

PASTORAL CARE AND MIGRATIONS

Abstract

The migration phenomenon is not a novelty, because it has always been inherent to man. However, in this globalized world, its causes and forms make it more complex and a serious challenge for society at all levels. In addition to its social, cultural and economic characteristics, migration is specific of its theological and pastoral aspects, being the “sign of the times” for the Church which should judge responsibly and perform its pastoral activities. The author of the article firstly deals with the phenomenon of migration in Antiquity and the biblical world, then he refers to its contemporary, social and cultural implications. Taking into consideration the globalized and secularized culture and society, the author focuses on migration as a challenge for pastoral theology and pastoral work. Finally, the last part of the article deals with the meaning of the pastoral care of migrants through its evangelizing mission and emphasize the importance of Christian formation challenged by the phenomenon of migration.

Key words: migration, refugees, pastoral, society, culture, evangelization, formation.

Introduction

The phenomenon of migration and refugees presents one of the complex phenomena of the modern time, which significantly interferes with the essence of human dignity, social and cultural structures as well as pastoral ministry. Although a right to migration is the fundamental human right,¹ it consequently deprives the local community of its intellectual, spiritual and material potentials, thus creating the void. Migration as a macro-phenomenon, as old as mankind, should be approached interdisciplinary, since it has provoked much more concern and interest than ever in the past.

The worldwide situation enhances migration due to the economic inequalities or the human rights violations. People look for security and a

¹ Cf. Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et spes* (7 December 1965), 65 (hereinafter: GS).

higher standard of living and are often forced to leave their home area because of insecurity and oppression. The political and ideological motives have also contributed to the complexity of migration, regardless of whether they relate to the country of origin or the host country. Recently, forced migration is affected by ravages of war, poverty and political persecutions, which aim to meet utilitarian goals, ideological intolerance and religious fundamentalism (e.g. radical Islamization).

Referring to the history of migration, it can be said that situation has worsened “in an increasingly globalized society”², and that globalization along with technology significantly contribute to the mobility and massive migration waves.³ Migration and globalization encourage the Church to re-evaluate its mission, which cannot be reduced to monolithic nor Eurocentric, because the Church is universal and Jesus Christ wants to “draw all men to Himself” (Jn 12:32; cf. Col 3:11; 1Cor 12:13).

From the theological and pastoral views, migration is a great theological and ecclesial challenge⁴, as Pope Benedict XVI claimed: Migrations present *a sign of the times*,⁵ which pope Francis⁶ constantly confirms in his teaching: “Migrants present a particular challenge for me, since I am the pastor of a Church without frontiers, a Church which considers herself mother to all.”⁷ The Church has always shown its concern for migrants as it is called to promote its pastoral work continuously, and to enhance its educational and formative dimensions referring to the acceptance of immigrants and refugees. However, it is not only important to create a model of pastoral care or mission which would meet the needs of migrants, but also to choose a face the Church wants to highlight and a way to promote the acceptance through pastoral praxis. Although, it has always been a tough challenge, migration still presents a *kairos* for

² Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in veritate* (29 June 2009.), 7 (hereinafter: CiV).

³ Cf. S. Zamagni, Migrazioni e globalizzazione, in: Pontificio consiglio della pastorale per i migranti e gli itineranti, *Il macrofenomeno migratorio e la globalizzazione*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano, 2010, p. 7-20.

⁴ Cf. R. Dausner, *Asylstädte. Flucht und Migration als theologische Herausforderung*, Stimmen der Zeit, 141 (2016) 9, p. 579-588.

⁵ Cf. Benedict XVI, Message for the 92nd day of migrants and refugees (2006). *Migrations: a sign of the times* (18 October 2005).

⁶ Cf. Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), 46 (hereinafter: EG). Pope Francis At the beginning of his ministry, in order to show his solidarity Pope Francis visited refugees on the island of Lampedusa in southern Italy (July 8, 2013), and during the refugee crisis at the end of 2015, he visited the refugees on the Greek island of Lesbos (16 April 2016), where he met with Patriarch Bartholomew I.

⁷ EG, 210. On August 17, 2016, Pope Francis established the *Dicastery for promoting Integral Human Development*, which refers to the refugees and migrants, the sick, the marginalized, victims of conflict and natural disasters, prisoners, the unemployed, and he himself will manage temporarily, cf. http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio_20160817_humanam-progressionem.html (25 January 2017).

evangelization because” the present time, in fact, calls upon the Church to embark on a new evangelization also in the vast and complex phenomenon of human mobility. This calls for an intensification of her missionary activity both in the regions where the Gospel is proclaimed for the first time and in countries with a Christian tradition.”⁸

1. The emergence of the first migration in Antiquity and biblical life

The phenomena of migration and mobility are as old as the human race. People have always moved from one place to another throughout history. Besides, a human being is created to move. Migration has its advantages and disadvantages. People are forced to leave their natural environment and assimilate into an alien culture which is very hard. Relationship between the locals and foreigners has varied throughout history and in different cultures, where the newcomer was considered either a stranger/an enemy (*hostis*), or a newcomer/a guest (*xenos*). In many archaic cultures, the foreigner was regarded as the enemy due to the differences in language, skin color, dress and culture. Many traders, artisans and officials used to immigrate to ancient Egypt. Although, a great majority of people experienced Egyptians’ oppression, still many foreigners could feel their hospitality and acceptance. In Greece, the *hostis* turned into the *xenos* and was guaranteed hospitality. It is worthwhile to mention that the Greeks realized their unity due to their language and awareness of belonging to a city (*polis*). The Greek cities were inhabited by foreigners (*barbarians*), i.e. the *xenoi* who assimilated into a community of the *politoi* (citizens).

Forced by the wars and other troubles, refugees from neighboring countries found their shelter in the Greek cities. Greece was an exemplary host in many ways, whereas ancient Rome was not that hospitable to foreigners, at the beginning, presumably due to constant wars. In the course of time, Rome became more open to receiving foreign people. Accepting of others was particularly evident in the Judeo-Christian tradition, in which hospitality was considered as a therapy to overcome xenophobia. Not only the doors of their homes, but also that of their hearts were opened to a foreigner who gradually became a friend.⁹

⁸ Benedict XVI, Message for the World day of migrants and refugees (2012). *Migration and the New Evangelization* (21 September 2011).

⁹ Cf. K. Koch, Receiving foreigners as a sign of culture: from hostility to hospitality, in: Papinsko vijeće za pastoralnu skrb selilaca i putnika, *Selilaštvo na pragu trećega tisućljeća - IV. sujetski kongres o pastoralnoj skrbi selilaca i izbjeglica*, KS, Zagreb, 1999, 123-131. (Original title of a Book of Proceedings): Pontifical Council for the Pastoral care of Migrant and Itinerant People, *Migration at the Threshold of the Third Millennium IV World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees* (Vatican 1998).

In the Old Testament, individuals and the people of God were always on the move, so the Sacred Scripture is the history of the people on the move. The Book of Exodus describes the Israelites as itinerant people. The history and spirituality of the people of Israel were marked by the practice of acceptance and hospitality (cf. Ex 23:9). It is rooted in the very origin of a nomadic lifestyle in the Patriarchal Age, i.e. and prevails throughout the Sacred Scripture. Expressions of respect, support and feeling for the foreigner (cf. Deut 10:18) are based on religious beliefs, because all the rules come from God. Hospitality reflects the will of God, and in that sense, slave and free man, an orphan, the widow and the stranger should be protected (cf. Lev 19:9-10; Deut 14:28-29, 24:19-22). The Israelites experienced the love of God in Egypt and are called to share it with others: "You shall not molest or oppress an alien, for you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt" (Ex 22:20; cf. Deut 5:14-21). In the book of Genesis we can read about hospitality to strangers. Abram was asked by the Lord to leave his country because the Lord wanted to make a great nation of His people (cf. Gen 12:1-5). Abram himself was "a resident alien" (Gen 23:4), "a wandering" who sought refuge in Egypt (cf. Deut 26:5), and therefore accepted those passing by his tent (cf. Gen 18:1-8). Hospitality was expressed by Moses, Joshua, Ruth, widow of Safat who accepted Elijah (cf. 1Kgs 17:8-16). The prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Malachi and others pointed to the importance of acceptance. However, some scenes violated the law of hospitality (cf. Ex 19:4-9). Jewish migration provided a favourable opportunity to spread the faith. The news of the Christian faith followed the routes of Jewish migration in the Greco-Roman world.

The New Testament emphasizes the issue of migration even more than the Old Testament. The practice of acceptance spread all over the world of Antiquity, however, Jesus' mission deepened the sense of acceptance and hospitality in the spirit of love towards others. He established the Church as the new nation, the universal Church entrusted to proclaim the Kingdom of God, but "The Church, while on earth it journeys in a foreign land away from the Lord, is like in exile."¹⁰ Jesus was a refugee from the beginning (cf. Mt 2:13-15), since he often left Palestine and went to Samaria, the Decapolis (cf. Mk 5:1; Lk 9:51s; Jn 4:4), Tyre and Sidon, too (cf. Mt 11:20-22), and the crowd came to him from all sides (cf. Mt 4:24-25).¹¹

In the parable of the Samaritan, the stranger becomes a paradigm of Christian acceptance (cf. Lk 10:29-37). The parable of the Wedding Feast indicates that all are called, throughout the world (cf. Lk 13:29). Jesus founded the ministry of His disciples on the principle of hospitality and identified himself with strangers: I was "a stranger and you welcomed

¹⁰ Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* (21 November 1964), 6 (hereinafter: LG).

¹¹ Cf. G. Bentoglio, "Il signore protegge lo straniero" (*Sal 146,9*). *Riflessione di teologia biblica*, Credere oggi, Messaggero, Padova, 26 (2006) 4, p. 19-29.

me” (Mt 25:35). The theme of hospitality is expressed in the Book of Acts and the Epistles: “love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor”... “exercise hospitality” (Rom 12:10.13); “Be hospitable to one another without complaining” (1Pt 4:9). From its beginning, the Church promoted the openness towards foreigners, itinerant people, refugees and all the weak, realizing that the encounter with other cultures and civilizations, migration and displacement of the faithful in the world is the God’s plan to proclaim “salvation to the ends of the earth” (Acts 13:47). There should be no foreigner in the Church, due to its hospitality and missionary life which are in its nature. However, the Church is aware that we exist in this world i.e. in time and space as “aliens and sojourners” (1Pt 2:11), “for here we have no lasting city, but we seek the one that is to come” (Heb 13:14), “But our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil 3:20). That goal is clearly described by the apostle Paul: “So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God” (Eph 2:19). In doing his missionary duty, St. Paul turned to the Jewish communities in the Diaspora which were well structured. He primarily addressed to them in their synagogues, e.g. in Thessalonica (cf. Acts 17:1ss), and in Ephesus (cf. Acts 19:8ss). In this way, he could reach the others, e.g. in Athens (cf. Acts 17:16ss), and in Corinth where he met Jewish couple Aquila and Priscilla (cf. Acts 18:1ss; 18:18ss). Although they failed to convert, they connected him with others such as a God-fearing Lydia from Philippi who converted (cf. Acts 16).¹²

In addition to the Jews and the external migrations, the internal migrations to Africa, Gaul, and Dalmatia (cf. 2Tim 4:9-12), contributed to the spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire. Apart from bishops and priests, the lay faithful had a particular role in the spread of Christianity e.g. slaves converted their masters, soldiers were converted by their fellow-soldiers and traders evangelized many of their customers. Also, the “barbaric migrations” ended up with baptism and the establishment of the Christian communities in the West. Immigration of the “pagans” to Europe was marked by their conversion to Christianity, too.

2. Migration as the contemporary socio-cultural phenomenon

Although the reasons, types, causes and challenges of migration in the past have been researched from different points of view, due to the

¹² Cf. F. Gioia, Acceptance of foreigners yesterday and today, in: Papinsko vijeće za pastoralnu skrb selilaca i putnika, *Selilaštvo na pragu trećega tisućljeća - IV. svjetski kongres o pastoralnoj skrbi selilaca i izbjeglica*, KS, Zagreb, 1999, p. 133-147. (Original title of a Book of Proceedings): Pontifical Council for the Pastoral care of Migrant and Itinerant People, *Migration at the Threshold of the Third Millennium IV World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees* (Vatican 1998).

limited scope of this paper, the systematic study of this issue is left out. This paper focuses on the contemporary phenomenon of migration and its implications for the social, cultural and pastoral settings. The interest and concern for the phenomenon of migration has been evident in recent years.¹³ Better understanding of it requires interdisciplinary approach, because migration involves various and interrelated factors such as historical, geographical, economic, sociological, psychological, political, medical, secure, religious, etc. Taking into consideration the interdisciplinary character of the increasing migration, pastoral theology deals with it from theological and pastoral points of view. The internal and external types of migration are often discussed. Internal migration refers to people moving within a country, whereas external migration refers to people moving across borders, also known as international migration.

Earlier migrations, either on a temporary or permanent basis, were mostly driven by agrarian motives. The rapid rise of industrialization and urbanization resulted in migration from rural to urban areas. People used to migrate because of economic, educational or religious reasons. Religiously motivated migrations were often focused on pilgrimages, missionary or evangelizing efforts.

The Church managed to control the flows of migration in the Middle Ages, due to the expansion and strengthening of the Christianity. However, in today's globalized society migration is distracting factor which moves the Church away and leads to the process of de-Christianization, thus a new evangelization is required. The two World Wars significantly contributed to the intensifying migration processes in the 19th and 20th century. At the end of the 20th century, the world experienced enormous mobility motivated either by leisure, work, study or tourism. The Church and pastoral work have faced completely new and difficult challenges of migration associated with militant secularism and social liberalization, in the context of post-modern and pluralist society. Aware of the dramatic social changes at the end of the 20th century, Pope John Paul II claimed: "Today we face a religious situation which is extremely varied and changing. Peoples are on the move; social and religious realities which were once clear and well defined are today increasingly complex. ... Religious and social upheaval makes it difficult to apply in practice certain ecclesial distinctions and categories to which we have become accustomed."¹⁴ Migration is neither a current phenomenon nor some exceptional and unexpected situation, but rather structural, social and pastoral necessity, because "the human race has passed from a rather static concept of reality to a more dynamic, evolutionary one. In consequence there has

¹³ Cf. <http://www.imiscoe.org> (1 February 2017).

¹⁴ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris missio* (7 December 1990), 32 (hereinafter: RM).

arisen a new series of problems, a series as numerous as can be, calling for efforts of analysis and synthesis.”¹⁵

Globalization and technological advancements significantly contribute to mass mobility and migration, but the increase in number of refugees is a special “sign of the times”. In addition to economic reasons, a great majority of people migrate because they are aware of the opportunities available to them in the field of science, technology or culture. Many of them just want to discover another way of life, improve standard of living or develop their talents. Pope Francis claims that human mobility and migration “can prove to be a genuine enrichment for both families that migrate and countries that welcome them”¹⁶.

Therefore, if properly managed, migration could be a driving force for development, otherwise it can cause instability that we experience today. It has beneficial effects since it allows knowledge exchange and sharing of socio-cultural experiences and achievements. It can be the basis for understanding and cooperation among countries, which are no longer mono-cultural but multicultural.¹⁷ It also promotes solidarity with the poor, refugees and persons whose human rights have been violated. Croatian bishops and other religious communities in Croatia¹⁸ claim that migration also encourages social and religious groups, movements and associations to accept immigrants and refugees, allowing them social and cultural assimilation. Solidarity and charitable spirit have been recognized, especially in recent years when the influx of refugees to Europe has dramatically increased. From the religious point of view, a space for ecumenical and interreligious dialogue has been created. From the sociological point of view and in the context of multiculturalism, the migration phenomenon is considered as an occasion for tolerance. However, from the theological-pastoral point of view, tolerance is not enough since the Gospel offers much deeper message.

Migration has now become a global phenomenon which brings some tensions, so society has to deal with the problems which migrants, countries and people experience.¹⁹ Reflecting on this fact, in his encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI concluded: “This is a striking phenomenon because of the sheer numbers of people involved, the social, economic, political, cultural and religious problems it raises, and the dra-

¹⁵ GS, 5.

¹⁶ Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris laetitia* (19 March 2016), 46 (hereinafter: AL).

¹⁷ Cf. M. Simeoni, *I processi migratori: multietnismo e multiculturalismo*, *Credere oggi*, 26 (2006) 4, p. 7-18.

¹⁸ Cf. Izjava Komisije HBK *Justitia et pax, O važnosti međunarodne zaštite izbjeglica i kršćanskoj solidarnosti u njihovu zbrinjavanju* (28 July 2015). *Apel vjerskih predstavnika u Republici Hrvatskoj za pomoć izbjeglicama* (1 September 2015.).

¹⁹ Cf. O. Forti – E. Varinetti, *Annus horribilis*, *Orientamenti pastorali*, 63 (2015) 10, p. 13-24.

matic challenges it poses to nations and the international community. We can say that we are facing a social phenomenon of epoch-making proportions that requires bold, forward-looking policies of international cooperation if it is to be handled effectively. Such policies should set out from close collaboration between the migrants' countries of origin and their countries of destination; it should be accompanied by adequate international norms able to coordinate different legislative systems with a view to safeguarding the needs and rights of individual migrants and their families, and at the same time, those of the host countries. No country can be expected to address today's problems of migration by itself. We are all witnesses of the burden of suffering, the dislocation and the aspirations that accompany the flow of migrants."²⁰

Negative effects, troubles and tragedies of migration which have undermined European and global reality at the beginning of the 21st century, have been in the focus of Pope Benedict XVI and even more of Pope Francis. On the one hand, it reflects concern for the refugees and all those who were forced to leave their homes, and on the other hand, the causes and consequences of migration have been revealed. Historical problems, economic inequality and political calculations have come to light. The vast majority of migrants and refugees crossed into Europe in 2015, due to re-opening of the so-called Mediterranean and Southeast European routes. Ongoing conflicts in the African continent (Nigeria, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, etc.), in the Middle East, so-called "Islamic situation" (Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan), and current developments in Eastern Europe (Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria) as well as natural disasters prompted mass migration. The entire groups were forced to use the aforementioned routes in order to reach Europe. The whirlwind of migration led to disintegration of many families and thousands of children and women were drowned and killed. It is to conclude that economic insecurity, wars, social unrest and natural disasters are the most frequent causes of migration. Furtherly, "the roots of the phenomenon can also be traced back to exaggerated nationalism and, in many countries, even to hatred and systematic or violent exclusion of ethnic or religious minorities from society. This can be seen in civil, political, ethnic and even religious conflicts raging in all continents. Such tensions swell the growing flood of refugees, who often mingle with other migrants. The impact can be felt in host societies, in which ethnic groups and people with different languages and cultures are brought together with the risk of reciprocal opposition and conflict."²¹

²⁰ CiV, 62.

²¹ Pontifical council for the pastoral care of migrants and itinerant people, Instruction *Erga migrantes caritas Christi* – The love of Christ towards migrants (3 May 2004), Vatican City, 2004, 1 (hereinafter: EMCC).

According to the rules and principles of international law²², states are required to assist and protect persons holding refugee status. There are *legal* and *illegal* immigrations, the later are often triggered by various criminal or terrorist organizations and intentions due to human hardship and tragedy. The refugees, especially women and children, often become victims of human trafficking, sexual exploitation, forced labor and begging.²³ Such phenomena generate intolerance and threaten the security of receiving countries. Some forms of social and religious fundamentalism, especially the phenomenon of Islamic extremism (ISIL), are sometimes supported by external, political or military forces who take advantage of social crisis and migration to infiltrate terrorist groups among refugees. The threat of terrorism and all forms of radicalism create the fear of losing national, cultural and religious identity. Consequently, on the one hand, resistance at the state level is manifested through the borders closure, fortifying borders with wire fences (Hungary, Austria, Slovenia) and raising walls (e.g. construction of border wall between the US and Mexico), and on the other hand, it encourages solidarity in preventing evil.²⁴

Social institutions are required to seek a just order and the way toward coexistence so that each person is respected, and to create laws that allow a faster integration of displaced persons and refugees. Although people have the right to emigrate, it is necessary today to encourage people's right to reside, as Pope John Paul II claims: "It is a basic human right to live in one's own country. However, this right becomes effective only if the factors that urge people to emigrate are constantly kept under control."²⁵ Although emigration can have a positive impact on a country of immigration, it can also seriously disrupt social system of a country of emigration. Being aware of this problem Pope Francis argues that: "this process should include, from the outset, the need to assist the countries which migrants and refugees leave. This will demonstrate that solidarity... In any case, it is necessary to avert, if possible at the earliest stag-

²² Cf. UNHCR, *The refugee convention, 1951*. UNHCR, *The protocol of refugees 1967*.

²³ Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Guidelines for the pastoral care of the road* (24 May 2007), p. 85-86. 122. Francis, Message for the World day of migrants and refugees 2017. *Child Migrants, the Vulnerable and the Voiceless* (8 September 2016).

²⁴ Cf. L. Larivera, *La "governance" globale delle migrazioni*, *La Civiltà cattolica*, 165 (2014) 4, p. 484-495. G. Sale, *L'immigrazione in Europa e i diversi modelli di integrazione*, *La Civiltà cattolica*, 167 (2016) 4, p. 253-268. *La tragedia dei bambini migranti* (Editoriale), *La Civiltà cattolica*, 167 (2016) 2, p. 313-320. M. Garcian Durán – G. P. Sánchez González, *La frontiera come un ponte. La sfida delle migrazioni in America Latina e nei Caraibi*, *La Civiltà cattolica*, 167 (2016) 4, p. 463-471.

²⁵ John Paul II, *Address to the Fourth World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees* (9 October 1998).

es, the flight of refugees and departures as a result of poverty, violence and persecution.”²⁶

The Republic of Croatia has an extensive experience in internal migration, emigration and experience to accept refugees.²⁷ The aftermath of World War II caused the gradual increase in rural-to-urban migration, which devastated rural areas and consequently led to the urban population growth. However, overurbanization led to emigration from large to small urban centres or from urban to rural areas. Emigration mostly caused by economic reasons has increased in Croatia after the economic crisis in 2008, and its accession to the European Union in 2013. The end of World War II was marked by a great labour emigration process and family disintegration. Young workers were motivated by earning enough money to send it to their families back home. Unfortunately, the entire young families and highly educated people are leaving Croatia today. Thus, migration is “particularly dramatic and devastating to families and individuals”²⁸, but also for the county itself, since it suffers a loss of valuable labour power and highly skilled and educated employees who were supported by the state funding. Emigration negatively affects demographics and the future of Croatia, which as Croatian demographers²⁹ have warned, is in danger of aging and gradual withering away, thus requiring immigration. Consequently, the Church and the state argue that: “every effort should be encouraged, even in a practical way, to assist families and Christian communities to remain in their native lands.”³⁰ In this context, it is evident that the issues of emigration and refugees in the European Union have completely different effects. Due to its aging population and the need for economic recovery and development, the EU actively encourages immigration of millions of young people and foreign labour.

²⁶ Francis, Message for the World day of migrants and refugees 2016. *Migrants and Refugees Challenge Us. The Response of the Gospel of Mercy* (12 September 2015).

²⁷ Cf. C. Hornstein Tomić, I. Hrstić, F. Majetić, I. Sabotić, M. Sopta, *Zbornik Hrvatsko iseljeničtvo i domovina. Razvojne perspektive*, Biblioteka Zbornici - Institut društvenih znanosti Ivo Pilar, Zagreb, 2014. - <http://www.pilar.hr/novosti/sve-novosti/20-izdvojeno/578-zbornik-hrvatsko-iseljenicstvo-i-domovina> (20 January 2017).

²⁸ AL, 46.

²⁹ Cf. *Hrvatska sve praznija, a država ne zna broj iseljenih. Stručnjaci upozoravaju: Bit će još gore*, in: <http://mojahrvatska.vecernji.hr/hrvatska-sve-praznija-a-drzava-ne-zna-broj-iseljenih-strucnjaci-upozoravaju-bit-ce-jos-gore-1144731> (25 January 2017). I. Nejašmić/A. Toskić, *Ostarjelost stanovništva seoskih naselja Republike Hrvatske*, Migracijske i etničke teme. 32 (2016) 2, p. 191-219. Due to an increasing immigration of Croats into Western Europe and the difficulties experienced by the Croatian Catholic Missions, a public appeal was sent by Ivica Komadina, a delegate for the Croatian faithful, at the meeting of Croatian priests and pastoral workers from Croatian Catholic missions and communities in Western Europe, which was held in Kastel Stafilić, 9 October 2015.

³⁰ AL, 46.

3. Migration as a challenge for pastoral theology, the church and the parish community

The implications of mass migration and refugees flows not only affect, but also concern theologians and the Church. The following questions arise: What does faith in Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, require when challenged by religious diversity? How can one express his/her Christian belief in encounter with adherents of other religions, especially if they are exclusivists? What does God expect of the local Church and the parish communities challenged by migration and can they remain isolate from the reality? Are the existing models of parish pastoral appropriate for the acceptance and evangelization of the new types of emigrants?

Faced with these and other issues, the Catholic Church is closely monitoring developments related to migrants and refugees, seeking pastoral models to realize its mandate for missionary evangelization.³¹ Although a pastoral paradigm shift is not easy, the Church's careless pastoral care and hardened attitudes toward migration are not allowed. Focusing on the migration crisis carefully and prudently, the Church becomes more aware of the anthropological-cultural catholicity through its regular day-to-day pastoral activity (cf. Gal 3:28) and ground its approach to migration on the Christian personalism and Christian anthropology. This means that, contemplating the incarnation and redemption of Jesus Christ, it recognizes Christ's image in every person and takes care of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. In this context, migration presents challenge for theology and pastoral care. The Church leaders provide guidance and launch initiatives, whereas the local Church develops and implements the migrant-specific programs and plans, taking seriously into account the reality of intercultural and inter-religious relationships, *hic et nunc*.

Some theologians contemplate on migration as the *locus teologicus*, i.e. the place of encounter with God, the place as a source for intensive theological reflection.³² From a pastoral-theological point of view, the rapid changes affected by the modern and post-modern processes have been observed. Also, it is important to take into account the process of globalization that redefines boundaries and transforms the social, cultural and religious identity, thus leading to tensions and conflicts. The contextual conditionality of migration becomes a source of knowledge, a new place for theology, a stimulus for pastoral strategy and responsibility in the concrete situation. Therefore, both theologians and pastoral care work-

³¹ Cf. R. Polak, *Migration: Herausforderung für Theologie und Kirche*, Diakonia, 42 (2011) 3, p. 150-157.

³² Cf. G. Parolin, *Chiesa postconciliare e migrazioni. Quale teologia per la missione con i migranti*, Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Roma, 2010, p. 271-497. R. Polak, *Migration als Ort der Theologie*, u: http://dioezesfiles.x4content.com/page-downloads/migration_als_ort_der_theologie.pdf (11 February 2017).

ers focus on the phenomenon of migration which, in the context of rapid social change, as “*a sign of the times*”, requires a clear theological-hermeneutical approach. A profound understanding of the “signs of the times” also requires the social and humanistic approaches, because theology or the Church in its faith seeks to discern the signs of God’s plan through the common human phenomena of our time and to discover and judge the mysterious presence of God in the complexities of modern migration. The light of faith clarifies all things and reflects God’s intentions.³³ The Church is aware of its primary mission to proclaim Jesus Christ to every man including immigrants and refugees. This approach is required for “furthering human freedom ... The Church is thus obliged to do everything possible to carry out her mission in the world and to reach all peoples. And she has the right to do this, a right given to her by God for the accomplishment of his plan.”³⁴

Having in mind the *diakonia*, the phenomenon of migration is often and almost exclusively viewed through the caritative service of the Church. In this context, there is a risk of reducing theological and pastoral dimensions of the Christian mission to only one aspect. Although, on the one hand, it justifies the Church’s involvement in a dramatic movement of people, and on the other hand ignores the overall pastoral mission. The Church is called to develop integrated theological and pastoral approaches to *ad intra* and *ad extra*. Concerning migrants and refugees “the Church and her various agencies ought to avoid offering charitable services alone; they are also called to promote real integration in a society where all are active members and responsible for one another’s welfare, generously offering a creative contribution and rightfully sharing in the same rights and duties.”³⁵ According to the theological-pastoral strategy,” in accompanying migrants, the Church needs a specific pastoral programme addressed not only to families that migrate but also to those family members who remain behind.”³⁶ It is necessary to raise awareness that the Church, with its entire pastoral care for migrants and refugees in the world, acts as the “yeast” (Mt13:33) manifesting “the light of the world” (Mt 5:14).

3.1. Migration between the traditional and the Synodal pastoral care

In order to put the pastoral care of migrants and itinerant people into practice, the existing forms of pastoral work should be reviewed, i.e. the relationship between ecclesiology and *poimenologia*, the traditional and

³³ Cf. GS, 4; 11.

³⁴ RM, 39.

³⁵ Benedict XVI, Message for the World day of migrants and refugees (2013). *Migrations: pilgrimage of faith and hope* (12 October 2012).

³⁶ AL, 46.

the Synodal pastoral care should be distinguished. The questions arise: which face of the Church and the pastoral care model the Church's leadership tend to create; whether the existing pastoral structures effectively assist migrants and refugees; or is there a true balance between pastoral care and integration into society?

In this context, it is important to take into account the spiritual and religious dimensions of immigrants, their vulnerability, insecurity, lack of the wholeness of life, family disintegration, scattered nationality and the degree of acceptance or marginalization as a response of the receiving communities. Also, it is worth to examine whether migrants and refugees are mere recipients of pastoral care and charitable aid or they are active members and bearers of life in the Church. The pastoral care for migrants in the past and the present differs in approaches. At the end of the 19th and during the 20th century the Church was concerned about the protection and preservation of faith of migrant Catholics, who were influenced by various ideologies (e.g. Marxism). Certainly, the Church has to preserve and defend the *deposit of faith* (cf. 1Tim 6:20), but is expected to constantly encourage a sense of duty for evangelization, missionary activity and apostolic mission, in order to grant people their eternal salvation.

Being aware of the importance of integration, the Church has focused on creating structures and special pastoral care, i.e. the acceptance and the gradual integration of migrants in the life of the local Church and the parish community. The parish pastoral care model was crucial for a successful work with immigrants. Respecting the culture, tradition, customs and language of immigrants, the Church encouraged and authorized the establishment of personal parishes and pastoral counselling which, being equal to the parishes, have ever been entrusted to the priests serving the faithful in their mother tongue. Following the guidelines of the Church, the bishops have sent priests, who in cooperation with the local bishop and pastors, assisted in the missions through developing appropriate types of pastoral care.³⁷ Although this approach proved to be effective for many people, the mono-cultural pastoral care disregards people of other cultures and lacks interest in reciprocity, hence slowing down integration into society and the life of the local Church. Although helpful for the protection of national and cultural identities, the mono-ethnic pastoral care still risks closure of the community in itself, encouraging self-sufficiency and narrowing its catholicity. The integration and assimilation of immigrants caused difficulties, since many immigrants could not integrate in

³⁷ Cf. Pius XII, *Constitutio apostolica Exsul Familia* (1 August 1952). This constitution is still considered a charter for the pastoral care of migrants. Then, Paul VI, encouraged by the Second Vatican Council, i.e. Decree *Christus Dominus* (no. 18), published the *Motu Proprio Instructio de pastoralis migratorum cura* which requires from the Congregation for Bishops to publish the new norms in a special instruction, *Congregatio pro Episcopis, De Pastoralis Migratorum Cura Nemo est* (22 August 1969.).

the host society, whereas many of them embraced the existing secular culture throwing away their communities and religious life.

The Second Vatican Council encouraged the Church to move from the mono-cultural to the multicultural model, because the Church is the community of the faithful³⁸. This change of model was important for strengthening the pastoral care of migrants, offering the cultural pluralism and unity in diversity, i.e. the differences which affect common life conditions and sharing of all valuable goods in life.³⁹ More precisely, referring to the one human family, the catholicity of the Church is witnessed through its dealing with migration and encouraging Christians to pastoral sensitivity and concern for other cultures, because a foreigner is “a visible sign and an effective reminder of that universality which is a constituent element of the Catholic Church.”⁴⁰

Openness to different cultures and religions is not always easy, but pastoral care and ecclesiology, anchored in the Trinity, raise awareness of accepting a stranger not as a problem but as God’s message of hope and trust in the eschatological victory. This eschatological reality should be revealed in the social and pastoral circumstances, which seek to implement an effective and *special pastoral care* or receiving pastoral care, because the church is clearly identified by its principles of giving and receiving which build it up and empower. In regard to migrants and refugees, “this pastoral activity must be implemented with due respect for their cultures, for the human and religious formation from which they come and for the spiritual richness of their rites and traditions, even by means of a specific pastoral care.”⁴¹ Such model of the pastoral care for migrants overcomes the traditional pastoral practice and gains its importance through the prism of *catholicity*. However, we should bear in mind that neither immigrants, catechists, pastoral workers nor pastors are familiar enough with the language and culture of the host society and the local Church, which slows down the development of the integrated pastoral care model. Therefore, it is important that the local church provides distinctive types of missionary work and Synodal pastoral care grounded on their prophetic identity. All proposals seek to shape a mindset based on the receiving and participating principles. It includes catechet-

³⁸ Cf. LG, 23: “By divine Providence it has come about that various churches, established in various places by the apostles and their successors, have in the course of time coalesced into several groups, organically united, which, preserving the unity of faith and the unique divine constitution of the universal Church, enjoy their own discipline, their own liturgical usage, and their own theological and spiritual heritage. ... This variety of local churches with one common aspiration is splendid evidence of the catholicity of the undivided Church.”

³⁹ Cf. GS, 53.

⁴⁰ EMCC, 17.

⁴¹ AL, 46.

ical activities and meetings as well as the inclusion of immigrants and parish communities' efforts. Also, it is important to make a step forward from the current Church's engagement in serving and offering many initiatives in order to meet the preferences and needs of people which are often inconsistent and consequently left unrecognized. The Church should promote the practice of involvement and participation which clearly depicts it to be the one true Church. Participation promotes receiving, and thus parishes become communities and not only gathering places for the fulfilment of spiritual or sacramental needs. It offers an opportunity for the development of the co-responsibility of the laity, which won't be instrumentalized, but will grow and strive to hold its specificity.⁴²

3.2. The pastoral care of migrants and a change of circumstances

Ongoing debates on migrants and refugees mostly focus on conflicting views regarding the admission or rejection of immigrants.⁴³ The annual rate of national and international migration, at the global level is greater than a billion, thus, according to Cardinal Antonio Maria Veglio, the question often arises whether we should "defend" ourselves against it as an "invasion"?⁴⁴ Migration is a quite complex phenomenon because it brings changes that a society can hardly cope with and therefore it struggles with tensions and violence. It is important to bear in mind that these people are often risking their lives in search of protection and a better quality of life elsewhere. Pope Francis warns strongly and points frequently to the disturbing reality of today's society. In his speech to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, in January 2016, he made a strong appeal: "His is the arrogance of the powerful who exploit the weak, reducing them to means for their own ends or for strategic and political schemes. Where regular migration is impossible, migrants are often forced to turn to human traffickers or smugglers, even though they are aware that in the course of their journey they may well lose their possessions, their dignity and even their lives."⁴⁵

The Church deals with the issue of migrants from theological, pastoral, ethical and moral points of view, and therefore it is committed to defend the right to life and dignity of every person. According to the anthropo-

⁴² Cf. S. Lanza, *Responsabilità, trasformazioni e compiti della comunità cristiana*, in: Centro di Orientamento Pastorale, *Gli immigrati interpellano la comunità cristiana*, EDB, Bologna, 2001, p. 89-137.

⁴³ Cf. *International organization for migration*: <http://www.iom.int> (2 February 2017). *Pontificio Consiglio della Pastorale per i Migranti e Itineranti*: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/index_it.htm (2 February 2017).

⁴⁴ Cf. Card. A. M. Vegliò, *Accogliere i migranti: minaccia, dovere o diritto?*, *Aggiornamenti sociali*, 60 (2009) 7/8, p. 521-528.

⁴⁵ Francis, *Address to the members of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See* (11 January 2016).

logical catholicity: “Migrations cannot be reduced merely to their political and legislative aspects, their economic implications and the concrete coexistence of various cultures in one territory. All these complement the defence and promotion of the human person, the culture of encounter, and the unity of peoples, where the Gospel of mercy inspires and encourages ways of renewing and transforming the whole of humanity.”⁴⁶

Since the socio-cultural and epochal changes affect emigrants, they also require the conversion of pastoral mentality. A transition from the traditional self-referential pastoral paradigm to a more dynamic and creative missionary evangelization is required⁴⁷. The pastoral care of migrants should correspond to a change of circumstances as defined by Pope Paul VI: “the pastoral mobility of the Church should correspond to mobility of the modern world”⁴⁸. In the past, the pastoral care of migrants referred mostly to Catholics focusing on their needs, and the Diaspora has greatly empowered the Church. Today, Catholic missions seek to meet the needs of new migrants offering them spiritual and emotional shelter. However, many of today’s migrants are well-educated and multilingual, so they can cope with the social and economic problems in the host environments. Under the influence of secularization and globalization of culture, there are many nominal Catholics, especially in urban areas, who ignore the Catholic tradition and practical faith. They stay away from the pastoral institutions and break their connection with the church community, hence losing their religious and national identity.⁴⁹ Since the external migration is mostly directed towards the West (the European Union, North America, Canada), and the Western Church is increasingly affected by secularization and spiritual anemia, the question arises: how would it carry out the work of evangelization or the new evangelization of immigrants? It seems that this is a burning issue which requires an urgent missionary work.

It is important to determine that the pastoral care of migrants has changed over time and that it differs significantly from that of the past, so the Catholic faith and the contemporary pastoral care in Western society and culture cope with the new challenge of migration. It is estimated

⁴⁶ Francis, Message for the World day of migrants and refugees 2016. *Migrants and Refugees Challenge Us. The Response of the Gospel of Mercy* (12 September 2015).

⁴⁷ Cf. EG, 27.

⁴⁸ Paolo VI, *Discorso al Convegno europeo sulla pastorale dei migranti*, AAS 65 (1973), 591.

⁴⁹ EG, 70: “Nor can we overlook the fact that in recent decades there has been a breakdown in the way Catholics pass down the Christian faith to the young The causes of this breakdown include: ... the failure of our institutions to be welcoming ...”, as well as, “new cultures are constantly being born in these vast new expanses where Christians are no longer the customary interpreters or generators of meaning. Instead, they themselves take from these cultures new languages, symbols, messages and paradigms which propose new approaches to life, approaches often in contrast with the Gospel of Jesus. A completely new culture has come to life and continues to grow in the cities” (73).

that a high proportion of migrants and refugees are non-Catholic Christians. They are members of radical religious groups, some of whom are mostly fundamentalist Muslims whose identity is specific from religious and cultural point of view⁵⁰ as well as groups not inclined to integrate into society.⁵¹

Besides, the influx of immigrants cause fears that the cultural and national identities of the host countries would be endangered. Being aware of the complexities of migration Pope John Paul II asserted that: "Public authorities have the responsibility of controlling waves of migration with a view to the requirements of the common good. The acceptance of immigrants must always respect the norms of law and must therefore be combined, when necessary, with a firm *suppression of abuses*. ... This demands not yielding to indifference regarding universal human values and a concern for safeguarding the cultural patrimony proper to each nation."⁵² Ecumenism and interreligious dialogue still remain a pastoral challenge for the Church which is called to carry out pastoral work. Rejecting proselytizing, non-Christians pose a particular challenge with regard to the form of evangelization which includes dialogue and reciprocity, the explicit proclamation and the social pastoral.

4. The missionary and educational aspects of the pastoral care for migrants

International organizations, governments and educational institutions are all responsible and called to promote the educational processes aimed at creating the just social and economic order and development of all nations and states. The Church's mission in these processes refers to "a more effective commitment to educational and pastoral systems that form people in a "global dimension", that is, a new vision of the world community, considered as a family of peoples"⁵³.

The foundations of society and the promotion of social integration and coexistence have been in the focus of discussions about migrants as never before. Thus, in order to avoid any exclusion, discrimination and marginalization, education for the value of respect for every person, which is based on the spirit of *anthropological catholicity*, is required. In addition to professional qualification and charitable sensitivity, the work with immigrants requires the "education of the heart". Since education

⁵⁰ Cf. EMCC, 7. 49-69. EG, 63.

⁵¹ Cf. Conferenza episcopale dell'Emilia Romagna, *Islam e Cristianesimo*, EDB, Bologna, 2000.

⁵² John Paul II, Apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa* (28 Juni 2003), 101, 102 (hereinafter: EIE).

⁵³ EMCC, 8., cf. 27.

and training are the most important factors which can combat poverty, the Church should constantly strengthen its efforts and activities in society.⁵⁴ Besides the recognition of fundamental rights of all migrants, it is necessary to develop creative educational processes and the culture of acceptance; to practice the biblical notion of hospitality and encourage solidarity with refugees and the weak.⁵⁵ In order to cultivate the *culture of acceptance* one should: “Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God” (Rom 15:7). Integration of immigrants into the socio-cultural fabric of the nation and the host country, but also their respect for its civil laws and manners, should be in the focus of overall society. A key challenge is social integration which encourages the networking in solidarity and combating against poverty and social exclusion, hence it requires the culture of encounter and dialogue that encourages relationships, exchange and enriched reciprocity.

From the theological and pastoral points of view, migration “follows the need for a more effective commitment to educational and pastoral systems that form people in a “global dimension”, that is, a new vision of the world community, considered as a family of peoples, for whom the goods of the earth are ultimately destined when things are seen from the perspective of the universal common good.”⁵⁶ Solidarity requires reciprocity and cooperation, i.e., it does not merely affect the receiving country but immigrants themselves and their countries of origin. Reciprocity promotes not only welfare benefits, but language acquisition, openness to work, strengthening of public safety, respect for the rules and the fight against prejudice. However, the new circumstances reveal that pastors and pastoral workers are not adequately prepared for the pastoral care of migrants at the diocesan and parish levels, as stated in the Instruction “The love of Christ towards migrants”, *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi* (34–68). Concerning an evangelizing aspect of the pastoral work for migrants, which is also educational, and within the theological and pastoral co-responsibility, it is necessary to think and act in the spirit of Trinitarian pedagogy and deepen theology aimed at the pastoral guidelines for fostering *catholicity*.⁵⁷

In order to reach pastoral acceptability and integration, concern and hospitality towards migrants and refugees, i.e., overall effective models of pastoral care, which would be ecclesiastically as authentic and appropriate as possible, it is necessary to analyze and verify the tools of pastoral workers i.e. the change of mentality (*metanoia*) and the pastoral renewal

⁵⁴ Cf. P. Neuner/P. M. Zulehner, *Dodi kraljevstvo tvoje. Praktična ekleziologija*, Ex Libris, Rijeka. 2015, p. 184-186.

⁵⁵ Cf. EIE, 100-102.

⁵⁶ EMCC, 9.

⁵⁷ Cf. G. G. Tassello, *Teologia e migrazioni*. Convegno annuale della Pastorale dei migranti in Germania, Kevelaer, 26-28 January 2010, p. 8-9.

in the spirit of catholicity are required. Catholic immigrant is an integral part of the local Church, because there are no foreigners in the Church. One can refer to dialectical-asymmetrical reciprocity because, despite the fact that multiculturalism can cause fear and conflict, pastoral care requires respect for diversity which can be understood as a sign of God's presence in history, and the fulfillment of God's plan for unity. The pastoral care of migrants and refugees presents an opportunity for evangelical love⁵⁸ and education, mutual acquaintance and dialogue, because dialogue rejects the weaknesses of tolerance and indifference. Moreover, dialogue is evangelism, because it comes from God Himself. Therefore, Catholic dialogue is required since it seeks to promote education based on *spirituality of communion*⁵⁹, which focuses on the mystery of the Holy Trinity. The purpose of the pastoral care for migrants is to maintain vigilance of the whole Church through the call for hospitality and catholicity⁶⁰, since in its very nature, the Church is the *one, holy, catholic and apostolic*. Catholicity is the Church' call for openness to the diversity of cultures and testimony to a generic divine plan. As stated in the Instruction *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi* (41–42), the particular Church must rethink and re-design pastoral care programme in order to help the faithful to live in today's new multi-cultural and multi-religious context; to raise awareness of the local population on the problems of migration and to throw out suspicions.

In regard to the pastoral care for foreigners *non-Christians*, it should be based on *the human relationship and testimony of love* which comprise dialogue and commitment to the proclamation of the Gospel. Christians are downhearted if the members of other religions, affected by emigration problems, become obsessed with materialism, thus losing their religious feelings. They should be encouraged to live the supernatural dimension of life, and to practice their faith and genuine respect for the values and laws of the host country.⁶¹ However, other pastoral challenges arise. As stated in the Instruction *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi* (61–67) it is not considered opportune for Christian churches, chapels, places of worship to be made available for members of non-Christian religions and Catholic schools must not renounce their own characteristics and Christian-oriented educational programmes when attended by immigrants' children of another religion. Particular difficulties arise with regard to marriage between Catholics and non-Christian migrants, which should be discour-

⁵⁸ Cf. A. Küppers/P. Schallenberg, *Flucht und Migration als Herausforderung christlicher Nächstenliebe*, *Theologie der Gegenwart*, 59 (2016) 3, p. 189-201.

⁵⁹ Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo millennio ineunte* (6 January 2001), 43-46.

⁶⁰ Cf. P. H. Vöcking, *Migration und Pastoral. Eine Chance für die Katholizität der Kirche*, in: <https://www.owep.de/artikel/353/migration-und-pastoral> (10 February 2017).

⁶¹ Cf. F. Olivero, *Immigrazione e servizio pastorale della Chiesa*, Roma, 25-28 giugno 2012, pdf, (23 January 2017).

aged. If a Catholic woman and a Muslim wish to marry, the Catholic party must beware of signing documents containing Islam's profession of faith, and take a firm stand on what the Church requires, focusing mainly on the Christian upbringing of their children.

Under the influence of economic globalization and technological enhancement, the old world seems to disappear and there is the new fragmented one, without a firm basis. The new culture has undermined the current models of pastoral care and the life of the parish community, and since they are wellsprings of safety and unity to foreigners, a true welcome by the host community is hindered. Strengthened by the Christian vision of education i.e. the proclamation, sanctification and service, and being often the last strongholds for foreigners, the parish communities are called to grow in a relationship of dissimilarity with others and in a relationship with God. Due to cultural pluralism and based on the theology of its foundation, the parish community should foster its educational mission through *acceptance and evangelization*. At the parish church, "It is there that the Church is seen locally"⁶², so it should not be the self-referential church, as claimed by Pope Francis "In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers" as well as "environments of living communion and participation", "completely mission-oriented" since they are called to be "a centre of constant missionary outreach"⁶³. The parish community whose shape changes today takes the responsibility for the acceptance of foreigners, because it should be open to everyone and gather people in their diversity. The Eucharist is the central event of the common life of the parish community and the source of unity. The parish community should be a genuine hospitable environment for Christian immigrants.

However, the classic formula of pastoral care, i.e. the *missio cum cura animarum*⁶⁴, which focuses greatly on the *ad intra*, can hardly cope with the challenge of migration, because it is designed to correspond to the ordinary circumstances which are beyond the pastoral care of migrants today. In order to avoid a parallel pastoral care or a parallel Church, and to make the pastoral unity more effective, it is necessary to change the paradigm of pastoral care or restore the traditional models of care for migrants and refugees, through opening to the *ad extra* the particular circumstances, because the circumstances are different, and the social mobility requires new models when it comes to a rapid cross-cultural and cross-national interaction. Today, the communities experience various stages of integration which is proved by several generations of a family living in some area, thus a new, effective, appropriate and more flexible

⁶² Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici* (30 December 1988), 26.

⁶³ EG, 28.

⁶⁴ Cf. EMCC, 91.

models of pastoral care for new migrants are required. Also, migrants should be the protagonists of pastoral care, though it often depends on their initial formation. Moreover, future pastors and laity should be prepared and educated in this spirit and specific pastoral sectors dedicated to their animation and formation are: the centres for pastoral work among young persons and for vocational orientation and the centres for study and pastoral reflection, with the task of observing the evolution of the migration phenomenon⁶⁵.

Conclusion

In order to understand the perspective of pastoral work related to the current mass movements of migrants and refugees, it is important to understand the long history of this form of pastoral care. From the beginning, the church has observed that the movement of people and the spread of the faithful in the world are providential parts of God's plan to spread the Christian message throughout the world. It is not only a matter of geographical distribution but the quality of the encounter with the new cultures and civilizations. The church has ever shown concern for migrants who were forced to move away from their homeland, as an out-cast Jesus Christ in Egypt with His family (cf. Mt 2:13-15).

The migration phenomenon is unstoppable, and to a certain extent it is a necessary process, because history itself is a constant movement and the only question is how to supervise and manage this phenomenon pastorally. The theological and pastoral aspects of the migration issues should be continuously reviewed and rethink evangelistically. However, migrants and refugees are often subjected to: social manipulation, political instrumentalization, the ideological battles for supremacy in the world, criminal objectives, various forms of extortion, profiting from human misery, signing fatal contracts and illicit trade. Persons in distress can be abused or become the victims of ideological games and utilitarianism. Also, they can be used for dishonest motives. Nevertheless, the mission of the Church is to warn political, social and cultural leaders and institutions about the need for peace and solidarity, the protection of human rights and human dignity, fostering of dialogue and balanced growth; to regard migrants and refugees as the *sign of the times*; to overcome the earthly interests; to show the face of God and to manifest the meaning of its pastoral mission in the world.

⁶⁵ Cf. EMCC, 94.