

TRANSITION TOWARDS A MORE JUST, SUSTAINABLE, AND PEACEFUL WORLD



NEWSLETTER
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*"The land
belongs to me,
says the
Lord, and
you are
strangers and
immigrants
to me"
(Lev. 25:23)*

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Editorial

« We know that it is not enough to open our hearts to the suffering of others. Much more remains to be done before our brothers and sisters can once again live peace fully in a safe home. Welcoming others requires concrete commitment, a network of assistance and goodwill, vigilant and sympathetic attention, the responsible management of new and complex situations that at times compound numerous existing problems, to say nothing of resources, which are always limited. » Pope Francis

With these words, Pope Francis invites us to a reflection on the issue of migration in his message for the World Day of Peace of 1 January 2018.

Through out the history of humanity, migratory movements have shaped countries, contributed to development, and fostered cultural exchanges.

But the global context is a great incentive to close the borders, to give in to fear, to remain indifferent to the many distresses of our time.

Let us reflect up on a phenomenon that affects each country, probably each of our families.

This second newsletter will develop the theme of Migration as follow:

Migration and Christmas
Migration in the international context
Migration and diversity.

Enjoy the reading !

*« You shall not exploit the stranger who lives in your land,
and you shall not oppress him,
for you have been yourselves a stranger in Egypt"
(Exodus 22 :20)*



International days

December 10	Human Rights Day
December 18	International Migrants Day
December 20th	International Day of Human Solidarity
February 6	International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation
February 20th	World Day of Social Justice





*Questions for
personal reflection
and community sharing.*

As I meditate on our constitutions, how can I go towards Christ in my sisters and brothers fleeing from violence with a humble heart in my own life? Honestly, am I ready to learn and receive from them?

What does the message of Pope Francis invite me to do or change in my personal, community, and apostolic life?

As I meditate on Jesus' flight into Egypt, I can ask: what happened on the way? How were they welcomed in Egypt? What does this biblical passage call me to?

“Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you” Mt 2:13

As we near the feast of the incarnation, the wondrous gift of God's infinite love for humanity, we also contemplate the reality of Jesus' coming into this world; a world that turns a blind eye to the need of a young mother seeking shelter. Shortly after His birth, an angel appears to Joseph and tells him to take Mary and the newborn messiah and flee; to remain in Egypt for an indefinite amount of time. What trust this young family needed! **Jesus becomes a refugee.** The angel said “rise, get up, flee”, these are the same words that are spoken in the hearts of over 65 million displaced people in our world today.

According to the UNHCR, approximately 20 people are displaced or forced to flee their homeland every minute; this equates to 28,300 people daily. Unknown to many, the UNHCR has noted that the top hosting countries of those displaced are Ethiopia, Uganda, Iran, and Lebanon. This is a reality that many western news stations fail to report.

Our hearts cry as we begin to understand the plight of so many of our brothers and sisters. How can we as FMM, respond to the cry of the poor at this moment in time? We have no further to look than to our own constitutions which show us the way; “like Christ, we **want to approach everyone with a humble heart, ready to learn and to receive** as much as to give, with **his attitude of**

respect, **acceptance** of persons, openness and service (#39)”. With a humble heart, a heart that is ready to learn, our first step is to nourish a desire to go towards others; and step out of our comfort zones.

Ministry in Canada has introduced me to refugees who have offered me many life lessons. They have taught me about gratitude, about walking in faith as Abraham and Mary did, living day by day with joy even though the uncertainty of their future looms over them. Many other refugees have shared their joy with me, trying to communicate despite language barriers. I experienced what mutual evangelization concretely looks like across religious boundaries. There is much that unifies us; it is a question of listening and sharing one's experiences to grow in faith and love. Growing in respect, trying to understand each other is a journey that requires a great deal of openness.

In this journey of walking with the refugees, I was touched to read in Pope Francis' reference in his encyclical “*Laudato Si*”: “There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants....sadly, there is widespread indifference to such suffering, which is even now taking place throughout our world. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our brothers and sisters points to the loss of that sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women upon which all civil society is founded.”

Arlene fmm

Prayer that can be prayed in community

Mary, mother of migrants, Mary, sister of refugees, you were forced to flee your country shortly after giving birth to the Emmanuel. You know the pain and tears of so many women on the road towards the unknown. Women carrying their newborns, searching desperately for a place where peace reigns, a place where their children will not live in fear, a place without the continuous sound of fighting and war, a place where they can live abundantly, free from misery. Pray with us for the refugees and migrants of our world, that they may find and be given of strength to continue and angels along the way to support and listen to them. Pray that your FMM daughters remain not indifferent to this reality, taking responsibility to courageously take the necessary steps to go towards these our brothers and sisters, to learn and give like you, in love and acceptance.

Migration: but what is the UN doing?

Migration is not a new phenomenon. The history of humankind is but a long series of migrations.

Today, the tragedy is seen in the Mediterranean Sea, thousands of migrants that die by drowning, the uninterrupted flow of those who risk of leaving their country and thereby find themselves in conditions of inhumane survival, the increase of xenophobia; all these factors threaten peace, security, the development of peoples challenges the international community.

It is why the United Nations asked the Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon to draw up a report made up of recommendations regarding the management of massive displacements of refugees and migrants. The report was publicized on the 9th of May 2016: "In safety and dignity: addressing large movements of refugees and migrants."

http://www.un.org/fr/documents/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/59&TYPE=&referer=/fr/&Lang=E

The 193 member states of the United Nations, through a resolution of the General Assembly on the 19th September 2016, decided to elaborate a global pact for a safe, orderly and regular migration in 2018.

For the follow-up of the process of negotiations that will unfold from February to July 2018, the new secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, has named a Special Representative for international migration, Mrs. Louise Arbour. She is listening to the non-governmental organizations and other stakeholder parties.

On September 20th 2017, she addressed the Member States to give them four overlaying observations : the global agreement must be centered on people, promoting human rights and respecting the framework of national and international protections, the agreement must be based on the cooperation between States, and taking into account the aspects connected to administration, work, security, health, education, and then the global agreement must be flexible and open to welcome opportunities in the future with changes connected to communications, demography, and finally this agreement must be based on the reality and take into account the fact that the majority of migrants live a regular life and contribute positively to society.

The Catholic Church addressed a letter to the Secretary General on October 6th 2017 developing a plan of action in 20 points to engage in dialogue with governments on these points which are critical for the lives of our migrant brothers and sisters.

Franciscans International with other NGOs also committed itself in the process of negotiations on an international level. In the following months, the meetings are organized with around 30 government representatives. As far as that goes, advocating for migrants in situations of great vulnerability with special attention for the respect of human rights, the situation of women, the detention of children, the climate of xenophobia, the effects of climatic changes will be at the heart of our discussion.

For more information, consult the website of the civil society (in several languages): www.madenetwork.org .

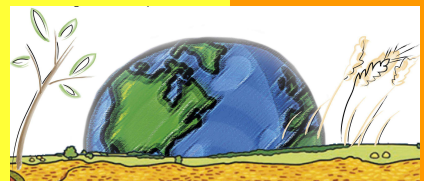
In a nutshell:

According to the statistics of the international organization for Migration (IOM)
In 2015:

244 million migrants are 3.3% of the global population (7.3 billion) of which 22 million are refugees. 48% are women.

For more information:

<http://www.iom.int/world-migration-report-2018>



Diversity: a space for encounter. The experience of Frances of Assisi.



In the most critical point of the Fifth Crusade, set up by the Lateran Council, Frances decided to leave, with a group of twelve companions, among them Br. Illuminate, for the camp of Crusaders, being encamped near Damietta, in Egypt. He was firmly decided to meet the Sultan of Egypt, chief of the Muslim soldiers, the enemy that Crusaders had to fight against and win, so as to enter into possession of the Holy Places. In the camp of Crusaders, according to the chronicle of Tomas of Celano, Frances preached against going by weapons and war and supported the need of proceeding by treaties of peace with the enemy. His action provokes the anger of the pontifical delegate Sir Pelagio Galvan, who cannot prevent Frances to go to the enemy's camp to meet the Sultan. Frances and Br. Illuminate cross then the camp of Crusaders among sneers, insults, mocking, kicks and beatings. The Saracens, seeing them arriving, go to meet them and lead them to the presence of the Sultan. Chroniclers of the time write that the Sultan name was Al-Malik al-Kamil; grandson of the famous Saladin, he was called "The Perfect Sovereign". At his palace he loved to argue with people learned in grammar and jurisprudence, he himself was a poet of which some verses have been handed down to us. In Cairo he founded a school for the science of traditions. Famous for its kindness and austere behavior, very good administrator, he controlled personally the tax lists. He was against all useless bloodshed, and at different times he had offered peace treaties to the Crusaders that they had disdainfully rejected. The meeting of Frances with this open, cultivated and enlighten Sovereign was extraordinary. The Sultan wanted Frances to remain as his guest for many days, to listen and chat with him, to deepen religious subjects helped by theologians and wise Muslims. Among the two arouse a friendship lasting the whole life. At the moment of leaving, the Sultan gave Frances many gifts, and among them the ivory and silver horn preserved in the Basilica of Frances in Assisi. In a time where a Muslim could be considered but an enemy, wicked, diabolical, the meek and humble Frances, against all wars and especially a war like a Crusade in name of the faith, tells us that a helpless man succeeds where an army will fail with weapons (in Egypt, in fact, the Crusaders suffered a disastrous defeat). The meeting and friendship born between Frances and al-Malik al-Kamil are signs and symbols of the possibility for people to understand each other and get beyond contrasts and difficulties, nevertheless how deep and critical they are, without turning to violence and to the use of armaments. These two men of a different faith, different origin and culture, different language, usages and customs, are witness that beyond all differences there is always a common ground, there are always spiritual and material unexplored territories where to venture together if we wish and are interested to discover realities which can contribute to a reciprocal enrichment, to create areas of peace, endless spaces of friendship overcoming the narrow places of mistrust, of hatred and fear of diversity.

In today's context we have many migration movements which will go to constitute a new world's order, new encounters and new challenges about cultures, peoples and economic and social systems; all this is urging us to reflect upon our way of conceiving the human person and her proper diversity. Our insecurity and fragility emerges in a context that we may feel threatening or also enriching by "somebody else", very far from our way of living and thinking. Knowledge, listening and dialogue may be the first steps, as it was between Francis of Assisi and the Sultan, to invest on diversity as a value and a fertile soil for a future of creative and harmonious living together of our differences.

Alessandra fmm



Fmm network
to share opinions, to have a constructive exchange through our lives and our experiences, collaborate and give us advice:

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