Faith in action

A discussion of Catholic teaching on how we work with migrants, refugees and other displaced peoples

— pages 8-13

Compassion and advocacy: Pope Francis on migration

— See page 8
PLAINVILLE, Kan. — The Prayer & Action program, founded in the Diocese of Salina under Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger, provides students the opportunity to take a week away from distractions to perform meaningful tasks for the poor, handicapped and elderly, while fostering their faith and love of Catholic values.

Already in six other dioceses nationwide, Prayer & Action has come to the Diocese of Tucson. A delegation from Arizona visited this summer’s program in Plainville, KS, to prepare for the Tucson launch.

“He was telling me about this program and how it helped the Salina Diocese increase vocations,” said Father Jorge Farias-Saucedo, Vocations director for the Diocese of Tucson. “I was excited after I looked into the program and told him, ‘I like it and I want to implement it here.’”

“Bishop Weisenburger told me that if I wanted to implement it I would need to go visit Kansas and experience it.”

With bishop’s encouragement, Father Farias-Saucedo invited Father Martin Moreno, parochial vicar at Immaculate Conception Parish in Yuma, and three seminarians, Abundio Colazo-Lopez of St. James in Coolidge, Luis Pablo Ochoa of Sacred Heart in Nogales, and Isaac Allwin of St. Ambrose in Tucson to join him on the trip to western Kansas.

After only a couple of days with the Prayer & Action team, each of them agreed that the experience had been positive and praised the program.

Plans for implementing Prayer & Action in the Diocese of Tucson came together quickly. Father Farias explained that the program was to start in July, less than three weeks after he and his team returned from Plainville. He was hopeful that despite the quick turnaround, they would be able to establish an experience like the one in Salina.

Long-term, the men hope that the young people of southern Arizona will embrace the project and that they will start to see an increase in youth involvement in their parishes and diocese, and an increase in vocations.

“The ideal outcomes are that we’ll figure out how Prayer & Action works within the culture of our diocese and that we’ll be able to reach out to the people - some are Catholic, some aren’t Catholic and some don’t practice their faith,” said Father Moreno. “We also hope we’ll see future vocations come out of this.”

Colazo said that as seminarians, he, Allwin and Ochoa have worked with youths, “but this (Prayer & Action) is at a different level.”

The event was held at Immaculate Conception in Yuma July 8-13 and at Our Mother of Sorrows in Tucson July 15-20.
Every day, it gets a little closer.

Ernie Nedder, former director of Development for the Diocese of Tucson, walks nearly every day from his temporary office at Broadway and Scott, to the rising new Conference and Education Center at Cathedral Square.

Work crews there have been assiduously working on the framing, the flooring, the heating and cooling systems and finally, the broad staircase that will lead guests to the second-floor public facility.

Nedder also said it will be a hub for the surrounding community; there have already been talks with local leaders to use the second-floor state-of-the-art meeting space for their professional gatherings.

However the person who won’t have an office there will be Nedder himself, who at age 77 is retiring for “the seventh or eighth time.” Speaking in late June, Nedder said the Catholic Foundation raised more than $18 million of the $20.2 million cost of the construction, with more solicitations continuing. By the time the building

See FUNDING on page 6
DIOCESAN EVENTS

Charismatic renewal gathering at Sacred Heart
Sacred Heart Church, 601 E. Fort Lowell Road, Aug. 9, 6:30 p.m., Tucson
The Diocese of Tucson Renewal Committee will hold its monthly “Alive in Christ” event with the theme “First Disciple, Queen and Patroness.” All are welcome. For more information, call Gloria (520) 237-7060 or visit tucsonccr.org.

Monastic Experience Weekend at Santa Rita Abbey
Santa Rita Abbey, 14200 E. Fish Canyon Road, Aug. 31-Sept. 3, Sonoita
The Cistercian Sisters are inviting women between the ages of 21 and 40 who are discerning their vocation to the upcoming weekend. Participants will pray, learn, rest and reflect with the contemplative nuns, hear the sisters’ vocation stories and share your own. There is no cost for the weekend. For more information, visit santaritaabbey.org, email sracommty@gmail.com or call (520) 455-5595.

‘Viewing Theology through Science’ at Newman Center
St. Thomas More Newman Center, 1615 E. Second St., Sept. 8-9, Tucson
Thomas Lindell, a professor emeritus of molecular and cellular biology at the University of Arizona, will be offering a two-part lecture as part of the community’s Faith & Science Forum, in the Curry Classroom at the Newman Center. The title of the program is “Viewing Religion/Theology through the Lens of Science.” The first part will be Sept. 8, noon-1:30 p.m., concluding the next day, Sept. 9, 12:20-1:45 p.m. For more information, visit uacatholic.org.

Wedding anniversary Mass set for Oct. 14
St. Augustine Cathedral, 192 S. Stone Ave., Oct. 14, 2:30 p.m., Tucson
Couples celebrating their first, 10th, 25th, 50th, 60th or longer anniversaries are invited to this special annual Mass. Those interested in attending are requested to register by Sept. 14 by sending their name, address, telephone number, parish, email address and special anniversary to the Office of Worship, Diocese of Tucson, PO Box 31, Tucson, AZ, 85702; or fax the information to (520) 838-2584; or email ojames@diocesetucson.org. For more information, call Isabel Madrid, (520) 838-2544, or Ofelia James (520) 838-2545.

PIMA SOUTH VICARIATE

Santa Cruz Knights host golf tourney
El Rio Golf Course, 1400 W. Speedway Blvd., Sept. 29, 7:30 a.m., Tucson
The Santa Cruz Parish’s Knights of Columbus 14139 Father Bach-Brother Angel de Santa Cruz Council will be hosting their 13th Annual Golf Tournament with check-in at 6:30 a.m. Proceeds benefit the Centennial Celebration of the parish in February 2019. The cost is $75 per player for a four-person scramble. For more information, call Bob Valencia at (520) 403-1541.

Bishop emeritus Kicanas wins England Award
Diocesan Communications, Outlook win four national press awards
GREEN BAY, Wis. — Bishop emeritus Gerald F. Kicanas won the prestigious Bishop John England Award for Catholic newspaper publishers, and his Monday Memo won first place in the Best Blog by Religious/Clergy from the Catholic Press Association at the 2018 Catholic Media Conference. A commemorative edition marking the bishop’s 50 years of priesthood won second place for Best Supplement or Special Issue on a Bishop’s Transition.
Communications Director Steffanie Koeneman won second place for Communications Director of the Year and the Catholic Outlook staff won Honorable Mention for Best In-Depth News/Special Reporting, Diocesan Newspaper, for its October 2017 edition on end-of-life issues. Bishop Kicanas received his award during a June 14 lunch at the annual conference. The bishop, who once served on the US Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Communications committee, said it was “a great privilege” to receive the England award and praised the Diocese’s communications office. “They’re the very best.”
The other awards were announced the following day at the conference’s closing dinner. It marked the first time the CPA had recognized diocesan communications efforts since awarding the previous publication, New Vision, a second-place award for General Excellence in 2009.

For current news turn to diocesetucson.org
Father Wocken elected provincial, departs diocese

Salvatorian Father Jeff Wocken, who led Tucson’s Jordan Ministry Team for six years, was elected provincial and has relocated to the community’s ministry headquarters in Milwaukee.

Salvatorian Sister Jane Eschweiler has been named interim director of the ministry which conducts adult formation.

Salvatorian Brother Silas Henderson has joined the Jordan Ministry Team.

Bishop’s Calendar — August 2018

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<td>4</td>
<td>11 a.m., Mass, Deacon Convocation, Most Holy Trinity Parish, Tucson</td>
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<td>2 p.m., Scout Mass, St. Augustine Cathedral, Tucson</td>
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<td>Mass, 100th Anniversary of St. Clare Chapel, Anegam Community, Sif Oidaf District on the Tohono O’odham Nation</td>
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<td>Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Holy Day of Obligation, office closed. 8:15 a.m., Mass, St. John the Evangelist Catholic School, Tucson 6 p.m., Spanish Mass, St. John the Evangelist Church, Tucson</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>11 a.m., Gathering with Western Lieutenancy of the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre, Pastoral Center</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Mass and Annual Convocation for directors of parish Religious Education and Youth ministries, Most Holy Trinity Parish, Tucson</td>
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<td>Ordination and Installation of Bishop-elect Gerald L. Vincke in Diocese of Salina</td>
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is ready to open, the loan on it will be $2 million or less.

Nedder credited Bishop emeritus Gerald F. Kicanas for his diligence in helping with solicitations.

“I tell people that besides being workaholics, Bishop Kicanas and I have two things in common,” he said. “We are both Lebanese and we both have flunked at retirement.”

Turning his attention to the new building, Nedder recites lines he’s likely said hundreds of times since coming out of retirement in 2016 to help with solicitations.

“We don’t see this as just enhancing the Diocese. We see this as enhancing the entire city,” Nedder said of the project.

In its latest rendering, illustrations show Ochoa Street on the north side with brick pavers, to match a terrace being built in front of St. Augustine’s, and a placita that includes the relocated Msgr. Arsenio Carrillo band shell in front of the office center, bordering Church Street on the east side.

Nedder said the hope is to have the brick included on Ochoa Street east of Church Street as further development occurs.

“I think the city’s plan is for Cathedral Square to serve as a gateway between the Tucson Convention Center and the surrounding neighborhood,” said Nedder.

Another feature is the banquet and meeting facility on the second floor, which can be rented to organizations and businesses, drawing people to local hotels and restaurants, he said. While he declined to identify which groups have expressed an interest in renting the facility, Nedder anticipates that interest will continue to grow as the opening date gets closer.

“This is not your typical square-box office building. When you look at this building, you will know it has character. It was designed with the intention of being something really special,” he said.

The completion of the education and conference center concludes the extensive Cathedral Square project begun in 2011. In addition to the center, Cathedral Square includes the renovation of St. Augustine Cathedral, Our Lady’s Chapel, and the Foundation for Senior Living’s renovation of Marist College as a senior community center and housing.

For Nedder, who promised current Tucson Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger that he would continue to work through the end of 2018, it means that, like the building he has worked hard to fund, retirement too is one day closer.

There are still opportunities for targeted donations for naming elements within the facility. Potential donors can email Ernie Nedder at enedder@diocesetucson.org.

Come Celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of LaSalette September 16, 2018

Sunday, September 16
1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Rosary
Confessions
Healing Service
Holy Hour
Sunday Mass
Optional Labyrinth Walk
and Stations of the Cross

Redemptorist Renewal Center
7101 West Picture Rocks Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85743

For more information call the LaSalette Missionaries at 520-797-8838
Deacon Donald J. Nagy

Deacon Donald J. Nagy, 63, of Tucson, died June 26 at Tucson Medical Center. Born Feb. 2, 1955, in Cleveland, to Donald and Elizabeth (Barrett McGuire) Nagy, he attended St. Agnes Catholic School in Mingo Junction, Ohio, and St. Joseph Preparatory Seminary in Vienna, WV.

He studied at St. John Vianney Seminary in Bloomingdale, Ohio, before studying and graduating from the Franciscan University, Steubenville, Ohio. He attended post-graduate studies at St. Francis University in Loreto, PA., and St. Michael College in Toronto, Ontario. After working at the Fred Acosta Job Corps, he earned a master’s in social work from Arizona State University in Tucson. He spent 31 years in psychiatric social work/therapy at the Tucson VA Medical Center. He received numerous Apple Awards from the ASU School of Social Work.

A Third Order Dominican, he was ordained a deacon by Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas on June 15, 2017, in St. Augustine Cathedral and served his home parish of Sts. Peter and Paul, Tucson. He also was a member of the Knights of Columbus and St. Vincent de Paul Society.

A member of the St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Choir, he traveled with them to Italy and Hungary and soloed at the Sistine Chapel.


A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated by Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger July 7 at Sts. Peter and Paul.

Sister Ann Seraphim Schenk, OP

ADRIAN, Mich. - Sister Ann Seraphim Schenk, formerly known as Doris Schenk, died June 24, at the Dominican Life Center. She was 100 and in the 81st year of ministry.

Born in Belleville, Ill., to Henry and Linda (Hoff) Schenk, she graduated from Bishop Muldoon High School in Rockford, Ill., and received her bachelor's degree in mathematics and her master's degree in administration from Siena Heights College in Adrian.

She spent more than 51 years in elementary and music education in Michigan, Illinois and St. Anthony Catholic School, Casa Grande. She became a resident of the Dominican Life Center in 2004.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her brothers, Gene, Floyd and Henry; and her sisters, Marge, Mary, Dorothy (Sister Francis Henry) and Evelyn. She is survived by loving nieces and nephews.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in St. Catherine Chapel June 28, followed by committal in the congregation cemetery.

Memorial gifts may be made to Adrian Dominican Sisters, 1257 East Siena Heights Drive, Adrian, Mich., 49221.

Announcement from the Tribunal Office for the Diocese of Tucson

Case Name: BLOUGH-HERTE; Case Number: 2018-0031M (Diocese of Tucson, Arizona) notice of Annulment Proceeding. Jon E. Herte is hereby notified that Wendi M. Gullion has filed a petition for a declaration of nullity of the marriage contracted by both of you. Please contact the Office of the Tribunal within one month of the date of publication. Anyone who knows the whereabouts of Jon E. Herte is asked to inform the Office of the Tribunal of the Diocese of Tucson as soon as possible at 520-838-2514.
Compassion and advocacy: Pope Francis on migration

Editor’s note: The Catholic Church historically has preached in its social teaching “welcoming the stranger” as it applies to the marginalized and those fleeing violence or abuse in their countries. Following is a look at the instruction of Pope Francis.

By MICHAEL BROWN
Managing Editor

Giuse Nicolini, the mayor of Lampedusa, an Italian island about half the size of Globe, AZ., said she hoped that Pope Francis’ July 8, 2013, visit there would “change history.”

“Europe, with its migration policies, has avoided the problem up until now, pretending not to see the immense tragedy of the voyages of hope across the Mediterranean.”

The pope, she said, “has made the invisible visible, restoring to the migrants the dignity which countries always have denied them.”

Four months later, more than 360 refugees from Africa drowned off Lampedusa’s coast.

Pope Francis visited Lampedusa and preached at an outdoor Mass that had all the markings of the Mediterranean Sea surrounding it.

The Catholic News Service reported: “The Mass was filled with reminders that Lampedusa is now synonymous with dangerous attempts to reach Europe: the altar was built over a small boat; the pastoral staff the pope used was carved from wood recycled from a shipwrecked boat; the lectern was made from old wood as well and had a ship’s wheel mounted on the front; and even the chalice - although lined with silver - was carved from the wood of a wrecked boat.”

The pope began his homily: “Immigrants dying at sea, in boats which were vehicles of hope and became vehicles of death. That is how the headlines put it. When I first heard of this tragedy a few weeks ago, and realized that it happens all too frequently, it has constantly come back to me like a painful thorn in my heart.”

The pope used the Genesis reading on the death of Abel to remind listeners of God’s question to Cain.

“Where is your brother? His blood cries out to me, says the Lord.

This is not a question directed to others; it is a question directed to me, to you, to each of us. These brothers and sisters of ours were trying to escape difficult situations to find some serenity and peace; they were looking for a better place for themselves and their families, for themselves and their families.

How often do such people fail to find understanding, fail to find acceptance, fail to find solidarity. And their cry rises up to God!”

He continued:

“Who is responsible for the blood of these brothers and sisters of ours? Nobody! That is our answer: It isn’t me; I don’t have anything to do with it; it must be someone else, but certainly not me. Yet God is asking each of us: ‘Where is the blood of your brother which cries out to me?’

Today no one in our world feels responsible; we have lost a sense of responsibility for our brothers and sisters.”

Recalling the parable of the Good Samaritan, Pope Francis said that we “have fallen into the hypocrisy of the priest and the Levite... We see our brother half dead on the side of the road, and perhaps we say to ourselves: ‘Poor soul!’, and then go on our way.

“It’s not our responsibility, and with that we feel reassured, assuaged. The culture of comfort, which makes us think only of ourselves, makes us insensitive to the cries of other people, makes us live in soap bubbles which, however lovely, are insubstantial; they offer a fleeting and empty illusion which results in indifference to others; indeed, it even leads to the globalization of indifference. In this globalized world, we have fallen into globalized indifference. We have become used to the suffering of others: It doesn’t affect me; it doesn’t concern me; it’s none of my business!”

The pope continued to hammer away at this theme of globalized indifference.

“Has any one of us wept because of this situation and others like it? Has any one of us grieved for the death of these brothers and sisters? Has any one of us wept for these persons who were on the boat? For the young mothers carrying their babies? For these men who were looking for a means of supporting their families? We are a society which has forgotten how to weep, how to experience compassion - ‘suffering with’ - others. The globalization of indifference has taken from us the ability to weep!”

Citing that this attitude as what led him to celebrate a Mass of penance that day, Pope Francis challenged his listeners: “Let us ask the Lord for the grace to weep over our indifference, to weep over the cruelty of our world, of our own hearts, and of all those who in anonymity make social and economic decisions which open the door to tragic situations like this. Has anyone wept? Today has anyone wept in our world?”

The homily at Lampedusa became

Pope Francis addresses the crowd gathered for Mass in the port of the island of Lampedusa July 8, 2013. The pope called for repentance over treatment of migrants during his visit to the Italian island where massive numbers of Africans have landed in attempts to reach Europe.

CNS photo by L’Osservatore Romano via Reuters
a benchmark for Pope Francis. It set him on a trajectory in which the plight of migrants and refugees were mentioned dozens of times in documents throughout his papacy. The homily at Lampedusa became one in a series of documents that focused on migrants and refugees, progressing into a comprehensive model for response issued in 2018.

In 2016, he announced the creation of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, along with a special Migrants and Refugees section for which he accepted personal oversight.

In 2017, he spoke at the Sixth International Forum on Migration and Peace, in which he introduced the “four verb” theme - “to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate” - to be used when responding to the migrant and refugee crisis.

The pope also talked about the root causes of migration and three duties owed to migrants: justice, civility and solidarity.

In the matter of justice, Pope Francis called for an outright redistribution of goods, with more resources going to poorer nations from which people were migrating.

“We can no longer sustain unacceptable economic inequality, which prevents us from applying the principle of the universal destination of earth’s goods,” he said. “One group of individuals cannot control half of the world’s resources. We cannot allow for persons or entire peoples to have a right only to gather the remaining crumbs.”

On the duty to civility, he cited the United Nation’s 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. “Our commitment to migrants, exiles and refugees is an application of those principles and values of welcome and fraternity that constitute a common patrimony of humanity and wisdom.”

Quoting St. John Paul II’s 1995 World Migration Day address, Pope Francis said “Irregular legal status cannot allow the migrant to lose his dignity, since he is endowed with inalienable rights that can neither be violated nor ignored.”

For solidarity, Pope Francis returned to his Lampedusa homily. “In the face of tragedies that take the lives of so many migrants and refugees – conflicts, persecutions, forms of abuse, violence, death – expressions of empathy and compassion cannot help but spontaneously well up.”

“A duty to solidarity is to counter the throwaway culture and give greater attention to those who are

See FRANCIS on page 10
Pope Paul VI  
March 26, 1967  
*Populorum Progressio* ("On the Development of Peoples")  
Emigrant workers should also be given a warm welcome. Their living conditions are often inhuman, and they must scrimp on their earnings in order to send help to their families, who have remained behind in their native land in poverty. (69)

St. John Paul II  
Sept. 8, 1989  
Lenten message 1990  
It is a matter of guaranteeing to refugees the right to establish a family or to be reunited with their families; to have a stable, dignified occupation and a just wage; to live in dwellings fit for human beings; (and) to receive adequate health care. (3)
national security or the high cost of welcoming new arrivals, and thus demeaning the human dignity due to all as sons and daughters of God. Those who, for what may be political reasons, foment fear of migrants instead of building peace, are sowing violence, racial discrimination and xenophobia, which are matters of great concern for all those concerned for the safety of every human being. All indicators available to the international community suggest that global migration will continue for the future. Some consider this a threat.

For my part, I ask you to view it with confidence as an opportunity to build peace," he said.

Migrants and refugees “do not arrive empty-handed. They bring their courage, skills, energy and aspirations, as well as the treasures of their own cultures; and in this way, they enrich the lives of the nations that receive them.”

Pope Francis specifically mentioned the UN effort on the two global compacts. “They need to be inspired by compassion, foresight and courage, so as to take advantage of every opportunity to advance the peace-building process. Only in this way can the realism required of international politics avoid surrendering to cynicism and to the globalization of indifference,” he said.

Thirteen days later, Pope Francis celebrated Mass for 104th World Day for Migrants and Refugees. In a message released the previous August, the pope recalled how deeply his visit to Lampedusa influenced him and his pontificate. “Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age,” Pope Francis wrote. “This is a great responsibility that the church intends to share with all believers and men and women of goodwill, who are called to respond to the many challenges of contemporary migration with generosity, promptness, wisdom and foresight, each according to their own abilities.”

He reminded readers again of the four verbs – welcome, protect, promote and integrate.

Citing Pope Benedict XVI, Francis said that acknowledging the human dignity inherent in each migrant or refugee “obliges us to always prioritize (their) personal safety over national security.”

Again quoting Pope Benedict, Pope Francis called migrants and refugees “a true resource for the communities that welcome them. This is why I hope that in countries of arrival, migrants may be offered freedom of movement, work opportunities and access to means of communication out of respect for their dignity.”

Underage minors should never be held in detention and have access to primary and secondary school education. “Equally, when they come of age they must be guaranteed the right to remain and to enjoy the possibility of continuing their studies,” the pope wrote.

The pope also stated that migrants and refugees are entitled to social and professional opportunities, “guaranteeing for all - including those seeking asylum - the possibility of employment, language instruction and active citizenship, together with sufficient information provided in their mother tongue.”

Migrant and refugee integration must include a path to citizenship “free of financial or linguistic requirements, and by offering the possibility of special legalization to migrants who can claim a long period of residence in the country of arrival,” the pope wrote. “The Church is ready to commit herself to realizing all the initiatives proposed above. Yet in order to achieve the desired outcome, the contribution of political communities and civil societies is indispensable, each according to their own responsibilities.”

For a copy of resources mentioned in this story, go to diocesetucson.org.

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1991

May 1, 1991

*Centesimus Annus* (“On the 100th Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*”)

In the countries of the West, different forms of poverty are being experienced by groups which live on the margins of society, by the elderly and the sick, by the victims of consumerism, and even more immediately by so many refugees and migrants. (57)

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1995

March 25, 1995

*Evangelium Vitae* (“The Gospel of Life”)

We cannot but think of today’s tendency for people to refuse to accept responsibility for their brothers and sisters. Symptoms of this trend include the lack of solidarity towards society’s weakest members - such as the elderly, the infirm, immigrants, children - and the indifference frequently found in relations between the world’s peoples even when basic values...are involved. (8)
Charities president calls migrants’ suffering ‘unimaginable’

A visit to the international border reveals families in pain and resilience

By MICHAEL BROWN
Managing Editor

“The suffering they are going through is unimaginable,” said Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president of Catholic Charities USA, after listening to stories from families waiting to apply for asylum at the international border at Nogales, Sonora, Mexico.

Sister Markham, who recently completed a tour of a detention facility for children in McAllen, Texas, said she wanted to visit Nogales to get the whole story behind the current public debate over immigration.

“Their stories,” she said, pausing to compose herself. “They are running for their lives. Literally, they left at gunpoint.”

She was joined July 11 at the Nogales Port of Entry by Jesuit Father Sean Carroll, executive director of the Kino Border Initiative, an organization that assists mostly families who have been sent back to Mexico following deportation proceedings. With the large influx of refugees seeking to enter the US, Father Carroll, along with other religious-based and nonprofit agencies in Nogales, AZ, have set up temporary shelters and a check-in system for families seeking to enter the US and to apply for asylum.

Were it not for those shelters, families would have to wait in line at the port of entry in the humidity and 100+ degree heat for about two weeks, said Father Carroll.

The first family Sister Markham met included 11 members, four of whom were young children. They left the Mexican state of Guerrero, one of the poorest and least safe areas in the country.

Father Carroll translated their story, explaining how their lives had been threatened by a local political party during the recent presidential election. At the border, their biggest fear is that the father and uncle would be detained, the children taken from them, and the women deported. Knowing that risk, they waited anyway because “they were threatened with death,” in the hometown, Sister Markham said.

While such conditions might easily fall into the classic example of political asylum, said Peg Harmon, executive director of Catholic Community Services in the Diocese of Tucson and who has served as a CCUSA board member. She acknowledged that under the current vetting system, there were no guarantees.

Another family – two women and two young children – also spoke to Sister Markham. One woman held a young girl who appeared to be no older than nine, crying inconsolably, close to her. The mother, also from Guerrero, spoke of her husband being taken and her daughter’s life threatened. She was with another woman, with a son about same age. They had tried to cross into the US in January but were stopped and deported in February. Under current US policy, they would not be eligible

Outlook photo by Michael Brown

Jesuit Father Sean Carroll, executive director of the Kino Border Initiative, joined CCUSA President Dominican Sister Donna Markham and Vice President for Communications Patricia Cole at the port of entry speaking to families at Nogales Sonora July 11.
to enter the country because of the previous attempt, but have no other place to go.

Sister Maria Engracia Robles Robles, a Missionary Sister of the Eucharist, works at a comedor – a combined soup kitchen and food pantry – run by KBI in Nogales, Sonora. As she listened to the families’ stories, she used her cell phone to put their names on the list of applicants waiting to file for asylum.

Several people passing the families as they entered the US from Mexico offered them candy and money. Local charities also supplied blankets and water bottles, kept in large coolers, at the border station.

Following her meeting with the families, Sister Markham said there were two things she hoped to accomplish when she returns to national headquarters outside Washington.

“We need to call all believers to prayer, and we have to educate people who don’t have the opportunity to come here,” she said.

Sister Markham said that visiting Nogales was a completely different experience from her trip to visit the juveniles held in Texas. In McAllen, “they are already going through the process; there the process is very slow.”

“Here, it is very painful to hear the stories, to know how people have suffered to get this far, especially the children,” she said. “It’s emotionally overwhelming. It’s more painful than I imagined.”

The next day, Sister Markham was joined by Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger at Casa Alitas, a family shelter run by CCS in Tucson. Casa Alitas receives families in transition from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, after being processed from the border and immigration court.

Early on July 12, there were two families preparing to leave Casa Alitas and another four being placed there. When the bishop and Sister Markham arrived, Olga, a Honduran refugee, was preparing to leave with her two children to board a bus for a three-day trip to stay with family in Baltimore.

A few hours later, Valentia, a Mexican native, was leaving with her two children for her own cross-country trip to a community in New Jersey.

The Casa staff expected three families from Brazil and one from Mexico to come from ICE by mid-morning.

Sister Markham visited the home the night before and had a chance to spend some time with the departing families. During her morning visit, she gave hugs and smiles to the familiar faces, and later, interviews with local media who arrived to document the visit.

“Our goal is to do everything we can to see that these families are treated with dignity,” she told one reporter.

A glance around the now crowded living area revealed weary women and children, some of whom looked ready for a nap. Some needed clothing, which was available from a supply room. The smell of a hot breakfast began to waft out of the kitchen where signs and wipe boards and children’s drawings create a homely atmosphere.

Bishop Weisenburger noted that “20 percent of the Gospels is about taking care of the poor and needy.”

Taking care of immigrants and refugees is important for those who want “to really live the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to call ourselves Christian.”

As she began to describe her experience from the day before, Sister Markham again paused to fight back tears after talking about “the babies sitting at the border in the heat.”

The van carrying the new arrivals from ICE came early and new families entered the home. Although most of the staff speaks Spanish, none speak Portuguese, so staff called a contracted interpreter service to translate for the newcomers about where they are and what to expect.

The families also learned about the special visitors there that day.

Staff learned that none of the families knew where they were going when they were boarding the van from their previous detention center. All the adults had ankle bracelets equipped with GPS locating ability to help ICE track their locations. One family had another member held in detention but didn’t know the person’s status or location. All the members of the Brazilian families had passports, which they were able to retain.

Diego Peña Lopez is the site manager for the house. He helps the families get settled and assists in the initial intake form, which includes information about extended family and contact numbers for reuniting them with the newly arrived and those still housed in detention centers elsewhere.

The information he gleans from the temporary residents includes medical conditions that need attention and other special needs.

Once the intake forms are completed, the families are directed to call loved ones to let them know they are safe. For those who are fleeing domestic violence, it’s important to let their next point of contact know that they are safe and to arrange travel plans, he said.

Language is more of a problem, he said, because ICE issues all their documents in English, and even the bus tickets are in English and difficult to read. Volunteers who drive the families to the station explain how the ticket works and highlights when they need to transfer to a different bus.

Before leaving to catch her flight back east, Sister Markham showered praise upon the more than half dozen workers and volunteers gathered at Casa Alitas as the new families arrived. “I am just amazed at the staff and the level of attention they give to the families here.”
Know both the Mary of Scripture and the Mary of Devotions

There’s an axiom that says: Roman Catholics tend to adore Mary while Protestants and Evangelicals tend to ignore Mary. Neither is ideal. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, has, in effect, two histories within Christian tradition. We have the Mary of Scripture and we have the Mary of Devotions, and both offer something special for our Christian journey.

The Mary of Devotions is the more well-known, though mostly within Roman Catholic circles. This is the Mary invoked in the rosary, the Mary of popular shrines, the Sorrowful Mother of our litanies, the Mother with the soft heart through whom we can get the ear of God, the Mary of purity and chastity, the Mother who understands human suffering, the Mother who can soften the hearts of murderers, and the Mother we can always turn to.

This Mary is pre-eminently the Mother of the poor. Theologian and Jesuit Father Karl Rahner once pointed out that when you look at all the apparitions of Mary that have been officially approved by the Church, you will notice that she has always appeared to a poor person - a child, an illiterate peasant, a group of children or someone similar without social standing. She’s never appeared to a theologian in his study, to a pope or to a millionaire banker. She’s always been the person to whom the poor look. Marian devotion is a mysticism of the poor.

We see this, for example, very powerfully in the effect that Our Lady of Guadalupe has had on much of Latin America. In all of the Americas, most of the indigenous peoples are now Christian. However, in North America, while most of the indigenous peoples are Christian, Christianity itself is not seen as a native religion, but rather as a religion brought to the native peoples from elsewhere. In Latin America, in every place where Our Lady of Guadalupe is popular, Christianity is seen to be a native religion.

Piety and devotions also run the risk of theological sloppiness and unhealthy sentimentalism. That’s the case too with the Mary of Devotions. We’ve tended to elevate Mary to divine status (which is simply wrong) and we have far too often encrusted her in so much piety that she, the Mary of Devotions, cannot possibly be the same person who wrote the Magnificat. The Mary of Devotions is often so enshrined in piety, over-simplicity and asexuality that she needs to be protected from human complexity. Still, the Mary of Devotions offers us a lot for our spiritual journey.

Much more ignored is the Mary of Scripture and the role the various Gospels assign to her. In the Synoptic Gospels, Mary is presented as a model of discipleship. More simply, she’s shown to us as the one person who gets it right from the beginning. However, that isn’t immediately evident. On the surface, the opposite sometimes seems to be the case. For example, on several occasions, as Jesus is speaking to a crowd, He interrupts and told that His mother and His family are outside wanting to speak to Him. His response: “Who are my mother and who are my brothers and sisters? It’s those who hear the word of God and keep it.” In saying this, Jesus isn’t distancing His mother from Himself and His message; in fact, quite the opposite.

Before this incident is recorded in the Gospels, the evangelists have been very careful to point out that Mary was the first person to hear the word of God and keep it. What happens here is that Jesus singles out His mother for her faith, not for her biography. In the Synoptic Gospels, Mary is the paradigm of discipleship. She’s the first to hear the word of God and keep it.

John’s Gospel gives her a different role. Here she’s not the paradigm of discipleship (a role John gives to the Beloved Disciple and to Mary Magdala) but is presented as Eve, the mother of humanity, and the mother of each of us. Interestingly, John never gives us Mary’s name, in his Gospel she is always referred to as “the Mother of Jesus.” In this role, she does two things: First, she gives voice to human finitude, as she does at the wedding feast of Cana when she tells her son (who is always divine in John’s Gospel) that “they have no wine”. In John’s Gospel, this is not just a conversation between Mary and Jesus; but also a conversation between the Mother of Humanity and God. Second, as Eve, as universal mother, and as our mother, she stands in helpless under human pain and within human pain when she stands under the cross. In this, she shows herself as universal mother and as an example of how injustice must be handled; namely, by standing within it in a way that does not replicate its hatred and violence but gives it back in kind.

Mary offers us a wonderful example, not to be adored or ignored.

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Jesus is the living bread that feeds us for our work

that feeds us for our work

other. Jesus demonstrates throughout His life what that looks like and what it sounds like, and He tells His disciples that they must do the same. He gives us an example; He gives us Himself. He states that it is He, Himself, who is the bread which we are to eat.

We may have heard the rest of the story many times, and it still has power to bring us up short. Hearing the truth, many find it to be too much. Watching what Jesus does, they choose not to see.

There are at least two ways of deceiving ourselves: we can believe what is not true, or we cannot believe what is true. We put our faith in Jesus; we commit ourselves to the truth that He Himself comes to us in the form bread and wine. We must believe the whole of the truth that He challenges us with, that we are to do the same for one another. He shows us that the only way to share bread - to be bread - is to break it.

The only way to share wine, to share our life, is to pour it out. We share in the supper of the Lord when we come, and we share it as well when we leave and serve in the world.
Fourth in a 10-part series.
By CACKIE UPCHURCH
Director of Little Rock Scripture Study

When we meet someone at a social event, one of the first questions we ask is usually “What do you do?” or “Where do you work?” Sometimes these kinds of conversations feel shallow. We know that our occupations do not define us. There is so much more to each of us than “what we do” for a living.

While a party or a conference may not be the place to explore the deeper questions, we do long to know who we are in a meaningful way, to be known for our deeper identity and even to know where we are going. These longings get to the heart of what it means to be human, and what it means to be the particular human that each of us is.

As Christians, we are no different than anyone else in our search for meaning and personal identity and destiny. However, as Christians, we have at our disposal the guiding testimony of the Scriptures. It is within these sacred stories and teachings that we begin to uncover who we are and where we are bound.

Our Bible opens with two accounts of creation. The writers offer testimony to their encounter with the God of creation who fashioned the earth and all that is in it. These accounts do not intend to describe exactly when or how we came into being as much as they testify to the reality of God’s creative work in the world.

A constant refrain throughout the first chapter of Genesis is “God saw that it was good.” The world was teeming with life, crowned by the creation of human beings, made in God’s image (Gn 1:27). Being made in God’s image means that we have within us a share or spark of divinity, and that wherever we go, we take God with us.

The psalmist reflects on God’s loving and creative acts with awe and wonder: “When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honor” (Ps 8:3-5).

If our identity is rooted in this understanding of a God who lovingly fashioned us to bear the divine presence in our world, we recognize within ourselves a sense of our remarkable dignity.

Our identity is also tied to a dynamic relationship with the God who knows and loves us. Again, the words of a psalm capture some of this intimate knowing: “You formed me in my inmost being; you knit me in my mother’s womb. I praise you, because I am wonderfully made ... My very self you know” (Ps 139:13-14). Our Creator knows us best. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he reminded them of God’s words, “I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor 6:18, referencing 2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:7; Isa 43:6 and Jer 31:9).

We are assured that followers of Jesus are children of God, intimately joined to God who allows us to call him “Abba, Father” (see Jn 1:12; Rm 8:14-15; Gal 4:7). A deep sense of belonging shapes our identity and gives us the grace to accept our high calling.

Throughout the Bible, we find stories of God’s call in the lives of ordinary people who then did extraordinary things in God’s name. Moses went from being a shepherd on the run to a liberating force for those enslaved in Egypt. The prophets were farmers and herders and teachers who became God’s mouthpiece demanding justice and announcing mercy. Esther was a Jewish woman married off to a Persian ruler who found herself in the position to save her people from slaughter. Mary was a young maiden whose consent to God’s plan led to the birth of God’s Son. Paul was an observant Jew who discovered in Jesus the courage to die to self and live for Christ.

Our stories are not yet written in full, but our identity is established and our destiny is secure. We can rest assured that, aware of our dignity and bound to a loving God, we will discover our calling and grow in our ability to answer with confidence the questions: “Who am I? What is my destiny?”

Study Questions

In what circumstances have you found yourself grasping for a greater sense of your personal identity and value?

How does the proclamation from Genesis 1:27 that we are made in God’s very image strike you? Is it reassuring? Confusing? Does it give you a sense of worth?

Do you feel empowered?

In baptism, we are each identified and claimed as a child of God, an identity that we grow into over the course of our lives. What people or events have helped you to mature in your understanding of being a daughter or son of God? What unique gifts have you been given as part of God’s family?

Where in our world (or within your daily relationships) do you see evidence of the need for understanding who we are and whose we are?

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La Palabra de Dios revela nuestra identidad y nuestro destino

Este es el 4º artículo de una serie de diez.
Por CACKIE UPCHURCH
Directora del Estudio Bíblico de Little Rock

Cuando nos encontramos con alguien en una reunión social, una de las primeras preguntas que solemos hacer es normalmente, “¿A qué te dedicas?” o “¿Dónde trabajas?” A veces estas clases de conversaciones nos podrían parecer algo huecas. Sabemos que nuestras ocupaciones no nos definen. Hay mucho más en nosotros que aquello con lo que “nos ganamos la vida.”

Aunque una fiesta o una conferencia no sea el lugar de explorar preguntas más profundas, deseamos saber quiénes somos de manera significativa, ser conocidos por nuestra identidad más profunda, e incluso saber hacia dónde nos dirigimos. Éstas aspiraciones van al núcleo de lo que significa ser humanos, de lo que significa ser el ser humano concreto que somos cada uno de nosotros.

Como cristianos, no somos diferentes a los demás en nuestra búsqueda de sentido y de identidad y destino personal. Pero, como cristianos, tenemos a nuestra disposición el testimonio guía de las Escrituras. Es dentro de estas sagradas historias y enseñanzas donde empezamos a desvelar quiénes somos y hacia dónde vamos.

Nuestra Biblia comienza con dos relatos de la creación. Los escritores ofrecen testimonio de su encuentro con el Dios de la creación que modeló la tierra misma y todo lo que hay en ella. Estos relatos no pretenden tanto describir exactamente cuándo o cómo llegamos a tener ser, cuando dar testimonio de la realidad de la obra creadora de Dios en el mundo. Un espirituano constante en todo el primer capítulo del Génesis es: “Dios vio que era bueno.” El mundo bullía de vida, coronado con la creación de seres humanos, hechos a imagen del propio Dios (Gn 1,27). Estar hecho a imagen de Dios significa que tenemos dentro una participación o chispa de divinidad y que, a dondequiera que vayamos, llevamos a Dios con nosotros.

El salmista reflexiona sobre la obra amorosa y creativa de Dios con sorpresa y maravilla: “Cuando contemplo el cielo, obra de tus dedos, la luna y las estrellas que has creado, ¿qué es el hombre para que te acuerdes de él, el ser humano para darle poder? Los hiciste poco menores que los ángeles, los coronaste de Gloria y majestad” (Sal 8,3-5). Si nuestra identidad está enraizada en esta comprensión de un Dios que nos modeló con amor para ser portadores de la presencia divina en nuestro mundo, reconocemos dentro de nosotros un sentido de nuestra notable dignidad.

Nuestra identidad también está ligada a una relación dinámica con el Dios que nos conoce y que nos ama. De nuevo, las palabras de un salmo captan algo de este íntimo conocimiento: “Me formaste en lo profundo de mi ser; me entretejiste en las entrañas de mi madre. Te alabo porque fui creado portentosamente … Conoces todo mi ser” (Sal 139,13-14). Nuestro Creador nos conoce mejor que nadie.

Cuando Pablo les escribió a los corintios, les recordó las palabras de Dios: “Seré para ustedes un padre, y ustedes serán mis hijos e hijas, dice el Señor, el Todopoderoso” (2 Cor 6,18, citando a 2 Sam 7,14; Salmo 2,7; Isa 43,6 y Jer 31,9). Nos asegura que los seguidores de Jesús son hijos de Dios, íntimamente unidos al Dios que nos permite llamarle, “Abba, Padre” (ver Juan 1,12; Rom 8,14-15; Gál 4,7). Un profundo sentido de pertenencia moldea nuestra identidad y nos da la gracia de aceptar nuestra alta llamada.

En toda la Biblia encontramos historias de la llamada de Dios en las vidas de personas Corrientes que luego hicieron cosas extraordinarias en el nombre de Dios. Moisés pasó de ser pastor en fuga a ser una fuerza liberadora para los esclavizados en Egipto. Los profetas eran granjeros y pastores y maestros que se convirtieron en portavoces de Dios exigiendo justiciar y proclamando la misericordia. Ester era una mujer judía casada con un gobernante persa que se encontró en posición de salvar a su pueblo de una matanza. María era una joven doncella cuyo consentimiento al plan de Dios abrió paso al nacimiento del Hijo de Dios. Pablo era un judío observante que descubrió en Jesús el coraje de morir a sí mismo y vivir para Cristo.

Nuestras historias todavía no están completamente escritas, pero nuestra identidad está establecida y nuestro destino es Seguro. Podemos estar tranquilos de que, conscientes de nuestra dignidad y ligados a un Dios de amor, descubriremos nuestra llamada y creceremos en nuestra capacidad de contestar con confianza a las preguntas: “¿Quién soy?” “¿Cuál es mi destino?”

¿En qué circunstancias te has encontrado buscando un mayor sentido de tu identidad y valor personal?

¿Cómo te suena la proclamación del Génesis 1,27, de que estamos hechos a imagen y semejanza de Dios? ¿Es reconfortante? ¿Confusa? ¿Te da un sentido de dignidad?

En el Bautismo, cada uno de nosotros somos identificados y reclamados como hijos de Dios, una identidad en la que crecemos en el curso de nuestras vidas. ¿Qué personas o acontecimientos te han ayudado a madurar en tu comprensión de ser hijo o hija de Dios?

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Compasión y acción: El papa Francisco y la migración

Por MICHAEL BROWN
Director Editorial

Giusi Nicolini, alcaldesa de Lampedusa, una pequeña isla italiana que por su extensión es alrededor de la mitad de globe, Az., dijo que pensaba que la visita del papa Francisco el 8 de julio de 2013 “cambiaría la historia”.

Europa, con sus políticas migratorias, ha eludido el problema hasta ahora, como si no viera la inmensa tragedia de los viajes de la esperanza a través del Mediterráneo. El papa, decía ella, ha hecho visibles a los invisibles, devolviendo a los migrantes la dignidad que los países siempre les han negado.

Cuatro meses después, más de 360 refugiados procedentes de África perecieron ahogados en el mar cerca de la costa de Lampedusa. El papa visitó la isla y celebró una Misa al aire libre donde predicó rodeado de símbolos de las travesías marítimas.

La agencia de noticias Catholic News Service reportó: En la Misa había varios recordatorios de que Lampedusa hoy es sinónimo de los peligrosos intentos de llegar a Europa: el altar había sido armado sobre un pequeño bote; el báculo pastoral que el papa usó fue tallado en madera de una barca naufragada; el atril, también hecho de madera de una nave, tenía al frente el timón de un barco; y hasta el cáliz –si bien el interior estaba recubierto de plata– estaba hecho con madera de un naufragio.

El papa comenzó su homilía así: Inmigrantes muertos en el mar, por esas barcas que, en lugar de haber sido una vía de esperanza, han sido una vía de muerte. Así decía el titular del periódico. Desde que, hace algunas semanas, supe esta noticia, desgraciadamente tantas veces repetida, mi pensamiento ha vuelto sobre ella continuamente, como a una espina en el corazón que causa dolor.

El papa usó la lectura del Génesis sobre la muerte de Abel para recordar a los escuchas la pregunta que Dios le hizo a Caín: “¿Dónde está tu hermano?” La voz de su sangre grita hasta mí, dice Dios. Ésta no es una pregunta dirigida a otros, es una pregunta dirigida a mí, a ti, a cada uno de nosotros. Esos hermanos y hermanas nuestras intentaban salir de situaciones difíciles para encontrar un poco de serenidad y de paz; buscaban un puesto mejor para ellos y para sus familias, pero han encontrado la muerte.

Y continuó: “¿Quién es responsable de la sangre de estos hermanos y hermanas nuestras? ¡Ninguno! Todos respondemos igual: no he sido yo, yo no tengo nada que ver, serán otros ciertamente, yo no. Pero Dios pregunta a cada uno de nosotros: “¿Dónde está la sangre de tu hermano cuyo grito llega hasta mí?”

Hoy nadie en el mundo se siente responsable de esto; hemos perdido el sentido de la responsabilidad fraterna; hemos caído en la actitud hipócrita del sacerdote y el servidor del altar, de los que hablaba Jesús en la parábola del Buen Samaritano: vemos al hermano medio muerto al borde del camino, quizás pensamos “pobrecito”, y seguimos nuestro camino.

No nos compete y con eso nos quedamos tranquilos, nos sentimos en paz. La cultura del bienestar, que nos lleva a pensar en nosotros mismos, nos hace insensibles al grito de los otros, nos hace vivir en pompas de jabón, que son bonitas, pero no son nada, son la ilusión de lo fútil, de lo provisional, que lleva a la indiferencia hacia los otros, o mejor, lleva a la globalización de la indiferencia. En este mundo de la globalización, hemos caído en la globalización de la indiferencia. ¡Nos hemos acostumbrado al sufrimiento del otro: no tiene que ver con nosotros, no nos importa, no nos concierne!.

Y el papa insistió en el tema de la globalización de la indiferencia. “¿Quién de nosotros ha llorado por este hecho y por hechos como éste? ¿Quién ha llorado por la muerte de estos hermanos y hermanas? ¿Quién ha llorado por esas personas que iban en la barca? ¿Por las madres jóvenes que llevaban a sus hijos? ¿Por esos hombres que deseaban algo para mantener a sus propias familias? Somos una sociedad que ha olvidado la experiencia de llorar, de “sufrir con”: ¡la globalización de la indiferencia nos ha quitado la capacidad de llorar! Diciendo que esta actitud es lo que lo llevó a celebrar una liturgia de penitencia ese día, el papa Francisco instó a sus escuchas: Pidamos al Señor la gracia de llorar por nuestra indiferencia, de llorar por la crueldad que hay en el...
mundo, en nosotros, también en aquellos que en el anonimato toman decisiones socioeconómicas que hacen posibles dramas como éste. ¿Quién ha llorado? ¿Quién ha llorado hoy en el mundo? La homilía de Lampedusa se convirtió en un punto de referencia para el papa Francisco. Lo colocó en una trayectoria en la cual el drama de los migrantes y los refugiados se ha mencionado decenas de veces en los documentos de su pontificado. La homilía de Lampedusa ha sido uno de una serie de documentos enfocados en los migrantes y los refugiados que fue generando el modelo para la respuesta.

En 2016, el papa anunció la creación del Dicasterio para el Servicio del Desarrollo Humano Integral, con una sección especial para los migrantes y los refugiados, bajo su supervisión. En 2017, ante el VI Foro Internacional sobre Migraciones y Paz, presentó una respuesta a la crisis de migrantes y refugiados que estaría articulada en cuatro verbos –acoger, proteger, promover e integrar.

Tres deberes

El papa habló sobre las raíces de la migración y sobre tres deberes para con los migrantes: justicia, civilidad y solidaridad. En cuanto a la justicia, el papa hizo un llamado a la redistribución directa de los bienes, para que las naciones más pobres, de donde la gente emigra, reciban más recursos. Ya no son sostenibles las inaceptables desigualdades económicas que impiden poner en práctica el principio del destino universal de los bienes de la tierra, dijo. Un pequeño grupo de individuos no puede controlar la mitad de los recursos mundiales. Pueblos enteros y personas no pueden tener solamente el derecho de recoger las migajas.

Hablando sobre el deber de la civilidad, mencionó la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas de 1948. Nuestro compromiso a favor de los migrantes, los refugiados y las personas desplazadas es una aplicación de los principios y valores de la hospitalidad y la fraternidad que constituyen un patrimonio común de humanidad y sabiduría. Citando el mensaje de San Juan Pablo II para la Jornada Mundial de las Migraciones de 1995, el papa Francisco dijo: la condición de irregularidad legal no permite menoscabar la dignidad del emigrante, el cual tiene derechos inalienables, que no pueden violarse ni desconocerse.

Para el principio de solidaridad el papa volvió a su homilía de Lampedusa. Frente a las tragedias que “marcan con fuego” la vida de muchos inmigrantes y refugiados –guerras, persecuciones, abusos, violencia y muerte– no pueden menos que brotar sentimientos espontáneos de empatía y compasión. Es deber de solidaridad combatir la cultura del descarte y conceder más atención a los débiles, los pobres y los vulnerables, dijo.

Cuatro piedras angulares

En 2016 la ONU aprobó la Declaración de Nueva York para los Refugiados y los Migrantes en respuesta a la continua crisis de migración que se vive en todo el mundo. Ésta incluía un compromiso de crear cuatro pactos mundiales sobre la migración y los refugiados para fines de 2018, un plan que cuenta con el respaldo pleno del papa Francisco.

Estados Unidos inicialmente firmó la declaración, pero el año pasado, bajo el presidente Donald Trump, se retiró del plan. En anticipación al desarrollo de los pactos, el papa dedicó el mensaje de la 51a Jornada Mundial de la Paz en 2018 a: “Migrantes y refugiados: hombres y mujeres que buscan la paz”. Además, mediante la oficina para migrantes y refugiados, emitió dos documentos. En uno de ellos presentó 20 planes de acción pastoral, y en el otro, 20 para los pactos universales.

En su mensaje del día de Año Nuevo, el papa Francisco comenzó recordándole a los escuchas que había 250 millones de migrantes en el mundo; 22,5 millones de ellos, refugiados. Acoger al otro exige un compromiso concreto, una cadena de ayuda y de generosidad, una atención vigilante y comprensiva, la gestión responsable de nuevas y complejas situaciones que, en ocasiones, se añaden a los numerosos problemas ya existentes, así como a unos recursos que siempre son limitados. El ejercicio de la virtud de la prudencia es necesario para que los gobernantes sepan acoger, promover, proteger e integrar, estableciendo medidas prácticas que “respetando el correcto orden de los valores, ofrezcan al ciudadano la oportunidad de ser parte de la nueva sociedad”, dijo, citando la encíclica Pacem in Terris de San Juan XXIII, de 1963.

El papa Francisco dijo que todos los migrantes y refugiados deben ser tratados de la misma manera, ya sea que lleguen por conducto legal o no. La mayoría emigra siguiendo un procedimiento regulado, mientras que otros se ven forzados a tomar otras vías sobre todo a causa de la desesperación, cuando su patria no les ofrece seguridad y oportunidades, y toda vía legal parece imposible, bloqueada o demasiado lenta.

Les pidió a los residentes y líderes de los países adonde llegan migrantes y refugiados que eviten el temor y la intolerancia.

En muchos países de destino se ha difundido ampliamente una retórica que enfatiza los riesgos para la seguridad nacional o el coste de la acogida de los que llegan, despreciable así la dignidad humana que se les ha de reconocer a todos, en cuanto que son hijos e hijas de...
Dios. Los que fomentan el miedo hacia los migrantes, en ocasiones con fines políticos, en lugar de construir la paz, siembran violencia, discriminación racial y xenofobia, que son fuente de gran preocupación para todos aquellos que se toman en serio la protección de cada ser humano. Todos los datos de que dispone la comunidad internacional indican que las migraciones globales seguirán marcando nuestro futuro. Algunos las consideran una amenaza. Los invito, al contrario, a contemplarlas con una mirada llena de confianza, como una oportunidad para construir un futuro de paz, dijo.

Los migrantes y refugiados “no llegan con las manos vacías: traen consigo la riqueza de su valentía, su capacidad, sus energías y sus aspiraciones, y por supuesto los tesoros de su propia cultura, enriqueciendo así la vida de las naciones que los acogen”.

El papa Francisco mencionó específicamente los dos pactos internacionales de la ONU. Es importante que estén inspirados por la compasión, la visión de futuro y la valentía, con el fin de aprovechar cualquier ocasión que permita avanzar en la construcción de la paz. Solo así, el necesario realismo de la política internacional no se verá derrotado por el cinismo y la globalización de la indiferencia, dijo.

Trece días después, el papa Francisco celebró Misa para la 104a Jornada Mundial del Migrante y del Refugiado. En un mensaje difundido anticipadamente en agosto, el papa recordó el profundo efecto que su visita a Lampedusa había tenido en él y en su pontificado.

Cada forastero que llama a nuestra puerta es una ocasión de encuentro con Jesucristo, que se identifica con el extranjero acogido o rechazado en cualquier época de la historia, escribió el papa. Es una gran responsabilidad que la Iglesia quiere compartir con todos los creyentes y con todos los hombres y mujeres de buena voluntad, que están llamados a responder con generosidad, diligencia, sabiduría y amplitud de miras, cada uno según sus posibilidades.

Volvió a recordar a los lectores los cuatro verbos: acoger, proteger, promover e integrar. Citando al papa Benedicto XVI, Francisco dijo que reconocer la dignidad humana inherente en cada migrante y refugiado nos obliga a priorizar siempre su seguridad personal por encima de la seguridad nacional” y, nuevamente citando a Benedicto, el papa hizo referencia a migrantes y refugiados como “un verdadero recurso para las comunidades que los acogen. Por tanto, espero que, en el respeto a su dignidad, les sea concedida la libertad de movimiento en los países de acogida, la posibilidad de trabajar y el acceso a medios de telecomunicación.

En cuanto a los menores, es preciso evitarles cualquier forma de detención y asegurarles el acceso regular a la educación primaria y secundaria. Igualmente, es necesario garantizarles la permanencia regular al cumplir la mayoría de edad y la posibilidad de continuar sus estudios, escribió el papa.

El papa también señaló que los migrantes y refugiados tienen derecho a la inserción socio-laboral, garantizando a todos, incluidos los que solicitan asilo, la posibilidad de trabajar, cursos formativos lingüísticos y de ciudadanía activa, como también una información adecuada en sus propias lenguas.

La integración de migrantes y refugiados debe incluir el ofrecimiento de la ciudadanía desligada de los requisitos económicos y lingüísticos y de vías de regularización extraordinaria a los emigrantes que puedan demostrar una larga permanencia en el país, continuó el papa.

La Iglesia está dispuesta a comprometerse en primera persona para que se lleven a cabo todas las iniciativas que se han propuesto más arriba. Sin embargo, para obtener los resultados esperados es imprescindible la contribución de la comunidad política y de la sociedad civil, cada uno según sus propias responsabilidades.

¿Quién es responsable de la sangre de estos hermanos y hermanas nuestras?”
-Papa Francisco
Fathers Quirk and Gonzalez begin ministry

Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger ordained Deacons Thomas Quirk and John Gonzalez to the priesthood in St. Augustine Cathedral June 2. Below the two lay prostrate as part of the rite. At right, Fathers Quirk and Gonzalez impose hands upon Bishop Weisenburger and Bishop emeritus Gerald F. Kicanas as a blessing.

**Congratulations!**

Congrats, Fr. Marcel Emeh, SDS, and Fr. John Gonzales.

The ordinations of Fr. Marcel Emeh, SDS, and Fr. John Gonzales are proof that God calls at any age.

Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology is a leading Catholic seminary with programs especially designed for men over 30, because, as Fr. Marcel Emeh, SDS, and Fr. John Gonzales demonstrate, older men have a valuable perspective that makes them great priests.

Father John Kartje and the entire community of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary send heartfelt congratulations, prayers and best wishes to Father Tom Quirk on his ordination as a priest for the Diocese of Tucson. May God bless you as you begin your priestly ministry.