any purely sociological or political analysis of the Church either universal or local, is quite powerless to explain its nature. We must reach the very Mystery of the Church.

We would be even more mistaken if we were to separate the mystery of the Church from its organization and structures. There are not two realities: an institutional Church and a communing Church. There is but one Church of God. (1)

And “this Church”, the Council tells us, “is truly present in all legitimate local congregations of the faithful, which, united with their pastors, are themselves called Churches in the New Testament” (L.G.,26). Certainly one could say “the Church of Corinth”, but St. Paul prefers to say: “the Church of God that is in Corinth”. (1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1). Thus, and I return to the Council text: the local Church is “fashioned after the model of the universal Church. In and from such individual Churches there comes into being the one and only Catholic Church” (L.G.,23).

All due proportions being safeguarded, we should find in each local Church the notes which characterize the universal Church. It must be one, holy, Catholic and apostolic.

For this reason the relations between the local Churches and the universal Church are not primarily juridical relations: the unity of the Church is a gift from God. As St. Cyprian says, the Church is “a people made one by the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit” (quoted in L.G.,4). This deep unity is visibly shown by the profession of the same faith, reception of the same sacraments and communion with the same pastors. Just as the Pope is “the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity of bishops and of the multitude of the faithful”, similarly “the local bishop is the visible principle and foundation of unity in his particular Church” (L.G.,23)

(1) “But the society furnished with hierarchical agencies and the Mystical Body of Christ are not to be considered as two realities, nor are the visible assembly and the spiritual community, nor the earthly Church and the Church enriched with heavenly things. Rather they form one interlocked reality which is composed of a divine and a human element” (L.G.,8).
Bonds between Local Churches

This bond is a bond of communion in the fullest sense of the word. In point of fact, the Council tells us, "among all the nations of the earth there is but one People of God, which takes its citizens from every race, making them citizens of a kingdom which is of a heavenly and not an earthly nature. For all the faithful scattered throughout the world are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit, so that 'he who lives in Rome knows the people of India are his members' (St. John Chrysostom)" (L.G.,13).

But this communion is not confined to the level of faith, the Eucharist and obedience to Christ as represented by the Pope and the bishops. It also exists at the level of mutual assistance. "Each individual part of the Church", says the Council, "contributes through the common sharing of gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church. Thus through the common sharing of gifts and through the common effort to attain fullness in unity, the whole and each of the parts receive increase ... Finally, between all the parts of the Church there remains a bond of close communion with respect to spiritual riches, apostolic workers and temporal resources" (L.G.,13).

This communion, however, no matter how deep it may be does not create uniformity. Whether there be question of the universal Church or of the local Churches, each people and each human group must realize that it will always be respected "as regards the ability, resources and customs" proper to each group "insofar as they are good". By taking them to herself the Church "purifies, strengthens and ennobles them" (L.G..13). Such is the Council teaching.

Finally, just as there can be no genuine collegiality of bishops without communion with the Pope, there can be no communion between the local Churches unless there be communion with the Roman Church of which the Pope is the bishop (L.G.,22 and 23).

Local Churches and Episcopal Conferences

What we have just said is directly connected with the very institution of the Church by Christ. For historical and pastoral reasons, however, patriarchates were seen to emerge in the early centuries of the Church, and today we see Episcopal Conferences emerging.

These groupings change nothing of the nature of these local Churches, but show forth in a particular way the bonds between them and the collegiality of the bishops. At the same time they render very important services within a single country for the better fulfilment of Christ's mission in each Church, as well as between various countries, by ensuring to a fuller extent that mutual brotherly help of which we have already spoken (Cf. L.G.,23; C.D. 36-38).

Bishops and Priests in the Local Churches

"Every priestly ministry", says the Council, "shares in the universality entrusted by Christ to his apostles" (P.O.,10). Consequently, neither bishops nor priests can shut themselves up within the limits of a diocese or a particular ministry.

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"Each bishop, as a member of the episcopal college and a legitimate successor of the apostles, is obliged by Christ's decree and command to be solicitous for the whole Church. This solicitude, though it is not exercised by an act of jurisdiction, contributes immensely to the welfare of the universal Church" (L.G.,23).

This universal solicitude should obviously be shown in the first place to those of whom we have formerly had charge and who have left their diocese, especially if they have more to suffer and are in greater danger on the spiritual plane. Likewise, within a diocese, the bishop ought to be particularly concerned about those in greatest need and those who are in danger of leaving the Church, even if they did not originally belong to his diocese (L.G.,23; C.D.,18).

Priests, too, although incardinated in a particular diocese, should be available for the universal mission, no matter what type of work they are to do in the service of this mission (P.O.,10). Their priesthood is, in point of fact, of the same nature as that of the bishop, with whom they are one. The only real difference is the level of their ministry and their dependence on the bishop (L.G.,28; P.O.,2).

**The People of God**

The Church does not consist solely of the bishops and priests. The Council tells us that "these pastors know that they themselves were not meant by Christ to shoulder alone the entire saving mission of the Church" (L.G.,30). The *entire People of God is a missionary people*: bishops and priests, religious and laity. Whether they are called to "a more direct form of co-operation in the apostolate of the hierarchy" (L.G.,33), or whether they carry out their apostolate in the framework of secular life, an apostolate which takes on "a special force in that it is carried out in the ordinary surroundings of the world" (L.G.,35), the laity also participate in the Church's saving mission (L.G.,33).

Moreover, they are called by God to take part in the organization of the earthly city so that it may be built in conformity with God's will, in justice and charity. "The laity", says the Council, "have the principal role in the universal fulfilment of this purpose" (L.G.,36).

**The Mystery of the Local Church**

Here are a few additional remarks which will help us to pinpoint and enter into the mystery of the local Church.

The local Church is not primarily determined by topography or by any other natural or human reality. It can only be understood in faith, with reference to the universal Church.

We run the risk of being mistaken, then, when we compare it with secular organizations. There is real ambiguity, for instance, when we speak of decentralization of the Church. This is not the case when we speak of mission, for then we are looking at the mystery of the Church, the mystery of her unity.
Likewise when we view the local Church in the light of the universal Church, we avoid all turning in upon ourselves, all ecclesial “nationalism”, all refusal to be united with the other Churches as with the Church of Rome.

In a word, in this same light, collegiality no longer appears as a grouping of members who can only act as a body, but in the mystery of unity we see quite clearly how, according to the needs of the mission, the Pope is induced to act in the universal Church and the bishop in the local one.

2. THE IDEAL WE MUST ATTAIN

Under the pressure of modern life we come to see that men are called more and more to establish a people without frontiers. There should no longer be any foreigners, only brothers. This is the aim pursued by the Church, for, as the Council tells us, “Christ and the Church . . . transcend every particularity of race or nation and therefore cannot be considered foreign anywhere or to anybody” (A.C.,8).

This orientation towards universal brotherhood originates in the Gospel and the apostolic writings. Already in the Old Testament, Yahweh appears as the “defender of the foreigner”, and what was prefigured in the Old Testament is explicitly taught in the New, through the universalism of fraternal charity.

Despite established custom, Jesus speaks to a Samaritan woman and asks a service of her (Jn.4:7). He praises the faith of a Roman centurion (Mt.8:10-12) and of a Canaanite woman (Mt.15:28). He contrasts the attitude of a priest and a Levite with that of a Samaritan who “proved a neighbour to the man who fell among robbers” (Lk.10:30-37). He asks his disciples to love all men, even their enemies (Mt.5:43-48; Lk.6:27-36). Finally, on the day of judgment he will say: “I was stranger and you welcomed me” unless he is obliged to say: “I was a stranger and you did not welcome me” (Mt.25:35-46).

Without denying the diversity among men, Saint Paul calls on all to be united in Christ Jesus; henceforth, he says, “there cannot be Greek or Jew . . . Barbarian or Scythian . . . you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Col.3:11; cf. Gal.3:28).

Confronted with the migratory phenomenon, the Church has striven to bring this evangelical ideal of universal brotherhood into the modern world just as it is today. Here are a few of its guidelines:

Every man has the right to live in his own country or to emigrate for lawful reasons (Pacem in Terris, 25) and only serious motives based on the common good can be opposed to this right, (Exsul Familia, 79; Instruction, 6 and 7).

On the other hand, the migrants must be received, not as strangers but as brothers, with respect for their nationality and their own culture and with no discrimination whatever, whether based on race or social or economic condition (Cf. G.S. 29, 60-66).
If the migratory phenomenon were to conform to these fundamental guidelines, it would be a means of fostering unity and brotherhood between the various nations. It would also afford them the possibility of mutual enrichment by the pooling of wealth and of their professional training and their culture (Instruction, 2 and 13).

**Mutual aid at the level of the local Churches**

Migrants should be admitted to the local Churches with full respect for their religious traditions. By this very fact they offer the diocese which welcomes them the possibility to become truly missionary in its own area, by adapting to the various classes of migrants, and thus to achieve in a practical way the unity and catholicity of the Church (Instruction, 29-34).

As for the local Churches from which these migrants come, they are invited to go beyond their own frontiers and open up to broader perspectives. They should, in fact, prepare those who intend to emigrate for the new life that awaits them; they should also sustain them through the medium of priests and religious who will enable them to maintain and develop their Christian life (Instruction, 23-25).

Thus, by reason of their mobility, people have, at least in fact if not by right, several bishops, and they are members of several local Churches. The very fact of migrations is an incentive to the local Churches to arrive at a better understanding of the mystery of their Church. They are stimulated by migrations to an awareness of their innermost being and of their very nature and obliged, as it were, to become what they are.

In a word, when a local Church comes into contact with people who profess other religions, it is called upon to show them Christ's countenance in all its purity and to establish relations of friendship with them in a brotherly spirit. Normally the local Church, through this contact, is enriched by certain religious or human values by which these people order their lives (Cf. Nostra Aetate, 2).

Unfortunately, this human and spiritual ideal proposed to us by the Gospel and by the Church does not correspond to the reality. In actual fact it is only realized by a small number of Christians — priests, religious or laity.

The migratory phenomenon presents itself to us, in the aggregate, deeply corrupted by racism and injustice: on the religious plane it en-

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(2) The Church's teaching with regard to migrants: The principal conciliar texts to be found in Gaudium et Spes (6; 25-29; 63-69); but one can also consult Lumen Gentium (13; 17-23); Ad Gentes (20; 26-28); Christus Dominus (16; 18; 23; 32; 35; 42); Apostolicam Actuositatem (2; 7; 10; 11; 14; 17; 23); Sacrosanctum Concilium (38); Unitatis Redintegratio (9; 10); Orientalium Ecclesiarum (4; 12); Nostra Aetate (2; 5).

The two principal papal documents are Exsul Familia, of 1st August 1952 (D.C. 1953, 457-502) and Pastoralis Migratorum Cura, of 15th August 1969 (D.C. 1970, 59-59) with the accompanying Instruction (22nd August 1969, D.C. 1970, 59-70). But as regards principles as well as facts, one should also consult Pacem in Terris (11th April, 1963, 25 and 106, cf. 8 to 45); Popularum Progressio (26th March 1967, 66-69); Octogesima Adveniens (14th May 1971, 16-17; 42-43; 66; 74). Finally, we may mention the synodal document of 1971 (1, Voiceless Injustices).
counters obstacles which it has not been possible, up to the present, to surmount, and these obstacles are a permanent threat to the migrants faith and to their Christian life. Let us have the courage to face up to this reality.

Some of you will perhaps think I am a pessimist. If I am mistaken, if the reality is better than I think, then I shall be very glad. But — good doctrine and good guidelines are not enough to satisfy us and set our minds at rest.

However, if the situation with regard to migration is really as I present it, we must not be discouraged. Quite the contrary. We shall feel even more keenly the need to go ahead in a truly hopeful spirit.

Meanwhile, let us look at the situation as it really is.

3. THE CRUEL ASPECTS OF MIGRATION

The cruel facts involved in migration have been denounced more than once in vigorous fashion, especially in the synodal document in 1971. We hear tell of migrants who suffer from discriminatory measures and who “are frequently obliged to live without any security and are treated in an inhuman manner.” We also hear of those millions of refugees who, for various reasons, are subjected to real persecution which can go as far as genocide (I, Voiceless Injustices). Here are the three titles we intend to deal with: racism, exploitation, persecution.

Racism

I am taking this word in its broad sense, to indicate the unbrotherly attitude of a nation with regard to various groups of migrants. I am not speaking of theoretical racism, but of racist attitudes.

Racism springs in the first place from the difference in language and customs. Migrants are always considered as a nuisance by the native population. They are made to feel this by the use of contemptuous terms in their regard and by failure to welcome them. Sociologists even speak of limits which are not to be exceeded if peace is to be maintained in a district or in a block of flats. In the schools, the presence of a large number of migrants is a real obstacle to the progress of a class.

These difficulties are inevitable, but nothing has been done so far towards their basic solution. People have been satisfied with taking merely restrictive measures.

On the other hand, the nation which receives migrants considers itself superior. It is richer and more powerful; it believes itself wiser because it has had more instruction. This gives rise to a contemptuous or paternalistic attitude. The foreigner is no longer respected as a brother; he is an inferior, to be tolerated, to be used, or to be treated with condescension.

Racism can even go as far as hatred. By dint of feeling themselves a nuisance, the migrants are tempted to turn in upon themselves. The more they differ in their language, customs, culture and religion, the more they withdraw from the native population. Feeling themselves unwelcome they
become distrustful of others. As for the local people, they find the migrants intolerable, they no longer want them; sometimes they are afraid of them. An attitude of collective rejection is then reached which can result in hatred and even murder.

**Exploitation of migrants**

The migratory phenomenon as it is today represents at sociological level a typical case of collective exploitation. Here I am not referring to students or to political refugees. I am speaking of the migrant workers as a whole.

Sometimes exploitation even begins in the country of departure. For certain governments in poor countries, migration is considered to be profitable: it reduces unemployment, brings in foreign currency and permits a certain professional training. Rather than concentrating on real development of their own economy by creating at all costs new jobs, these countries prefer to take advantage of the migrants.

But this criticism would be unfair if it did not also call in question the countries of immigration. Rather than working to enrich themselves by means of foreign manpower, should they not help the countries from which the migrants come so as to create jobs for them at home.

Exploitation is still more obvious when we observe it in the receiving countries. Whatever the intentions may be — and of this God alone is the judge — the migratory phenomenon today is *subordinated to employment policy*, that is to say, to the needs of production in a country which means to *increase its manpower* in order to *develop its wealth*.

According to the demands of production, either *clandestine immigration* is *encouraged* or every irregular situation is severely dealt with even to the point of expulsion from the country. Sometimes people travel to other countries in *search of manpower*, even making fallacious promises. Again, masses of migrants are sometimes brutally despatched to their own country because the *employment market has reached* saturation point.

Almost invariably *the nastier*, more dangerous and more laborious jobs are kept for the migrants, precisely those jobs which the local people refuse to accept.

There has been talk of *a new slavery*. The expression is perhaps a harsh one, but it is certainly a fact that migrants are usually treated as “mere instruments of production” (G.S., 66, par.2; cf. 63, par.3. (3))

(3) There are further circumstances which make both racism and exploitation more serious. Only too often the migrants are badly housed or at least their housing is inferior to that of the local people. This increases their inferiority complex and makes them feel that people despise them. In spite of the laws, they are quite often the victims of employers who take advantage of their need to work, of their irregular position or their ignorance, by obliging them to work for additional hours beyond what is permitted by law, or by depriving them of the salary which is their due. This treatment separates them still more from the local people and helps to crush them more utterly. In addition to all this, the reactions of the local working class too often increase the migrants’ sufferings. It is not surprising that the native workers participate, more or less, in the racism.
The evil goes so very deep that some wonder if it is possible to remedy it or if it would not be better to prohibit all migration. Such a plan would appear Utopian and would be contrary to man’s rights, but it compels us to reflect. The migratory phenomenon as it exists today, and no matter what economic advantages it may entail, is so subject to the dictates of profit alone that it seems irreconcilable with the true requirements of man’s dignity and of human brotherhood. (4)

Collective migration

It is only too easy to forget the millions of people who have been and who still are exiles from their country or who are obliged to flee from persecution. When there is question of a small number of political refugees, the problem is already a serious one. However, in many countries there exists a fairly liberal statute for the political refugee. But where entire human communities are involved the situation becomes tragic and it sometimes seems as if there is no way out. It brings about acts of violence which must certainly be condemned, but of which those really responsible are not merely the ones who commit acts of violence, but also those who have provoked this violence by creating unjust situations.

Pius XII, in Exsul Familia, referred in particular to the Armenians (48), the Jews (64) and the Palestinians (69 and 70). Our epoch, which considers itself civilized, has seen genocides and collective deportations more atrocious than those which history relates of ancient pagan times (Cf. Synod 1, Voiceless Injustices.) (5)

of the receiving country. They readily agree that the types of work of which we have already spoken be reserved for the migrants. At times they even feel a certain bitterness towards their migrant companions: they are afraid of competition. They also fear the consequences of their presence. In point of fact, the inflow of foreign manpower has in certain occupations checked the rise in salaries which would normally have taken place. Moreover, there are strikes which do not succeed because the migrants, for fear of losing their jobs or being expelled from the country, do not dare to take part in the workers’ conflict.

It is true that the workers’ organizations are struggling against racism and against everything which might divide the workers. But their action is not easy. Undoubtedly there are migrant workers who participate fully in the trade-unionist conflict despite the possible consequences for themselves. But the others have the impression that the unions are using them for their own political ends and on this score they consider they are being exploited.

(4) Internal migrations. All due allowances being made, racism and exploitation are also to be found in internal migrations. The greater the economic superiority of one region over another, the greater the difficulties in customs and culture, the greater also are the possibilities for the development of racism and exploitation within a country. I am thinking of the Southerners who arrive in Northern Italy, of the Andalusians who arrive in Catalonia. But when racial differences in the strict sense of the term are added to all this, then the sufferings of internal migrants are increased still further. I am thinking also of migrants from the Antilles and Reunion who come to work in France, in the metropolis, so to speak.
4. THE MIGRATORY PHENOMENON AS A FACTOR IN DECHRISTIANIZATION

Even if the pastoral care of migrants were perfectly organized, the migratory phenomenon would still be a danger for Christian life. In point of fact, the Christian life is not something purely spiritual; it is deeply embedded in a given human system. Now, immigrants are people who have been uprooted and this fact by itself contributes to the deterioration of their religious loyalty.

On the other hand, the migrants very often come from rural areas where Christianity is more a social than a personal matter. On their arrival in the large cities which are profoundly de-christianized, they receive a severe shock. They are not prepared for such an environment. Only too often do they neglect religious practice, becoming slack in their morals and so, little by little, they feel that their faith is threatened.

Support by the Church of emigration and by the mission

I shall perhaps appear to be too severe in my judgment of the pastoral care of migrants as it exists today. However, I am not pronouncing judgment on the persons committed to this mission, both migrants and local people. Quite the contrary, for I am filled with admiration for the spirit of faith and the generosity of all those who are thus committed. Taken in the aggregate, however, the pastoral care of migrants is not accomplishing its task, and I should like to explain why.

At the point of departure, the migrants' preparation is often inexistent. On the other hand, the number of priests and of religious of either sex who go abroad to serve the migrants is also quite inadequate; the percentage of these is much lower than that which exists in their countries of origin.

On the other hand, the task of these priests and religious who emigrate in the service of the migrants is not easy.

On the whole, and despite some remarkable efforts, they do not feel welcome in the dioceses which receive them. There are undoubtedly some local priests who are open-minded towards the problems of migrants, but they see these problems in their own way, and the "missionaries" do not feel themselves loved and understood. Dialogue is difficult here. what are we to

(5) The migration profiteers. Migrations on the whole are marked by injustice, but for some people they become an occasion for profit. There are migrants who have forgotten their country of origin and have availed of their emigration to further their own advancement. They have preferred to serve richer countries where they can satisfy more fully their ambition and their desire to make money. In this regard we hear of the "brains market". Others have returned to their own country, not for the purpose of serving it, but to grow rich and to exercise power. It is not our place to judge those who act thus, but we should question ourselves as regards the evangelization of the rich. What are we doing in our country for the conversion of the powerful ones, the rich and highly cultured, so that they may become the humble servants of the common welfare?
say, then, of the clergy as a whole who share more or less the racist mentality of the population! As a rule, their reactions are neither harsh nor contemptuous, yet they show a certain humiliating paternalism as well as a deep lack of understanding towards the foreigner.

Thus the priests who have followed the migrants suffer, feeling themselves "strangers" in the local Church to which they have come. Sometimes they give way to discouragement or else become aggressive. Sometimes they shut themselves in and confine themselves to the more or less numerous groups of their compatriots who come to the mission. In these cases the mission cannot help towards integration in the local Church and is in danger of becoming like a little national Church shut into itself. As for the missionaries, they are tempted to leave to themselves those who do not come to the mission, either because they are scattered, or because they live far away, or because this type of mission does not appeal to them.

What the migrants blame particularly in the missionaries is their attachment to the power of their country, through the embassies and consulates. They also find fault with them on the score of their monetary demands. Moreover, under the influence of their de-christianized environment, they reject the priests who, they say, want to win them back, to control and exploit them. On the other hand, when the period of their stay is prolonged, many migrants want to become integrated in the country to which they have come, although they do not abandon the desire to return to their homeland. They then find that the mission does not help them towards this integration. This does not mean that they will seek out the French priests. Rather will they give up completely and remain on the fringe where religion is concerned. (6)

The Church of immigration and the migrants

On the whole, as far as I have been able to see and to understand, the Church of immigration is greatly lacking as regards the requirements of true pastoral care for migrants. There is no question of blaming individuals, but merely of stating the facts and seeking to explain them.

Since the number of priests and religious coming from outside the country is inadequate, the receiving diocese must supply the deficiency, for a local Church is certainly responsible for all those who live in its territory. The migrants are members of the local Church, with the same rights as the local people. However, the local Churches hardly ever assign priests to service of the migrants.

How is this deficiency to be explained? It seems to me that the local Church has two alternative attitudes. Either the migrants are considered members of the diocese like the rest, and in this case it is not necessary to

(6) The life of missionaries to migrants is a very hard life. I am by no means surprised when I find them discouraged or aggressive towards the country of immigration and its Church. I greatly admire those who, in spite of the many difficulties and frustrations, persevere in their service of the migrants, but we must make a deep examination of these sufferings.
do anything special for them. They have at their disposal the same parochial activities, the same Catholic organizations, the same apostolic movements as the local people. Or else they are considered foreigners and, in this case, it is up to their country of origin to provide for their spiritual needs.

Hence we come either to an assimilative pastoral care or else to pastoral care in a national ghetto. But neither one nor the other can prove effective, since neither corresponds to the reality. At the level of the Church, in actual fact, migrants are neither foreigners nor members of the diocese like the rest: they are simply migrants.

Now, in the local Church, what is recommended is rather an assimilative pastoral action. I have heard local people (priests or laity) say: "What use are the missions? Since the migrants are here amongst us, since the men work in our building enterprises and our factories, since the children attend our schools, why should something special be done for them? This will only delay their integration.

To these remarks is often added a more or less contemptuous judgment of the "religion" and "superstitions" of their countries of origin. Hence the missions appear harmful, since they help to maintain the migrants in a religious attitude which should be left behind.

This policy of assimilation is aimed at the missions and not at the migrant priests. The latter will be gladly welcomed, but on condition that they do not set up a mission. The desire is that they should occupy positions similar to those of the local priests, while placing themselves especially at the service of their fellow-countrymen with a view to their integration.

Pope Paul VI has said with regard to the pastoral care of migrants:

"It is not possible to exercise this pastoral care effectively unless due account is taken of the spiritual heritage and the particular cultural background of the migrants" (P.M.C., D.C. 1970, 58).

It is not surprising then, that our efforts are ineffective. We must admit it: the migratory phenomenon at the present juncture has become a phenomenon of religious disintegration. It is speeding up the process of de-Christianization. (7)

(7) Relations with the non-Christian religions. We are no longer living in an age in which we intend to take advantage of the presence of non-Christians for the purpose of "converting" and baptizing them. However, apart from a few specialists, we are, in general, indifferent to the presence of non-Christians amongst us. The Council teaching on the Church's relations with the non-Christian religions has remained a dead letter for most Christians. We may even ask ourselves how many priests, religious and lay people have really read and studied the Declaration "Nostra Aetate". I should like at least to quote here No. 2 of this document. The Church "has this exhortation for her sons: prudently and lovingly, through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, and in witness of Christian faith and life, acknowledge, preserve and promote the spiritual and moral goods found among these men, as well as the values in their society and culture" (N.Ae., 2).

By omission, we are also responsible for the religious degradation of the Muslims who live among us.
II
TOWARDS A DYNAMIC THEOLOGY

In view of the sad contrast which we have just described, we cannot content ourselves with a theoretical exposé. The theology of the Church on migration must be determinedly prophetic, dynamic and fresh. This was foreseen by Christ (Jn. 15, 18-21). The essential thing is to be faithful to the mission which Christ has confided to His Church.

1. THE PROPHETIC ROLE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH: THE EXIGENCIES OF BROTHERLY LOVE

In view of the racism and systematic exploitation of which migrants are victims, the Church cannot remain inactive. Certainly, she respects political authority and the autonomy of workers' organizations and in no way wishes to take their place. But she has received from her Founder a message of brotherly love which is not being respected. For this reason she must intervene.

Independently both of the established governments and of the revolutionary powers, who see a change of structures as the only way of saving humanity, the Church proclaims that the suppression of racism and exploitation depends first and foremost on a personal and collective change of heart. She affirms, at the same time, that fundamental changes of structures are necessary if human relations are to be normalized in justice and fraternity (P.P. 29-32; O.A. 45)

"It is not enough to recall principles, state intentions, point to crying injustice and utter prophetic denunciations; these words will lack real weight unless they are accompanied for each individual by a livelier awareness of personal responsibility and by effective action". (O.A. 48)

It is precisely then that the particular role of the local Churches appears in a special way, united among themselves and with the Sovereign Pontiff. In fact, it is at the level of the local Churches that everyone can more easily be employed, each according to his role and responsibility. In this field, bishops, priests, religious and laity should, make a common intervention; but it should be remembered that, for the reorganization of the world in conformity with the spirit of Christ, "the laity have the principle role" (L.G. 36).

If bishops and priests know how to intervene "in season and out of season, proclaiming the word, refuting error, warning and exhorting with untiring patience and the desire to teach" (II-Tim.4,2); if religious, both men and women, show by their lives consecrated to God in the service of men the link which exists between love of God and the love of their neighbour, in such a way that anyone presuming to love God without loving his neighbour would feel himself to be a liar (I.Jn.4, 20); if, finally, the laity in
all their organisations fight against racism and the exploitation of migrants, continually reviewing, among themselves, their action in the light of the Gospel (cfr.I Jn. 3,14-18; Ja. 2,14-17), then the Church will become the prophetic sign of the God who is Love.

We will be accused perhaps of setting ourselves up against governments and laws; but in reality the fault exists as much in the silence or complicity of peoples as it does in the decisions of governments. And if we bring about a collective conversion of popular mentality, the governments will be obliged to conform. On this point, too, it is a matter of our rediscovering the liberty of the Gospel. Is it not the first duty of the local Church to preach God's gospel and His message of love?

Perhaps in a people impregnated with racism we will encounter misunderstandings and accusations. Some people will no longer come to Church! But what significance can be attached to the presence in church of someone who is a racist or exploits his brother? And then, if we hold our tongue today, we will rightly be reproached for our silence when humanity, having developed its collective conscience, will condemn the abuses of past centuries.

Furthermore, this campaign in favour of justice and fraternity must not extend only to our Christian brethren but to all men, whatever their religion. It is necessary, in fact, that "the sign of Christ may shine more brightly over the face of the Church" (L.G. 15; cfr. G.S. 43).

I am thinking particularly of those millions of Muslims who are living and working in Europe today to increase the wealth of the Christians. They must be able to recognize us as the disciples of Christ, in the quality of our welcome, in our respect for them, in our desire to be just with them and to treat them as brothers, not forgetting the compassion we owe to those who have allowed themselves to go astray in one way or another (Col. 3, 12-15).

In this prophetic effort of the local Churches in favour of migrants, the Churches of departure have an irreplaceable role to play. There, too, it is the whole local Church which must intervene, through its bishops, its priests, its religious and its laity, to defend itself against the pressure to emigrate. The responsibility of the good Shepherd who does not hesitate to lay down his life for his sheep does not belong only to the bishops but to the whole People of God (Jn. 10, 12-13).

The fundamental principle to which we must refer is that of John XXIII. "It is opportune" he said in Pacem in Terris, "that, as far as possible,
capital should take the initiative in meeting the working man, and not vice versa." (102). (9)

2. THE DYNAMIC ROLE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH IN THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS

Without doubt, the faith can live in any situation and in any state of life; but the Church itself teaches us that the field of the earth, transformed by the action of the laity with respect to justice and brotherhood “is better prepared for the seed of the Word of God” (L.G. 36). How, in fact, would migrants accept evangelization from a local Church which was more or less an accomplice, at least through silence, in the racism or exploitation to which they are subjected? It is a whole climate which must be changed.

We cannot, however, mark time in announcing Christ. At the same time that the local Church, in its entirety, engages itself in the evangelical fight against racism and the exploitation of migrants, it is led to a deep self-renewal in its pastoral attitude towards them. (10)

It is not our intention to give pastoral orientations. These exist already; but they are very little observed, not through lack of goodwill but through the absence of a favourable climate. A true pastoral action supposes, on the part of the receiving Church, of the mission and of the Church of departure, a missionary conversion which should radically change not only mentalities but also ways of acting.

Missionary Conversion of the Receiving Church

There exists a missionary theology for the foreign missions and one readily criticizes missionaries who ignore it. But when the foreigners come to us, the need for this theology is forgotten and one acts towards them as though they were the people of the country.

The conversion needed, then, by the receiving Church is a missionary conversion with all its characteristics. What is demanded in the first place is that it should be a conversion of love. One can only evangelize a person

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(9) This principle is valid not only for capitalist countries but also for socialist countries. In the latter case, one would not refer to capital but rather to the creation of employment. Finally, this principle is applicable not only inside a country but also at the level of international cooperation. Unhappily, given the present mentality, disinterested international cooperation does not exist, on the part either of capitalist or socialist countries. At the end of a meeting of big industrialists with branches in the Third World, one of them said sadly: "It is impossible to help a developing country without exploiting it", and I have seen at Phnom Penh a gasworks built by the Chinese on condition that the coal was bought in China. Yes, in the course of my many journeys in various parts of the world, I have seen some magnificent disinterested cooperators but never have I come across disinterested cooperation.

(10) Here too, and above all, one cannot be content with a migrants’ pastoral work entrusted to specialists only. In the countries of immigration one is constantly thrown into contact with migrants, on the street, in public transport, at work and at leisure. Contacts are also made in the schools and neighborhoods.
to the extent that the person concerned feels himself to be loved — with all his cultural values, with the whole history of his people, with all the collective aspirations which he carries with him. To achieve this kind of love, it is first of all necessary to pray, because love is a gift of God and, when it is a question of loving one's migrant brothers, the gift needs to be a particularly big one. At the same time, however, this love will be an enrichment.

As to migrant priests, one should welcome them, thinking of them as the native clergy of the migrants. Missionaries have been reproached for not sufficiently respecting the clergy of the receiving country and for acting without liaison with them. Let us not be guilty of the very things for which we reproach the missionaries. The note of authenticity of our conversion on this point will be seen in our manner of understanding, helping and sustaining the migrants' priests in their difficult tasks. In particular, we ought always to facilitate and encourage the access of migrants to their chaplains.

Keeping to the general rules of the foreign missions, we will take care not to impose on migrants the religious or cultural customs of our country. We will respect their own customs without even allowing ourselves to criticize or depreciate them. Without doubt all customs change, but let us not be "dominating" priests or lay apostles where migrants are concerned; rather let everything be done by them, with them and for them. They are constrained to a humiliating conformity in their working and social life. Let them at least feel the Church's respect for their liberty and their dignity.

When migrants join Catholic organizations or apostolic movements, they need to form themselves into separate groups in order to be able to exchange ideas and act more freely. Thanks to this pluralism, the idea of unity in diversity will be better understood, that is to say, what the catholicity of the Church means. It will also be possible to discern what is the essence of a movement and what are its contingent aspects. If a movement is not capable of accepting this diversity, it should perhaps be taken as a sign that it is not yet catholic. (11)

For achieving the conversion of the receiving Church, "Migrants Day" is not sufficient. A continuous effort must be made both in the parishes and in the various groups of the lay apostolate. Particular attention should be paid to the events which mark the lives of the migrants. Holy Year could be a particularly fruitful time for reflection, with its double aim of conversion

(11) The foreign missionary has often failed because he "imported" the pastoral methods of his own country. There are dioceses where one could identify the nationality and the period of the missionaries' implantation by the type of pastoral programme that had been imposed on the People of God. Dialoguing and searching together with the faithful for the proper response had been overlooked. We are in danger of doing the same thing in our relations with migrants. For us, an "evolved" migrant is one who copies the autochthons in their mentality and behaviour. Certainly we must respect the liberty of those migrants who do not wish to attend the mission, above all when they intend to settle in the country and become naturalized. But we should not forget that migrants are marked by their country of origin. This is also true of the children of migrants, even if they no longer speak their parents' language. It would be a good thing that they should get together sometimes and be helped in finding their own way. Often they are not at ease either with other migrants or with the local people.
and reconciliation. Penitential services would be useful in enabling the People of God to become conscious of their collective sin and to receive forgiveness for it. In a climate of conversion and reconciliation, it would be easier to find out what action should be undertaken to overcome racism and the exploitation of migrants, and to assist them in their Christian life.

**Missionary Conversion of the Missions to Migrants**

We have already noted the difficulties encountered by missionaries in fulfilling their role amongst migrants. Here too, it is a conversion which is needed; but this conversion presupposes that the receiving Church is ready to convert itself, not only in the area of intentions but also by a change of attitude.

Missionaries will then be able to adapt themselves to the real situation of migrants in their quality as migrants. To wish to evangelize migrants as though they were still in their country of origin would be unrealistic. Certainly account must be taken of their foreign roots, but they should also be helped to adapt themselves to the receiving country. Here, too, *priority must be given to love*: a migrant should get to love the country in which he lives; he is in no way obliged to let himself be dragged along by his own errors and deviations; but a barrier of opposition cannot be creative; the missionaries, then, helped by the local people, should discover for themselves and help their brothers to discover those values which belong to the receiving country. Then an integration, in the best sense of the word, could begin.

Missionaries should also be able to invoke the aid of their brothers in the local clergy both in the matter of liturgical ceremonies and with a view to taking part in the apostolic life of the country. If links of friendship, of confidence and of mutual esteem exist, then everything becomes possible. Otherwise, the finest juridical or pastoral norms are rendered ineffectual.

Aware that the political orientations of the countries of departure and of the receiving countries are scarcely disinterested, the mission will simply maintain its independence, not because of indifference or opposition, but in a spirit of liberty. The best way of loving the homeland when one is a migrant is to remain faithful to what is best in its traditions and culture. In this way immigrant Christians will be preparing themselves for re-entry into their own country, with maturity and a greater competence, appreciative of what they have received.

There will necessarily be some migrants who will wish rather to integrate into the receiving country to the point of settling down there and becoming naturalized. These instinctively steer clear of the mission: this is regrettable, if only in view of an integration which could only but be progressive. They will be so much the more useful to the country which is receiving them in the measure that they bring their own richness to it.

(12) *Religious sisters assigned to the apostolate of their brothers.* Sometimes in the receiving countries there are religious sisters engaged in all sorts of work, especially the most humble, in various institutes, hospitals or nursing homes. Certainly we have to
Missionary Conversion of the Church of Departure

The fact of migration offers a strong challenge to the Church of departure in the matter of its missionary orientation. In fact, each diocese suffers the temptation to close in upon itself as if it were the universal Church. But in the event of emigration, the Church of departure is faced with a double problem: preparing migrants for their departure, and accompanying them. Does the Church of departure really feel itself to be responsible? Once again, a problem of conversion has to be faced.

If migrants, before leaving their diocese, have not made the transition from a faith based on traditions and customs to a personal faith truly involved in their life, their faith is in danger. But how can this transition be made?

There can be several different ways. I shall quote an example from an exchange of ideas between some priests of a traditionally Christian country. Three points: 1. Help young people towards a personal encounter with Christ, through genuine prayer, in an atmosphere of silence and retreat. 2. Help them to engage in a service to their brothers based on faith. An unengaged faith does not resist the corrosive action of a secularized environment. 3. Help them to express their faith together, since a purely individual faith cannot resist the collective pressure of a dechristianized environment.

In this way, young people should be able to prepare for their departure and, on arrival in the receiving country, in liaison with the mission and the local Church, they could get together and sustain each other.

As far as the question of accompanying the emigrants is concerned, this has so far been inadequate. Here once again, the pastoral care of migrants appears to have been entrusted to specialists, whereas the diocese of departure should feel itself responsible as a whole for the support of its sons who have left for distant parts. Could not a certain number of young priests, after five or six-years on the home mission, be asked to offer a service of three to six years in the receiving dioceses? Things would have to be kept in proportion, but the migrants have a right to a percentage of priests at least equal to that prevailing in their own diocese. The more there are priests engaged in the service of migrants, the more easily the diocese of origin will be able to reach out to them in their need.

I have pointed out these two problems and have suggested solutions. We cannot, however, remain at the level of theories and orientations; our respect the autonomy of the religious Congregations; but those in charge should give a thought to so many women, young girls or children who will only be evangelized if they find sisters from their own country who could be released, at least partially, to serve them. I'm afraid that sometimes foreign nuns have been used as docile and cheap labour! Is there not some rethinking to be done, some conversion to be effected? "The little children clamour for bread: there is no-one to share it with them" (Lam. 4,4). It is true that some nuns have not received the proper training for this sort of work, but they could train themselves with the help of the mission and the services of religious teaching.
words and intentions must be put into practice through actions which will testify to our conversion. (13)

3. THE NEW ROLE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH: NEW STRUCTURES

Whatever may be the importance of collective conversion, it is not enough by itself. The present structures will continue to incubate racism and exploit migrants unless they are radically changed. The Church, however, must respect the autonomy of men in the choice of their economic or political regimes. That is why we do not enter this field. But, throughout the centuries, the Church has never ceased to advocate changes in the various regimes set up by men so that the rights of the human person might be better respected and the demands of justice and brotherhood be better observed. Such is the role of the Church’s social teaching.

However, in a problem as difficult as this one, a single answer is not enough, and Paul VI does not hesitate to appeal to Christian communities in an effort to bring about “the social, political and economic changes seen in many cases to be urgently needed” (O.A.4). But the researches which are carried out at grass roots level need to be referred to the major orientations which would seem to be of universal application. As far as the migrations situation is concerned, a twofold general orientation appears to merit our consideration. The first should be capable of rapid implementation; the second will be rather more difficult.

The International Right of Migrants

Up to the present time, migrants have been subjected either to more or less arbitrary rules laid down by the receiving country or to agreements reached with the country of origin. In both cases, the personality of the migrant has not been sufficiently safeguarded, and when privileged agreements are reached, new sources of division between the migrants themselves are created. Now respect for man cannot countenance the well known adage: “Divide and rule”

Only an international right will ensure for the migrant that security and respect which are his due. In the framework of this international right, it seems particularly worthwhile to mention the following points.

(1) Absolute equality of rights, not merely theoretically but effectively, between migrants and autochthons. The only exception that could be made is that of certain political rights, as for example the election of parliamentary representatives. So long as there is discrimination towards migrants, they

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(13) The increase in the number of priest migrants will necessarily pose financial problems. Normally it is the receiving diocese which must be responsible for these. Perhaps one could envisage not so much a group of migrant priests, but rather think in terms of their distribution among various team ministries: thus they could give half of their time to their fellow citizens and half to the local people. This is merely a suggestion.
cannot be considered as brothers and they will go on being exploited. The present situation necessarily engenders racism and exploitation.

(2) Regulations for the acceptance of migrants into a determined country. Whilst defending the right to emigrate, it must be recognized that, for the common good, there is need for certain regulations governing the acceptance of migrants, but the following clauses should be clearly written in:

—every entry permit with the right to work should include permission for the worker to be accompanied by his family with the right to suitable accommodation;

—it should not be possible to withdraw this permit to serve the ends of a labour policy. It should be considered, therefore, as definitive in itself. Only offenses recognized in law should allow justice, and this alone, to decree expulsion.

If these two points are not accepted, then a certain affective imbalance is maintained against migrants, which could well be responsible for certain misdemeanors, and the migrants will be kept in a climate of insecurity and fear, which would constitute a grave attack on their liberty.

(3) The cultural formation of migrants. Migrants have a right, like all men, to a culture adapted to their situation. In accepting a migrant worker, the receiving country commits itself to provide him with a sufficient training in the language of the country. Care will also be taken to ensure that the wives, too, can learn the language of the receiving country.

Where the children of migrants attending school in the receiving country are concerned, courses will be provided to teach them their mother tongue.

The Human Family

Often enough, especially since the time of Pius XII, countries have spoken out in favor of a true community of nations. The Council took up the same theme again, especially in relation to the achievement of peace. That is why it calls for "the establishment of some universal public authority, acknowledged as such by all, and endowed with effective power to safeguard, on behalf of all, security, regard for justice, and respect for rights" (G.S.82). Paul VI presented a similar proposal to the representatives of the United Nations in New York. He dealt again with the same subject in Populorum Progressio. Speaking of the world authority, he said: "Some would consider such hopes Utopian. It may be that these persons are not realistic enough, and they have not perceived the dynamism of a world which desires to live more fraternally". (P.P. 78-79)

Since that time, it seems more and more necessary to follow the paths opened up to us by the Popes and the Council.

The growth in the number and power of multinational undertakings which are practically immune from government authorities, the unprecedented development of international finance and its influence in the political scene; the growing contrast between the rich nations and the poor nations
with the exploitation that goes with it; the utilization of the foreign worker for the enrichment of the richer and more powerful countries, all these should help humanity to look beyond the narrow concept of nationalism and open itself, whilst maintaining due respect for the rights of nations, to a really planetary organization of human life.

With regard to what concerns us more directly today, we must recognize that racism and the exploitation of migrants can only disappear to the extent that all men feel themselves to be brothers in the same human family, and to the degree that a world authority can make the recognition of the international rights of migrants truly obligatory.

In former times, the abuses of the feudal system and the perception of a national commonweal led to the setting up of a real national power which, despite its deficiencies, was able, at least up to a certain point, to ensure peace and prosperity. Today, the abuses of nationalism and the growing vision of a planetary commonweal are leading us little by little towards a true community of nations with a world authority at the service of all nations, to guarantee them peace and a more just distribution of the earth's goods, freeing them from all exploitation and from all imperialism.

Do we need more wars, more injustices and more revolutions to open our eyes? I am well aware that we will run up against exaggerated nationalisms which, under various forms, dominate the mentalities and condition the reactions of our contemporaries, but have we not to accept our responsibilities? Are we sufficiently convinced that a concerted action by all the local Churches along the lines indicated to us by the Popes and the Council would be efficacious?

In every hypothesis we could begin our action now—bishops, priests, religious and laity—for the introduction of an international charter for migrants, and so that the narrowmindedness of nationalism may be overcome in a true love of one's own country and of all mankind.
CONCLUSION

We have no conclusion to offer. There are, rather, questions which demand our attention: do we believe enough in the salvific force which Our Lord has communicated to His Church and which is to be found in each local Church? Do we believe enough in the efficacy of a concerted action undertaken in each local Church by the totality of its members? Are we decided to engage truly in this action, with the light of Christ and the strength of the Holy Spirit?

It will really be a holy year for us, a year of conversion and reconciliation, if, faithful to the spirit of God, we accept the challenge to come forward and review with the members of our Church how we can exercise our responsibility with regard to our migrant brothers. And so, turning to Our Lady of Loreto, I shall say to her: “You who have known poverty and exile, pray for us”.
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