The Global Migration Megatrend: Blessing or Curse?

Robert Lassalle-Klein, Ph.D., MSW
Oakland Catholic Worker
Holy Names University
1.) Migration, Poverty, & Climate Change Are Interrelated Megatrends Changing the Planet & CA
1. Nearly 1/3 of the world's population — over 2.1 billion people — live on less than $3.10 a day,

2. Over 766 million live in extreme poverty — less than $1.90 a day

3. 795 million people do not have enough to eat

4. Over 16,000 children die each day due to poverty

2. Asia-Pacific Region: 120,000 migrating to cities each day. UNDP, Human Development Report 2009 In the Asia-Pacific region, ESCAP Annual Report 2014

3. 42,500 displaced every day by conflict or persecution,

4. 59.5 million homeless people, 20 million refugees (half under 18), and 10 million stateless people UNHCR.
1. 244 million are international migrants while 740 million are internal  
   UNDP, Human Development Report 2009

2. Almost 1 in 7 people on the planet are migrating, including over 50 million children  
   UNICEF Annual Report 2015

3. A billion people are migrating tonight!
1. 10 million+ migrants in CA- 1/4 of US total.
2. 1 in 4, or 27% CA are migrants, double US %!
3. 30%+ of 7 counties: SC, SF, LA, San Mateo, Imperial, Alameda, and Orange.
4. 1/2 of CA kids have at least one immigrant parent

Public Policy Institute of California, “Immigrants in California,” May 2013
2) 33 Years with Migrants at the Oakland Catholic Worker
1. Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin 1933.
2. Beatitudes and CST God-given dignity of every human person.
3. Hospitality, Compassion, Family
4. 185 CW communities: prayer; hospitality; nonviolence, & simple living.
5. The OCW - welcoming homeless migrant people & families for 33 years
Funded by Local Catholic Community

1. Bishop Michael Barber
2. Assumption Parish
3. Christ the King
4. St. Perpetua
5. St. Joseph Basilica
6. St. Philip Neri
7. St. Lawrence O’Toole
8. St. Leo’s
9. St. Charles Borromeo
10. St. Joan of Arc
11. St. Joseph Basilica
12. Corpus Christi
13. St. Stephen’s
14. St. Monica’s
15. St. Raymond’s
16. St. Bonaventure
17. Catholic Community of Pleasant Hill
18. Cath Charities East Bay
19. Cath Charities SC County
Dec. 12, 1986: Francisco Herrera, Bob LK Refounded the OCW to Welcome CA Refugees

Bob Lassalle-Klein, Francisco Herrera, Ines Betancourt, Barbara Graves, Beti Cantón, Terry Mahin, Chris & Suzy Nauman, and Edwin & Betha Rodriguez. Mission was to provide hospitality to refugees and migrants fleeing from U.S. sponsored wars in Central America.
Flourishing Ministry

Today

1. **Welcoming the migrant stranger:** Housing and family services for impoverished immigrants & families.
   - 12 families per year.

2. **Feeding the hungry:** $1,250,000 this year
   - 1200 families given food boxes each month with food for a week
   - 1500 meals served each month at the door

**Accompanying the thirsty, naked & imprisoned:**

- Legal & medical referrals
- English ESL classes 4 days a week, morning & evening
- Christmas gifts for immigrant children
- Catholic feast days, Empowerment and community events for the immigrant community
3) After Three Decades
What Have We Learned?
Despite Their Desperate Situation, Many Migrants Speak of a God Who...
Juan Jose: “I also know that he is never going to leave us because he is walking with us.”

Mario Antonio: “Help me to have faith and … enlighten my search for my little girl and deliver her from every evil.”
Alison: “The people with whom we travelled … were people through whom God made himself present to us.”
198. “They have much to teach us... for in their difficulties they know the suffering Christ.
Giving shelter or food to anyone who asks for it, or needs it, is giving it to Christ.

And to those who say, aghast, that they never had a chance to do such a thing ... He will say again ... that if these things were done for the very least of His brethren they were done to Him.”

The Suffering Migrant Is the Defining Sign of the Times

They bear the sin of the world. Their innocence exposes the guilt of those who snatch away their lives for personal gain.
And God Has Chosen To Save the World
Through the Invitation to Mercy and Solidarity…

1. with the millions of suffering migrants fleeing poverty, violence & climate change …
2. And He comes to meet us in the person of the poor and rejected, in the person of the migrant, who asks for our hospitality.
What Is Our Response To This Invitation? Will It Prove to Be a Blessing or a Curse!