Migration, the World, and the Church: Transcending Citizenship with Ecclesial Vision

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Migration, the World, and the Church: Transcending Citizenship with Ecclesial Vision
An STL Thesis

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Table of Contents

Introduction: Migrating Through History

Migration has been an aspect of human history since our emergence as a distinct species. As human civilization became more complex, particularly with the development of nation-states and the concept of citizenship, the movement of peoples between different lands took on political and legal dimensions. Against the contemporary backdrop of globalization, and the pressure caused by economic disparity and climate change, there are many factors driving people to move from one place to another in search of a more fruitful and dignified life for themselves and their families. However, in a global economic system that relies upon the smooth movement of capital, goods, and information, there is a paradoxical resistance– often rooted in racism, prejudice, and xenophobia– to the movement of certain classes and groups of people.

As the phenomenon of migration gains greater attention in global affairs, and produces tensions on scales from the national to the local, a strong theological perspective on this complex reality has much to contribute to a dialogue that is often more political, legal, and nationalistic in nature. Even more crucially, as the number of migrants and refugees driven from their homes by the effects of war, violence, poverty, and climate change swells quickly, and the suffering and danger they experience along their journey intensifies, the necessity of attending to their human rights of health, safety, shelter, and due legal process becomes more urgent. Both the structural forces and individual experiences of migration must receive due attention. Assistance and solidarity must be offered at the personal level, while fostering integration among migrants and their receiving communities requires multiple levels of political, social, and cultural change.

For most of my twelve years as a Jesuit in formation for the priesthood, I have learned from and carried out ministry with Latin American migrants, both in their home countries and in the United States. This perspective informs my argument, rooted in belief and experience, that the Catholic Church, through its vision of the dignity of the human person, its moral teaching on human rights, and its very nature as a diverse global community, has positive, practical, and inspiring perspectives on migration to offer to the nations and peoples of the world. The Church has also developed an array of theological, cultural, and practical resources to aid migrants in their journeys in search of conditions that will allow them to flourish. The Church's vision of itself, expressed anew in the Second Vatican Council and subsequent decades, is that of individuals comprising a community on pilgrimage through a changing world with which they enter into dialogue, even as they strive to attain a heavenly kingdom. At the same time, the local Church in many cities and countries reflects a history of migration, inculturation, and adaptation, as successive generations of migrants from a wide range of countries have arrived, put down roots, and contributed to the well-being of the Church and society. Particularly in recent years, Pope Francis, as well as many of the faithful, have increasingly invited the Church to intensify its commitment to matters of morality, ethics, and justice that concern the most poor and vulnerable members of the human family. Such commitment necessitates powerful and prophetic advocacy in dialogue as well as intentional, generous, and respectful solidarity in action, and the Church of the 21st century seems both called and poised to do both. Essentially, by drawing on its own ecclesiological image of a pilgrim people, the Catholic Church can better identify with and advocate for migrants, whose faith and perseverance in

search of a better life invite us all to greater solidarity, in both our earthly and spiritual journeys.

For those within the Church, greater solidarity with migrants and enhanced advocacy for a global order that protects the rights and well-being of all people is part of a call to renewed fidelity to the life, teachings, and example of Christ. For those who witness the actions and words of the Church and its people, this testimony will be a powerful invitation to recognize and foster the dignity of all human beings, and also to accept their responsibility to take part in creating a more just global society. Migrants' hope for a better life is manifest in their determined labor to attain it despite the grave risks and fierce hardships along their journeys. Once settled, migrants also tend to invest significantly in the communities that receive them, striving for peace and justice, appreciation for diversity, and the future that they are committed to building for the next generation. They express a powerful call upon the Church and the world, one that deserves to be heard and heeded, to transform attitudes of fear and anxiety about migration to acts of compassion and community-building with migrants. Failing to respond to this call as a Church jeopardizes the authenticity of its mission to proclaim and live the Gospel, to defend the poor and the marginalized, and to profess Jesus' teaching in Matthew 25 that whatever we do (or do not do) for the least of our brothers and sisters, we do (or not do) for Christ.

This thesis begins with an introductory section situating migration in its historical, geographical, and sociological contexts, presenting it as a human phenomenon with economic, political, cultural, and legal attributes, influences, and effects that are felt strongly by individual migrants and the people with whom they come into contact along their journeys. Chapter 1 will present an overview of themes in social ethics pertinent to

the issues associated with migration, particularly the impact of globalization and the experiences of families separated by migration. Case studies drawn from an earlier period of the author's ministry will present typical scenarios highlighting the complex relationships and difficult decisions that develop as a result of migration policies that do not fully cohere with the economic rhythms of globalization, nor the considerations of human flourishing in stable family life. Chapter 2 will explore the political and legal aspects of citizenship, situating the conceptual basis of migration's challenges on a global scale. This chapter will contrast this approach to citizenship with a Christian anthropology that asserts the dignity of all human beings, also in order to better examine the relationships between the phenomenon of migration, the Vatican II image of a pilgrim Church, and various words and actions from the papacy of Francis. Chapter 3 will present approaches to migration shaped by the perspective of practical theology, again using concrete experience to ground and elaborate upon relevant theories in the field. The focus here will be narrowed to address the Latin American migration corridor more specifically– flows from the "Northern Triangle" countries of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala into and through Mexico towards the United States. Attention will be given to a variety of issues and experiences affecting migrants, as well as local residents, in Mexico and along the Mexico-United States border. Special attention will be given here to the author's five-week journey with fellow Jesuits along the Mexican migration corridor in summer 2015. Building upon these foundations, the concluding section will review and summarize the main argument of the thesis and present a hopeful vision for resolving the contentious elements of the "migration crisis" through attention to signs of faith and images of the Church revealed in the phenomenon of migration. Seen from this perspective, engagement with migrants at all

points along their journey will be guided by a renewed sense of our common human pilgrimage toward greater flourishing, justice, and peace for all peoples of the world.

Chapter 1: Moving the Borders: Globalization, Family, and the Ethics of Migration

Writing in 2009, Daniel Groody noted that "nearly 200 million people, or one out of every 35 people around the world, are living away from their homelands. This is roughly the equivalent of the population of Brazil, the fifth largest on the planet."[1] Various authors describe the range of factors that drive people from their homes: the lack of work, the hope for employment, political strife, persecution and violence, coerced activity at the hands of criminals, climate change, and so on. Much of the contemporary scholarship on migration recognizes this phenomenon as inextricably joined with the context of globalization. David Hollenbach affirms that "the movement of massive numbers of people across national borders is one of the defining characteristics of the world today… one aspect of the growing phenomenon of globalization."[2] Yet Gemma Cruz observes that such large-scale migration flows are nothing new: "migration is not a new phenomenon… it is deeply woven into the story of humanity."[3] Her perspective can help to normalize the existence of migration as a recurring theme in human history, throwing into stark relief the contested political, legal, and ethical dimensions that are ascribed to it today. She also sees forms of globalization and attendant migration flows stretching back over five centuries, from the earliest decades of European colonial expansion through "social upheavals brought by the two world wars" to today's complex global landscape.[4]

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[1] Daniel Groody, "Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees," *Theological Studies* 70 (2009): 638.
[2] David Hollenbach, "Migration as a Challenge for Theological Ethics," *Political Theology* 12 (2011): 807.
[3] Gemma Cruz, "Between Identity and Security: Theological Implications of Migration in the Context of Globalization." *Theological Studies* 69 (2008): 357.
[4] Ibid., 359.

Particularly when viewed from the United States, however, there are some surprising elements of the global picture of migration. Cruz found, "not surprisingly, [that] more than 60% of migrants are in developed countries… about 75% of all migrants live in only 28 countries."[5] Yet in 2005, more migrants journeyed to Asia than to North America, and Europe led Asia in the share of migrants by only six percentage points.[6] Data also indicates a profound economic impact of migrants upon their home countries. Groody notes, "in 2006, migrants sent home to their families, often in small amounts of $100 to $300 at a time, more than $300 billion. Meanwhile, the total Overseas Development Aid from donor nations to poorer countries was $106 billion… migrants living on meager means spent three times as much money helping alleviate global poverty as the richest countries in the world."[7] Migrants' ties to their home countries across vast distances are more than economic; they constitute "a worldwide migration chain… [and] utilize a wide array of global communication and technology tools to maintain familial and other social relations; and develop or engage social, political, and religious networks within the migrant community and abroad."[8] Seen in this view, migrants appear just like any other family whose members live in different regions of the same country and maintain relationships on multiple levels using the variety of means at their disposal.

Legal and Political Considerations

Groody finds the greatest challenges to a realistic vision of migrants in the language used to frame legal and political approaches to migration. "A great divide exists between

[5] Cruz, "Between Identity and Security," 360.
[6] Ibid., 361.
[7] Groody, "Crossing the Divide," 647.
[8] Cruz, "Between Identity and Security," 362.

the problem of migration and migrating people… between the political and social identities of migrants and refugees and their human and spiritual identities,"[9] he writes. Legal frameworks and political views often objectify and aggregate migrants, retaining an awareness of their human nature yet discussing their regulation and movement in terms little different from those used for goods and capital. Groody is not alone, either in academia or in general society, in his discomfort with structures in which "it is easier for a coffee bean to cross borders than those who cultivate it."[10]

Many approaches to immigration law and policy strive to balance the needs and rights of migrants and the rights and responsibilities of states on behalf of their citizens. Most ethical arguments recognize the virtue of both sides in the debate, while also affirming that "when people cross borders without proper documentation, most are not simply breaking civil laws but obeying the laws of human nature, such as the need to find work so as to feed their families and attain more dignified lives."[11] Moreover, although it can be easy to identify refugees, such as those fleeing the conflict in Syria, "neither international law nor particular nation states recognize the category of economic migrants as one that merits legal protection."[12] There are thousands of "religious and social service providers who, without violating civil law, attempt to respond to the migrant knocking at the door"[13] as they balance their legal responsibilities with their religious and ethical senses of duty to fellow human beings.

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[9] Groody, "Crossing the Divide," 642.
[10] Ibid., 645-6.
[11] Ibid., 656.
[12] Ibid., 657.
[13] United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope: A Pastoral Letter Concerning Migration* (Washington DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2003), #4.

Kristin Heyer also notes the prevalence of "a criminal rhetorical frame [that] scapegoats immigrants as threats to the rule of law, without evoking skepticism about root causes or outmoded policies."[14] After surveying cases of bias and prejudice in various countries that large numbers of migrants currently attempt to enter, Heyer strongly critiques "the deficiencies of an immigration paradigm centered on instrumentalist expediency, national security, or economic efficiency,"[15] in which people– not just goods, capital, and information– are reduced to commodities and figures. This is particularly apparent in developed countries whose immigration policies feature "imposition of draconian 'deterrence' measures alongside recruitment of skilled migrants from developing countries,"[16] severely downplaying (yet also worsening) the plight of some migrants while viewing others as means to desirable economic outcomes. Despite the many years over which contemporary migration patterns have developed, states have been slow to adapt to "the evolving international human rights regime [that] challenges state sovereignty by holding nations accountable to norms transcendent of national interests."[17] The result is an "immigration quandary [that] pits the interests of different constituencies against one another,"[18] one that often relies on contentious legislation, rather than a comprehensive approach to managing the various causes and implications of migration, for solutions.

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[14] Kristin Heyer, "Reframing Displacement and Membership: Ethics of Migration," *Theological Studies* 73 (2012): 190.
[15] Heyer, "Reframing Displacement," 194.
[16] Ibid., 196.
[17] Ibid., 197.
[18] Kristin Heyer, "Social Sin and Immigration: Good Fences Make Bad Neighbors," *Theological Studies* 71 (2010): 411.

Another approach, known as "the 'migration without borders' (MWB) scenario"[19] proposes the abolition of state borders as they are currently conceived. Noting that "the right to leave [a country] is not complemented by a right to enter [another country],"[20] this theory argues that "within the current globalization process, which favours an increasingly free circulation of goods, information and capital, it is worth considering including free movement of human beings as well."[21] Although any genuine application of this proposal would have profound and unprecedented implications for state sovereignty, it forces the question of whether "the human costs of border controls… are compatible with the core values of the international community,"[22] or for that matter, individual states. Already there is the recognition, at least on the ethical level, that "human rights… are based on personhood rather than nationality, and protect both nationals and migrants."[23] However, the current system of state sovereignty enjoys sound ethical support, as well as the general approval of historical experience, though recent notable examples of repressive governments and failed states– North Korea, Somalia, and Syria come to mind– are obviously far from the ideal. Moreover, "despite its essentially international nature, migration has long been one of the least-discussed issues at the international level."[24]

The subset of migrants who are classified as refugees also calls into question the effectiveness and defensibility of state sovereignty when states "have failed in their duties

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[19] Antoine Pécoud and Paul de Guchteneire, "The Migration Without Borders Scenario," in *Migration Without Borders: Essays on the Free Movement of People*, ed. Antoine Pécoud (Paris: UNESCO Pub., 2007), 1.
[20] Pierre Sané, "Foreword," in *Migration Without Borders: Essays on the Free Movement of People*, ed. Antoine Pécoud (Paris: UNESCO Pub., 2007), ix.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Pécoud and de Guchteneire, "Migration Without Borders Scenario," 7.
[23] Ibid., 18.
[24] Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, "The Frontiers of Mobility," in *Migration Without Borders: Essays on the Free Movement of People*, ed. Antoine Pécoud (Paris: UNESCO Pub., 2007), 55.

of ensuring the well-being of their citizens… [yet] resort to the principle of sovereignty, which prevents any intervention in the internal affairs of a state."[25] The forms of military intervention by other states in the Syrian conflict over the last five years, exacerbating a horrific collapse of security and public order leading to a profound refugee crisis and worsening wartime atrocities, is a stark contemporary example. The current practices of the international community treat refugees not primarily "as a humanitarian, a moral, or a development issue… [but as one] related to the notion of national boundaries and state sovereignty."[26] A powerful and uncomfortable question that is raised by the quantities of migrants and refugees fleeing many nations is why they fail to provide what these people rightly expect from their governments– human rights, freedom from undue risks of violence, a strong economy that serves the needs of all people, and so on. Yet despite this situation, Arsène Brice Bado is not entirely confident that the MWB approach would be effective, musing instead that "removing borders can mean removing responsibilities. There is no world government or world authority that can effectively ensure the responsibility to protect forced migrants, like refugees."[27]

Theological Perspectives

As the scale and scope of migration patterns have expanded around the globe, and the plight of many migrants at various stages of their journeys has garnered greater attention in the media, in academia, and among various religious institutions, many fields of inquiry have turned their attention to this global phenomenon. Groody claims that only

[25] Arsène Brice Bado, *Dignity Across Borders: Forced Migration and Catholic Social Ethics* (Denver: Outskirts Press, 2011), 1.
[26] Ibid., 7.
[27] Ibid., 17-18.

recently, and not yet fully, has theology taken its place in this discourse: "Economics, politics, geography, demography, sociology, psychology, law, history, anthropology, and environmental studies… shape the emerging field of migration studies… theology seems to enter the academic territory from outside, as if it were a 'disciplinary refugee' with no official recognition in the overall discourse about migration."[28] On one view, theology can be seen to encompass all of the above disciplines, insofar as Scripture, Catholic social teaching, and theological ethics address issues in these fields through their exploration of the relationships, and especially the mutual responsibilities, between individuals and societies. Yet work certainly remains to be done in order to bring Christian theological reflections and resources into constructive and truly mutual dialogue with more secular approaches to the challenging issues of migration. If, as Esther Reed says, "the majority of [Christian] reflections in this area tend to be doctrinally selective and limited,"[29] then it is no wonder that such contributions have been marginalized. If "a theology of migration is a way of speaking about the mission of the church within the context of a disordered political economy,"[30] then that mission, and the more ordered society that it proposes, must be compelling and clear to a broad audience.

In 2003, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano (CEM) published *Strangers No Longer*, a joint pastoral letter that provides a strong theological and pastoral foundation for Catholic approaches to migration, especially with respect to the border between the United States and Mexico. The bishops see the complex reality of migration "as part of the dynamics of

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[28] Groody, "Crossing the Divide," 640.
[29] Esther Reed, "Refugee Rights and State Sovereignty: Theological Perspectives on the Ethics of Territorial Borders," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 30 (2010): 60.
[30] Groody, "Crossing the Divide," 666.

creation and grace on the one hand, and of sin and death on the other, that form the backdrop of all salvation history."[31] They also proclaim that "faith in the presence of Christ in the migrant leads to a conversion of mind and heart, which leads to a renewed spirit of communion and to the building of structures of solidarity to accompany the migrant."[32] And unlike the vast majority of perspectives that see migrants under the hegemonic influences of structural forces beyond their control, *Strangers No Longer* boldly urges that "migrants should be reminded of their role as evangelizers,"[33] affirming their dignity and autonomy even when faced with few or no meaningful choices. In fact, Heyer affirms that "cultivating migrants' agency will be essential for adequate humanitarian, legislative, and cultural responses"[34] to their movement and presence in countries other than their own. Moreover, as Cruz and others have written, "religion provided immigrants the spiritual resources to cope with the psychological effects of migration"[35] throughout the world.

Many authors have noted the strong basis for a duty to protect and care for migrants in the Judeo-Christian Scriptures. Bado observes that "the Old Testament offers more accounts of people who are forced to cross borders than it offers accounts of people who migrated because they were pleased to do so."[36] These stories present both individuals and entire societies as refugees, and recall this collective memory in rules that oblige the Israelites to have the same generous and benevolent attitude toward migrants that God displayed toward them. Moreover, as "Israel's relation to the land… [was] a relation of

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[31] USCCB, *Strangers No Longer,* #23.
[32] Ibid., #40.
[33] Ibid., #46.
[34] Heyer, "Ethics of Migration," 206.
[35] Cruz, "Between Identity and Security," 360.
[36] Bado, *Dignity Across Borders*, 35-36.

stewardship,"[37] they were subject to God's commands as they exercised authority over their territory. The mobility of migrants and refugees suggests that this ethic is both portable and stable: people on the move must respect the land through which they travel, and its citizens are enjoined to treat them with hospitality and kindness. The legacy inherited by Catholic social teaching on migrants has as "the starting point of its discourse… not the state and border protection; but rather the human person and her dignity."[38] With this recognition of universal human dignity comes a responsibility to defend it in the situations of threat, harm, and displacement experienced by migrants during their journeys, and even after their arrival in a destination country. Bado believes that states play an essential role here as well: "moral principles that transcend national borders do not obviate the utility of territorial borders… they are reconceptualized as an assignment of responsibility… [that] consists in promoting both the national common good and the good of all humanity."[39]

In the United States, theological and pastoral perspectives on migration have been profoundly influenced by the growing numbers of Latino Catholics, many of whom have themselves migrated from Mexico, El Salvador, and other countries in Central America. Timothy Matovina, reflecting upon the content and effects of *Strangers No Longer*, sees great potential in "Catholics [who] promote education on the church's immigration teaching and on policy debates, seek to focus attention on the human struggles and life stories of immigrants, and engage in conversation about responding in faith."[40] At the same

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[37] Bado, *Dignity Across Borders*, 41.
[38] Ibid., 49.
[39] Ibid., 55-56.
[40] Timothy Matovina, *Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America's Largest Church* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 203.

time, he has found that "the most widespread form of Catholic public presence on immigration is the numerous outreach efforts in local faith communities."[41]

Case Studies: Two Mexican Families

During a period of work in a Hispanic parish in the Midwest, I encountered many individuals and families who had migrated to the United States from various countries in Central America, as well as a great number from Mexico. Despite the unstable political situations in some of those countries, the vast majority had migrated to the United States in search of better opportunities for employment and financial stability than they had been able to attain in their home countries. In some cases, rampant crime and violence led them to seek a safer environment–the United States– in which to raise their children. Those who had migrated without official sanction– whether by sneaking into the country or staying beyond the expiration of legally acquired tourist visas– experienced periods of fear and anxiety when local officials made statements about illegal immigrants. In some municipalities near the parish, police officers were known to profile drivers and attempt to ascertain one's legal status during traffic stops. Several case studies drawn from my work in this parish– with names and some details altered to preserve anonymity– highlight the complex array of circumstances in these migrants' lives.

Luís and Monica both trained and were certified as health professionals in Mexico, but lost their jobs when the clinic that employed them shut down. Unable to find work, they obtained temporary visas to the United States, and came to the Midwest in hopes of working in a similar clinic. They brought a 7-year old daughter, Esperanza; their 16-year

[41] Matovina, *Latino Catholicism*, 204.

old son, Hector, remained in Mexico with relatives. Contrary to what Luís and Monica had been told, their Mexican medical licenses were not recognized in the United States, and training to be certified in the United States would have been prohibitive in cost and repetitive in nature. Several months of negotiation with local medical officials proved fruitless, jeopardizing the grounds for their plan to apply for citizenship or permanent residency. Meanwhile, Esperanza was adapting well to her new school, and seemed reluctant to return to Mexico. Luís and Monica found jobs in the construction and hospitality industries, respectively, and were able to acquire a home in a diverse suburban neighborhood. When their visas expired, the family decided to quietly stay in the United States; by that time, they had become connected to the parish and encountered other families living in similar circumstances. Two years later, another daughter was born; Liana is the only one in her family who is a United States citizen. Luís and Monica decided to apply for green cards for themselves and Esperanza, but their application stalled at multiple stages in the process, leaving them waiting for years. Because she missed an opportunity to sign up for President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, Esperanza was forced to return to Mexico when she turned 18, or risk undermining her family's application by willfully staying in the country illegally. An outstanding high school student, capable of gaining admission into some of the best universities in the Midwest, Esperanza made preparations to return to a country that was largely foreign to her, in hopes of one day being permitted to settle permanently in the country she had long considered home.

Juan, Rosa, and their three young children were living happily in Ciudad Júarez, a Mexican city across the border from El Paso, Texas, until the sudden explosion of crime,

violence, and murders related to the conflict between rival cartels seeking to control a major smuggling route for drugs. Mexican authorities seemed powerless as drug lords assumed control over the city's neighborhoods. Juan and Rosa also feared for their two daughters; the disappearances of women were an ominous and unpredictable occurrence, and most of these cases were never solved. Juan worked for a global company with offices in Mexico and the United States; when he got word of a coming assignment in the Midwest, he saw an opportunity to make a permanent move that would remove his family from the dangers of Júarez and offer a brighter future for their children. However, the company gave him only a six-month position, with no provisions for his family to accompany him. Juan reluctantly went alone to the Midwest. But after three months Rosa obtained visas for herself and the children, and the family was reunited. Juan was eventually offered a permanent position in the Midwest office, but was told that the process of obtaining permanent resident status, even with the company's help, could take years. Before the process was completed, the recession hit, and Juan's company downsized. His position was retained, but he knows that without the job, the case for acquiring permanent residency for him and his family would quickly fall apart. Meanwhile, the situation in Júarez has not improved; Juan and Rosa have already determined that they can't bring their children back there, nor could they leave them alone in the United States.

Synthesis: Migration, Ethics, and Theology

Considering the implications of these cases, in a context that synthesizes ethical arguments as well as theological propositions, will highlight the crucial difficulties found in contemporary migration scenarios, and also suggest solutions that uphold the most

important individual rights and collective values in these situations. Those rights and values involve migrants, citizens of the countries to which they travel, national governments held responsible for preserving order and opportunity within their borders, and religious institutions that address the migration issue through both practical action as well as social, political, and cultural discourse.

Heather Widdows claims that "globalization– the increasing interdependence of global society economically, socially, culturally, and politically– has created truly global dilemmas that require global solutions."[42] She also accepts that "partial and piecemeal measures will gradually contribute to establishing truly global methods"[43] to address global issues such as migration. The United States-Mexico border seems an apt place to develop an improved, more humane, more practical migration policy that better reflects the needs of individuals in both countries, in light of the content of the case studies above, and the opportunities presented by the joint pastoral letter written by the Catholic bishops of the United States and Mexico. Widdows acknowledges the "seemingly eternal debate between moral universalists and moral relativists"[44] that can often confound meaningful and constructive debate, rather than seeking to apply ethical norms like the dignity of the human person in a variety of particular and unique circumstances. Thus a small-scale or piecemeal approach seems to offer greater prospects for developing more reasonable responses to today's patterns of migration, and the forces that influence them.

Hollenbach asserts that "though national borders carry considerable moral weight, they are not morally determinative in the face of the grave need of refugees or those who

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[42] Heather Widdows, *Global Ethics: An Introduction* (Durham, UK: Acumen, 2011), 5.
[43] Ibid., 8.
[44] Ibid., 31.

have no alternative but to migrate."[45] Essentially, the significance afforded to borders is a geopolitical concept that must always be subordinated to the common good and the well-being of individuals who seek to cross them. In the case of Juan and Rosa, the threats to them and their children in a city beset by violence and a breakdown in official authority arguably support fulfilling a moral imperative to safeguard their family's well-being by migrating to a safer locale. Juan's placement in the United States– an opportunity enabled by the globalization of commerce and industry– provided a means to achieve this end. Matovina's research of Latino Catholic communities reveals that "long-standing links between Latin and North America already lead many Latinos to adopt a more hemispheric perspective to Catholicism in the United States."[46] That perspective could extend to migration, seeing movement around the continent in a way that recognizes yet transcends the interests of a given state. Luís and Monica grapple with the implications of that perspective, as do their children, especially Esperanza, given her ambiguous relationship with Mexico and her strong, yet not legally sanctioned, bond with the United States.

For both of these families, a primary issue is preserving their unity on all levels. Obtaining citizenship or permanent legal residency for all members of the family is thus a paramount concern. Although citizenship for migrants is often a flashpoint for charged rhetoric and acrimonious debate in legislative sessions and street demonstrations alike, it does seem to bear the greatest conceptual potential for achieving a legal adaptation to a new demographic reality. Pécoud suggests that "immigration further calls citizenship into question… [and] introduces into the content of citizenship new cross-cutting values that go

[45] Hollenbach, "Migration as a Challenge," 810.
[46] Matovina, *Latino Catholicism*, 40.

beyond the national framework."[47] As will be explored in the following chapter, the flow of migrants and refugees in some parts of the world is directly related to the breakdown of a given state and its government's duties to provide for its citizens. Yet arguing from such cases toward a form of global citizenship remains problematic, both conceptually and practically. Widdows recognizes the pitfalls of arguing for global citizenship, but notes a variety of propositions for "a moral idea of citizenship… an ethical stance and a statement of community and identity"[48] that could then have distinct political and social expressions in different countries. Given the long history between the United States and Mexico, marked by both collaboration and conflict, the leaders and citizens of these countries could draw on some common moral and ethical positions to develop migration policies that preserve the practical interests of both states while also permitting a degree of migration and settlement that more reasonably reflects the economic, cultural, and social forces that exert their influence across the geopolitical border between them.

The theological dimension is helpful here, as it goes beyond ethical concepts of rights and duties to present the claims stemming from human dignity, justice, and the communal nature of society. Catholics and others whose faith inspires them to attend to migrants and their needs report that "one of the most central issues facing migrants today is the struggle simply to reclaim their status as human beings, especially in the context of a world that demeans, diminishes, and dehumanizes them."[49] This was certainly true of the migrants whom I encountered in that Midwestern parish; police in one of the neighboring

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[47] Wihtol de Wenden, "The Frontiers of Mobility," 60.
[48] Widdows, *Global Ethics*, 132.
[49] Daniel Groody, "A Mission of Reconciliation: Theological Perspectives of Pilgrim People," in *On "Strangers No Longer:" Perspectives on the Historic U.S.-Mexican Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Migration*, eds. Todd Scribner and J. Kevin Appleby (New York: Paulist Press, 2013), 67.

towns periodically made a habit of stopping any drivers who appeared Hispanic and harassing them for proof of their permission to be in the United States. Many were wearied by the long delays in the application process, which often meant extended separation from their families and an inability to return to Mexico for important occasions, such as the funeral of a relative. Fortunately, although the parish was known to be supportive of migrants, the local authorities never targeted our parishioners as they traveled to and from the church. In fact, officials from the nearest Mexican consulate came to the parish twice a year to help people process their paperwork and have a variety of questions addressed. The parish thus expressed "a Catholic anthropology [that] profoundly critiques patterns wherein stable receiving countries accept the labor of millions of immigrants without offering legal protections or viable paths to citizenship."[50] Such advocacy would be particularly crucial for Esperanza, as well as the children of Juan and Rosa.

Bado sketches out some suggestions for bringing a synthesis of ethical and theological concerns into practical and effective advocacy for migrants. Among these is the principle of subsidiarity, whereby "it is the duty of the country of origin of refugees and IDPs [internally displaced persons] to resolve the crisis that drove out the people... a failure of national governments to protect the rights of persons results in the need and the duty of outside authorities taking action on behalf of victimized population."[51] Mark Ensalaco contends for some extension of a human rights framework that presently "reflects the minimal consensus of the international community, a consensus that would not exist if

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[50] Kristin Heyer, "Legalization and the Undocumented According to Catholic Social Teaching," in *On "Strangers No Longer:" Perspectives on the Historic U.S.-Mexican Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Migration*, eds. Todd Scribner and J. Kevin Appleby (New York: Paulist Press, 2013), 92.
[51] Bado, *Dignity Across Borders*, 59.

rights claims were founded on religious doctrine."[52] In the United States, though, much of the support for migrants has come from churches, and these various forms of aid help migrants to achieve a level of social and cultural integration. There is room for asserting the claim of Catholic social teaching that "sovereignty and hospitality are mutually implicating… with legitimate exercises of sovereignty dependent upon prior demands of human rights protections and basic conditions of social justice"[53] rooted as much in ethical and philosophical concepts of the human person as in theological and religious perspectives on migration. Sovereignty without hospitality reflects a political and social order driven more by material concerns than ethical and relational ones. Moreover, when "international law provides inadequate protections of the human rights of migrants, no doubt because the consensus norms of the international community unduly reflect the interests of the powerful,"[54] one can raise not only theological questions of justice, but also ethical concerns about duties and the ends of a global order marked by such unequal allotments of power and influence.

Concluding Thoughts

The contemporary situation of migrants in various regions of the world is often fraught with danger and uncertainty that diminish the vitality of their lives. Although a number of factors have been seen to drive people to leave their homes, their movements are grounded in a fundamental and universal concern for securing a better, more stable,

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[52] Mark Ensalaco, "Illegal Immigration, the Bishops, and the Laity: 'Strangers No Longer'," in *On "Strangers No Longer:" Perspectives on the Historic U.S.-Mexican Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Migration*, edited by Todd Scribner and J. Kevin Appleby (New York: Paulist Press, 2013), 265.
[53] Heyer, "Legalization and the Undocumented," 95.
[54] Ensalaco, "Illegal Immigration," 267.

more safe, and more fruitful life for themselves and those under their care. Despite the achievements of a globalized society in the economic, technological, and cultural realms, the legal and political climate has remained ambiguous, and in recent years become increasingly hostile, with respect to the movement of people without whom many of those accomplishments would not persist. A historical perspective on migration shows the significance of this phenomenon for the development of contemporary civilization, in which the legacy of European colonialism continues to exert heavy influence in many areas of the Southern Hemisphere.

Although dismantling the geopolitical framework of nation-states would hardly solve the problematic issues of migration, a globalized world calls for international agreements aimed at "ensuring that the migration process does not harm the interests of sending and receiving states nor of migrants themselves."[55] Donald Kerwin notes that "the Catholic Church supports the international regime of refugee protection and has urged all nations to adopt its relevant instruments."[56] In the United States, "the Catholic community could play a decisive role in pushing immigration reform forward… having grown as successive waves of immigrants reached U.S. shores."[57] Informed by the experience of individual migrants, rich with the stories of their purpose in migrating as well as their difficulties with legal frameworks and prevailing attitudes in society and politics, general arguments could be built to propose sensible adjustments to immigration law that parallel the opening of borders to goods, investments, and other tangible and intangible

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[55] Pécoud and de Guchteneire, "Migration Without Borders Scenario," 22.
[56] Donald Kerwin, "The Natural Rights of Newcomers and Migrants: A Challenge to U.S. Law and Policy" in *A Promised Land, A Perilous Journey*, eds. Daniel Groody and Gioacchino Campese (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 193.
[57] Scribner and Appleby, eds., *On "Strangers No Longer,"* 296-297.

commodities from around the globe. The practical reality of contemporary migration "points to the necessity of envisaging a more comprehensive right to mobility."[58] Yet without a diverse range of supportive voices– drawn from ethics, theology, politics, and other fields– such a vision seems likely to be overshadowed by a *status quo* that seems caught between competing claims of openness and defensiveness, with migrants tragically stuck in the middle.

[58] Pécoud and de Guchteneire, "Migration Without Borders Scenario," 1.

Chapter 2: Moving Globally to Secure the Rights of Citizenship

The significant rise in movements of refugees and migrants around the world raises questions about how to redefine citizenship when certain states fail to provide an array of basic and reasonable human rights for their citizens. The notion of citizenship is inherent in the current sociopolitical order that privileges the nation-state (or country) as a key unit. Yet questions about the vitality and future of certain nation-states, and their effective provision of the attributes of citizenship, are raised by increased flows of refugees and migrants, particularly from countries where prolonged warfare, the breakdown of law and order, the lack of basic social provisions, or climate change have played a major role in triggering those flows.

Certain small island nation-states, mostly in the South Pacific, imperiled by sea level rise have already begun to enter into agreements to move their citizens to other countries, a first step in facing the prospect of literal disappearance. Countries such as Somalia have experienced extended periods with little to no government, bringing into question what citizenship means there. Despite the recognition by the international community that there is still a government in places like Syria, Yemen, and South Sudan, prolonged civil warfare and a large exodus of refugees has called into question the future viability of these states. In North Korea, Eritrea, and other nation-states with highly authoritarian governments that severely restrict access to, and freedoms within, their territories, one can wonder if there is anything akin to citizenship as it is understood in the democracies of many other countries. Migrants continually leave the countries of Central America's Northern Triangle– Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador– to escape rampant gang violence and obtain more

gainful employment to provide for their families, seeking conditions that their own governments struggle to create and sustain themselves.

Looking at established definitions of statehood and citizenship in the context of human rights, and taking into account the phenomenon of migration as a sign that these rights are going unmet in many countries, can provide an additional perspective on the phenomenon of migration, and suggest potential responses to these concerns. Moreover, arguing that statehood and citizenship should serve the interests and well-being of all human beings can lead to a more realistic and humane understanding of the rights and responsibilities of statehood and citizenship, and the implications for individuals and nation-states when those conditions go unmet.

Ideals of Liberal Democracy and Citizenship

Seyla Benhabib claims that "modern liberal democracies owe their stability and relative success to the coming together of two ideals which originate in distinct historical periods: the ideals of *self-governance* and *territorially circumscribed nation-state*."[59] This structure places the citizen in the role of "the subject of *state-administration*, or more positively, as *the subject of rights and entitlements*."[60] Ultimately, in her view, this sense of citizenship was increasingly interpreted– though perhaps not uniformly within any given government or country's citizens– "as the formal equality of citizens who now sought to realize the *equal value of their liberty*."[61] This arrangement ostensibly works well within any given nation-state that can be self-sufficient, but in a globalized world in which the

[59] Seyla Benhabib, "Borders, Boundaries, and Citizenship," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 38 (2005), 673.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.

welfare of every country is influenced by the actions of others, these matters quickly become complicated. Levels of individual and collective liberty, the strength of civil society and its associated institutions, and the robustness of governing institutions and their availability to provide for the basic needs of their citizens, and other attributes of public and private life vary widely across the roughly two hundred nation-states in the world today. That variation alone, and the awareness of it, can be enough to drive movement from one country to another as a migrant or refugee, though often many factors are present. In any case, according to Benhabib, a "relatively successful synthesis of republican and liberal-democratic ideals, or of public and and private autonomy, is today in crisis… the crisis of the territorially circumscribed nation-state formation."[62]

Amid this increasingly turbulent geopolitical situation, the Catholic Church– both as a whole and in its local and regional manifestations– exists as a global community that has the potential to transcend the divisions and polarization arising within and between many nations. Its theological vision of itself as the Body of Christ expresses a conviction that every person is made in the image and likeness of God and has unassailable dignity that must be upheld and protected by just and equitable laws. In this view, there is room to criticize the harmful effects of a concept of citizenship that, as Rainer Bauböck describes it, functions as "a sorting device for allocating human populations to sovereign states,"[63] which inevitably leads to citizenship law being used as "a control device that strictly limits state obligations toward foreigners and permits governments to keep them out, or remove

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[62] Benhabib, "Borders," 673.
[63] Rainer Bauböck, "Citizenship and Migration – Concepts and Controversies," in *Migration and Citizenship: Legal Status, Rights, and Political Participation*, ed. Rainer Bauböck (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 16.

them, from their jurisdiction."[64] Not only does this perspective of citizenship reduce individuals to mere abstractions, and create an automatic, artificial distinction between citizens and non-citizens, it also fails to account for the complexity of global affairs and the large variation in how "citizenship" is actually experienced in the various nation-states of the world. Bauböck wisely notes that "normative connotations of membership in a self-governing community do not easily apply to regimes that lack appropriate institutions of popular government… authoritarian states rule over their nationals, but these nationals can be called citizens only in a very limited sense;"[65] Eritrea and North Korea come to mind as examples. Particularly in these regimes, but also in robust, stable, and vibrant liberal democracies, "citizenship marks a boundary between insiders and outsiders."[66]

With respect to the questions posed to concepts of citizenship by globalization, as well as the recent surge in numbers of migrants and refugees, David Abraham notes that "elites and citizens alike ask who belongs to the national political and social community of the 'we' and what belonging entails in the way of rights and obligations."[67] Recognizing the diversity of impacts that globalization has had on the political order of nation-states and their sovereignty, understood at least territorially, he claims that "under the impact of unprecedented free mobility for both capital and labor and the crises of the social welfare state, the borders and bonds of citizenship have been changing."[68] The vision of citizenship in the liberal, affluent, democratic countries from which such questions are raised is "based

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[64] Bauböck, "Citizenship and Migration," 16.
[65] Ibid., 17.
[66] Ibid., 19.
[67] David Abraham, "America, Germany, Israel: Three Modes of Citizenship and Incorporation," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 78 (2010), 123.
[68] Ibid.

on… three kinds of rights: civil, political, and social."[69] These presume a mutual relationship between individual citizens, the various groups into which they assemble themselves, and a functional, reasonably transparent, and well-resourced government to maintain various attributes of social order, a working economy, education, public health, and so on. Yet many nations in the developing world are not marked by these characteristics, and as such, do not adequately or fully enable "the sovereign self-determination of a people, and the will to act in its name and to make sacrifices… a 'we' to which members belong and 'in whose deliberations they have a voice' and 'feel a sense of shared fate and solidarity.'"[70] As that image of citizenship falls into decline in many nations, driving conflicts that undermine civil society and produce flows of migrants and refugees, a Christian anthropology can offer a valuable corrective. Such a vision motivates the Catholic Church's devotion to migrants and refugees through various forms of ministry and advocacy; that image is nothing less than the Kingdom of God, in which all people are welcomed and enabled to coexist in peace.

Practical Challenges to Citizenship and Sovereignty in an Age of Globalized Migration

Analyzing the concepts of citizenship and sovereignty in three countries– the United States, Germany, and Israel– Abraham finds notable weaknesses in the actual situation of their citizens and their understanding and practice of citizenship. In the United States, for example, he observes that citizenship "is of less social and economic value and offers less of a premium over mere legal residence."[71] In a global political environment where millions of people have fled their home countries on account of violence, unemployment, lack of

[69] Abraham, "Three Modes," 124.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., 123.

education, the effects of climate change, and many other causes, it is distressing to observe "an inverse relationship between the ease of access to citizenship and what citizenship offers."[72] This is particularly problematic insofar as citizenship becomes a means by which residents of one country can distance themselves from migrants and refugees fleeing another country. A failure in "willingness to engage with and assume duties on behalf of others… is the problematic of the welfare state or of social democracy,"[73] and if it is found among citizens within the same country, it is bound to have the harshest effects on those who are not citizens.

Benhabib likewise observes this "dilemma at the heart of liberal democracies: between sovereign self-determination claims on the one hand and adherence to universal human rights principles on the other."[74] With respect to migration, with implications for citizenship, Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "recognizes the right to emigrate– that is, the right to leave a country– but not a right to immigrate– the right to enter a country."[75] Moreover, in this list of rights, "Article 15 stipulates that 'No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.'"[76] Taken together, these statements reveal how "a series of internal contradictions between universal human rights and territorial sovereignty are built right into the logic of the most comprehensive international law document in the world."[77] This is compounded by the

[72] Abraham, "Three Modes," 123.
[73] Ibid., 124.
[74] Benhabib, "Borders," 673.
[75] Ibid., 674.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.

lack of a global enforcement mechanism for such international law; "states' sovereignty to disregard or abide by or not implement them, goes unchecked."[78]

The issue of migration, by its very nature, cuts across national borders and draws nation-states and their citizens together in multiple types of relationship. There is no easy solution to the questions of citizenship, inclusion, and identity that arise when individuals seek to cross borders, either temporarily or permanently. As increasingly intractable issues in certain countries, such as those listed in the opening paragraphs of this paper, show no signs of resolution, undermining both their short- and long-term prospects for providing human rights to all their citizens, countries where migrants and refugees are seeking shelter and/or asylum have great responsibilities to these people, as well as their own citizens. Attention must be paid to both groups, for citizens have every right to express their own wishes and desires for their own countries, while "studying migrants' social networks and organisations as well as their cultural and religious identities is… crucially important since these are among the most important factors influencing their political opportunities and activities."[79] Insofar as migration is both a global phenomenon and an issue with profound local implications, a "question therefore is how local truths are legitimately transformed into universal creeds… and whether they redound to the benefits of peoples everywhere."[80]

Bauböck defines migration as "a form of human mobility that involves crossing territorial borders and taking up residence in another municipality, region, or country…

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[78] Benhabib, "Borders," 674.
[79] Bauböck, "Citizenship and Migration," 15.
[80] Makau Mutua, "The Complexity of Universalism in Human Rights," in *Human Rights with Modesty: The Problem of Universalism*, ed. András Sajó (Leiden: Netherlands: Brill, 2004), 52.

most such geographic entities are organised as jurisdictions with precisely defined political borders."[81] Thus the right to emigration enshrined in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights is intrinsically both a choice protected by international law and a political act fraught with uncertainty. Given the political system in place today, this universal right is, in practice, curtailed by "states [that] may impose specific restrictions on certain nationals (e.g. through visa requirements) while opening their borders for others."[82] There have been countless instances of this throughout history; although "in the 1960s and 1970s, the exclusion of particular ethnic and racial groups from immigration was abandoned in the US, Canada and Australia and is… regarded as illegitimate in European immigration states,"[83] the pushback in many of these same countries against Syrian and African refugees represents a troubling reversal in this trend. At a time when many flee their countries more out of vulnerability than positive desire, and spend increasingly longer periods of time in foreign countries, either in transit, detention, or temporary settlement, "excluding settled immigrants from access to full citizenship amounts to political tyranny,"[84] a cruelly ironic state of affairs for those fleeing authoritarian regimes.

The practical experience of many migrants and refugees who spend significant lengths of time in host countries sees them "formally claim certain basic rights of civil citizenship that are considered human rights… due process rights in court… emergency health care or public schooling for their children."[85] In a sense, they grasp and enact what many citizens of those countries recognize– "duties of education and paying taxes or social

[81] Bauböck, "Citizenship and Migration," 17.
[82] Ibid., 18.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid., 20.
[85] Ibid., 23.

security contributions are not attached to nationality but to residence, income and employment."[86] Migrants and refugees undertake, perhaps with more devotion and intentionality than many of their neighbors, the social and communal responsibilities to the common good from which they themselves wish to benefit. Migrants from countries with compromised rule of law and socio-political institutions– from Somalia to Honduras– invest in their receiving countries in ways that are less available or more risky to them in their home countries, like starting a business, establishing a reasonable amount of savings through labor at fair, living wages, and participating meaningfully in the political process. Receiving countries are in a bind, and often seek to relieve the tension between citizens and immigrants by "assert[ing] a specific duty to immigrants to assimilate or integrate… [using] the naturalisation process as an occasion for asserting a duty of loyalty that remains at best implicit for native citizens."[87] The longer that these circumstances persist, the greater the development of what Bauböck calls "transnational citizenship… migrants' political activities directed towards their countries of origin but also to institutional changes and new conceptions of citizenship in states linked to each other through migration chains."[88]

The Double Standards of Borders

All of these issues become most evident at the physical, geographical borders between countries, where their respective decisions regarding citizenship, migrants, and refugees are enacted. As Bauböck notes, today "a border is a site where political powers attempt to regulate flows of goods and services, money and capital, information and ideas,

[86] Bauböck, "Citizenship and Migration," 30.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid., 28.

and people across distinct territorial jurisdictions."[89] A common critique of globalization is that it facilitates the movement of each of these, except for people. With respect to migration, "where there is a political or administrative border between places of departure and destination, freedom of movement is composed of three distinct elements: a right of exit, a right of entry, and a right to settlement at the destination."[90] This is consistent with the ideals behind the Universal Declaration on Human Rights concerning movement of people, and goes beyond that declaration by asserting a right of entry. However, rapidly expanding the right of entry can lead to tension when that right is perceived as being exploited. The European Union's response to the Syrian refugee crisis during the summer of 2015– a situation that remains unresolved– highlights the difficulty in reconciling concerns of human rights on the one hand, and responsibilities of political, civic, and legal order on the other. Indeed, Bauböck notes that "internal border controls in the Schengen area can be temporarily reintroduced if a government claims that there is a significant risk to its national security,"[91] and certain EU countries– notably Hungary– made just that claim as they closed their borders to refugees and migrants. This situation indicates that mere permission of entry is one thing; acceptance of that right by citizens of a receiving country, let alone a path to more permanent citizenship for migrants and refugees arriving there, is something else entirely.

With respect to those who are permitted to enter, "most countries make it easy to enter as a tourist, more difficult to enter as a would-be resident or worker, and even more

[89] Bauböck, "Citizenship and Free Movement," 346.
[90] Ibid., 350.
[91] Ibid., 346.

difficult to enter as an immigrant."[92] The underlying attitude here is one that harbors suspicion of what incoming foreigners might wish to draw from that country's resources, yet is more than happy to receive individuals for brief stays during which they will mainly benefit that country's economy through tourism expenditures. Migrant workers are perhaps the most numerous category; yet most migration policies in developed nations exploit them "as workers while limiting their claims as human beings."[93] In the United States, where "the undocumented alone represent 5 percent of the U.S. workforce, and have become a structural reality in the U.S. economy,"[94] this is an uncomfortable reality that contributes to the intensity of debate over migration policies. In nation-states that are more open to immigration, and perhaps even perceive it to be necessary and/or desired for a variety of political, economic, and social reasons, "immigration policy may encourage people to enter but discourage them from coming if they would only be dependants rather than workers (and taxpayers); it might encourage them to become residents but make it difficult to become citizens."[95] Moreover, once admitted to the country, these people are often submitted to various restrictions with deportation as a threatened sanction for noncompliance: "those who have entered as residents may be forbidden to work in paid employment. Those with work permits may be restricted to work with the sponsoring employer and prohibited from changing jobs… in some countries foreign residents are prohibited from commenting on local politics."[96] In such situations, they clearly do not

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[92] Chandran Kukathas, "Expatriatism: The Theory and Practice of Open Borders," in *Citizenship, Borders, and Human Needs,* ed. Rogers Smith (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 327.
[93] Campese, "¿Cuantos Más?," 279.
[94] Kerwin, "Natural Rights," 197.
[95] Kukathas, "Expatriatism," 329.
[96] Ibid., 330.

enjoy the full suite of rights accorded to their citizen neighbors, creating an unethical disparity between human beings who merit fundamentally equal rights and dignity.

While "very few people (or states) advocate completely closed borders"[97] today, "many countries are concerned about admitting 'too many' people from particular groups, or people who are not members of the dominant group in the country,"[98] and those concerns are reflected in their border control regimes and immigration policies. There are strong arguments in their favor: "any stable society, the argument goes, needs to be able to keep control of its population to guard against criminality, political subversion, and terror… members of any country have benefits that accrue to them in virtue of their having access to opportunities outsiders do not."[99] This line of thinking, however, overlooks or ignores the negative effects of xenophobic suspicion and political and cultural isolation on the social fabric of a nation. Moreover, there is a strong social justice counterpoint to the thread of protectionism inherent in such arguments, a claim that Joseph Carens advances by identifying and critiquing a deterministic understanding of citizenship that is obsolete: "citizenship in the modern world is a lot like feudal status in the medieval world. It was assigned at birth; for the most part it is not subject to change by the individual's will and efforts; and it has a major impact upon that person's life chances."[100] This aligns with the understanding that "every state implicitly creates a default category of those who live outside [its] boundaries and are by definition beyond the pale of membership,"[101] thus presenting citizenship as an exclusionary force, easily criticized from a social justice

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[97] Kukathas, "Expatriatism," 334.
[98] Ibid., 335.
[99] Ibid., 336.
[100] Bauböck, "Citizenship and Free Movement," 354.
[101] Niraja Gopal Jayal, *Citizenship and its Discontents* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 82.

perspective as protecting the rich at the expense of the poor, an unequal status quo instead of a more equitable vision for the future. Other potential conceptions of citizenship include "neoliberal citizenship [that] looks at society as a society of natives; [and] integrationist citizenship [that] looks at society as one that includes immigrants and ethnic minorities… who are to be made part of 'us.'"[102]

Completely closing borders will not solve these tensions over citizenship, yet completely opening them would be similarly ineffective. After all, Kukathas observes, as the majority of nation-states currently advocating stronger border controls have democratic societies in which individual freedom is a cherished value, "any justification for closed borders has to offer reasons strong enough to warrant the interference with individual freedom– both of those who wish to move and of those who are unable to welcome outsiders."[103] At the same time, many individuals in such societies would surely recognize the standing of an argument from "a principle of humanity [that] suggests that it is difficult to justify turning the poorest people away from the doors of the richest societies… on the whole, the well off and the rich have little trouble crossing borders. The purpose of closed borders is usually to keep out the poor."[104] Along these lines, "conceding the significance of social justice arguments is a way of recognizing that there is a tradeoff to be made between doing justice within societies and doing justice across societies."[105] The United States and the European Union are both engaged in intense political and ethical debates over this tradeoff, with respect to global migration and a number of other major issues. Ultimately,

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[102] Christian Joppke, "Immigration, Citizenship, and the Need for Integration," in *Citizenship, Borders, and Human Needs,* ed. Rogers Smith (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 163.
[103] Kukathas, "Expatriatism," 337.
[104] Ibid., 338.
[105] Ibid., 340.

any given state has the freedom to choose to whom it grants, bestows, or extends citizenship within the established sociopolitical and legal framework. Yet the growing numbers of migrants and refugees raise for many countries– and perhaps the entire global system of nation-states and citizenship– a crucial question: "When and under what conditions does the moral personhood of a refugee or migrant generate a right to legal or juridical personhood in the form of citizenship?"[106]

Theories and Policies of Citizenship for Migrants and Refugees

Niraja Gopal Jayal notes that "there is a curious disjuncture between the ways in which citizenship as legal status is treated in the worlds of theory and of policy."[107] She believes that there is a danger in a growing gap between how citizenship is legally defined and granted on the one hand, and how it is actually applied and practiced on the other hand. In the United States and other countries that, whatever their past policies, are now manifesting opposition to receiving migrants and refugees and offering them a path to citizenship, there is, in her view, an inadequate grasp of what such arguments actually concern. If "the welfare-state has induced passivity in the practice of citizenship and has created apathetic voters and welfare-dependent citizens, wholly unmindful of their civic obligations and duties,"[108] then such individuals lose their standing for withholding from others a citizenship that they neither grasp nor practice. There is also a need to more clearly assess the various moral and legal threads in this issue. As Jayal characterizes it, "the *moral* claims of refugees are addressed to humanity in general, but it is not very clear

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[106] Jayal, *Citizenship*, 82.
[107] Ibid., 84.
[108] Ibid., 85.

to whom the *legal* claims might be addressed in the absence of a new international legal regime."[109] Moreover, whenever migrants and refugees arrive in another country, "there are two crucial aspects of quotidian life that have to be confronted… first, the fulfillment of basic needs and livelihoods; and second, the hostility of the host population."[110]

A clear distinction is necessary when speaking of refugees and migrants in terms of their status; "refugees are *not* citizens. Such rights as they are granted are a result of the humanitarian provisions of international law, and if they claim citizenship, it is on terms specified by the state."[111] Despite the rhetoric of universal human rights and the theoretical agreement of most nation-states to uphold these rights through international law and their own laws and statutes, they still have great liberty to define citizenship as they wish, and to bestow it upon– and sometimes withdraw it from– whomever they choose. Jayal cites an instance in India's history when "about 60% of [approximately 73,000 stateless Sri Lankan refugees living in Tamil Nadu] have been born in India but, due to the 2003 amendment which denies citizenship to any individual one of whose parents was an illegal immigrant at the time of his/her birth, are ineligible for legal status."[112] The situation of people of Haitian descent living in the Dominican Republic who face the revocation of their citizenship and deportation to Haiti is similar, and highlights the power and autonomy that individual state governments retain over citizenship, although increasingly the conventions of international law are resisting measures that could lead to stateless individuals. There may be significant moral criticism, and even outrage, over such decisions, yet they can be defended and upheld from a straightforward legal perspective.

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[109] Jayal, *Citizenship*, 87.
[110] Ibid.,93.
[111] Ibid., 85.
[112] Ibid., 88.

Citizenship has great attraction; "both for those who do not yet have it, as well as for those who do, citizenship remains the architectonic aspiration under which all their dreams and hopes for greater security and a better quality of life are subsumed."[113] Christian anthropology considers these attributes of civil society as an absolute right; the current geopolitical order does not consistently foster them. Particularly for people who have lacked the circumstances supporting such basic human and political rights in their own countries, "citizenship is the form taken by claims of what are little more than rights to the fulfillment of basic needs, for those who are citizens in no more than juridical terms, but also for those who are not yet citizens even in the minimum juridical sense."[114] Like Bauböck, Jayal has also noted "international trends, where a visible pluralization of citizenship has been evolving over the last decade,"[115] raising the possibility of how moral arguments might be made for adjusting the legal standards and practices for granting citizenship to individuals fleeing states where citizenship is not practically provided or experienced. There are already allowances within accepted conventions of dual citizenship that protect voting rights. A next step is to argue that "just because citizens emigrate, they should lose rights of citizenship in their country of origin especially because they will not, at least initially, enjoy any rights of citizenship in the host country, and no human being should be altogether deprived of political rights."[116] Should such a claim have any less force when someone emigrates from a situation in which they have no political rights or no means by which to exercise them?

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[113] Jayal, *Citizenship*, 94.
[114] Ibid., 99.
[115] Ibid., 102.
[116] Ibid., 104.

Considering this question invites us to focus on what Kukathas, speaking of open borders, though in a way applicable to citizenship as well, proposes as "three dimensions along which the issue can be considered: entry, participation, and membership."[117] In assessing various nation-states around the world, it is clear that "entry, participation, and membership are all a matter of degree,"[118] influenced by the particular laws of each country, which in turn are shaped by the attitudes of the societies, cultures, political parties, and faith communities, among others, therein. The concern over open borders expressed in some countries, usually conceived and presented in terms of a threat to its national security and the well-being of its citizens, is actually rooted in the question of "lowering or easing restrictions on foreign entry into, participation in, and membership of a state or polity."[119] The anxiety about making such changes is a very real and legitimate one. Kukathas upholds as reasonable the argument that "the admission of foreigners should be restricted to ensure that a homogeneous society does not become diverse in unfamiliar or uncomfortable ways– even if diversity is not to be repudiated entirely."[120]

It is important to note that the diversity to which Kukathas refers is a fact of life in many of the countries which are now feeling pressured by contemporary surges in migration, as well as a rich aspect of their heritage. Benhabib observes that "the UN estimates that in 1910 roughly 33 million individuals lived in countries other than their own as migrants,"[121] contributing to the increase of diversity in the countries that received them. Moreover, from 1910 to 2000, "the population of the world has grown threefold,

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[117] Kukathas, "Expatriatism," 332.
[118] Ibid., 333.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid., 335.
[121] Benhabib, "Borders," 673.

from 1.6 to 5.3 billion. Migrations, by contrast, increased almost six-fold over the course of these 90 years."[122] As movement outpaced growth, people from various races, cultures, nationalities, religions, and social classes inevitably mixed with increasing frequency, even as certain areas of the world remained fairly homogeneous. Diversity cannot be reversed without intentional– and almost certainly coercive– steps that would face serious legal and moral criticisms. Thus the argument for restricting migration based on concerns for the preservation of social homogeneity wavers in the face of past history and present reality. In contrast, as Benhabib argues, "citizenship rights today must be resituated in a transnational context"[123] that recognizes and affirms nation-state sovereignty while also challenging it to adapt to the more universal demands of human rights law and moral claims about human dignity in a globalized world. As Benhabib notes, this creates a vexing tension between "the republican ideal of self-governance and the liberal ideal of the equal value of liberty,"[124] such that a given nation's policies regarding migration are weighed against more universal arguments for human rights that could supersede a nation's interests. An appeal to a Christian vision of the human community and political society would more firmly identify and critique "an outright contradiction between human rights declarations and states' sovereign claims to control their borders and to monitor the quality and quantity of admittees."[125]

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[122] Benhabib, "Borders," 673.
[123] Ibid., 674.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid.

Free Movement: A Replacement for Borders and Citizenship?

New concepts of citizenship are implicitly brought to the forefront of geopolitical debate by the expanding numbers of migrants who leave their native nation-states with little hope of return. They often face little choice but to abandon cherished homes that have been compromised by the ravages of war, ineffective or nonexistent government, authoritarian regimes, and climate change, to name the most significant push factors driving migration. Europe continues to struggle with the Syrian refugee crisis, with the cohesion of the European Union itself strained by the political and humanitarian aspects of this situation. Immigration continues to be a politically charged topic in the United States, often in ways that mask racism and xenophobia that are opposed to the diversification wrought by globalization. Bauböck, in this context, regards "the citizenship argument for controlling immigration as indeed quite strong,"[126] and privileges it above certain "positive duties of global social justice and… negative duties of states to refrain from restricting basic liberties."[127] By arguing for the value of national identity defined, in part, by clear and well-enforced borders, he commits himself to upholding the current nation-state framework in which citizenship, migration, and the like are understood, which requires him to address the weaknesses in this structure exposed by contemporary circumstances.

Bauböck notes, quite rightly, that "proponents of free movement may think that states do not have moral rights to control immigration, but they rarely question that in the current international system they do have positive legal rights to control it."[128] He traces this legal convention not to the origin of the nation-state framework itself, but to a much

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[126] Rainer Bauböck, "Citizenship and Free Movement," in *Citizenship, Borders, and Human Needs,* ed. Rogers Smith (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 343.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid., 345.

more recent historical period– "during World War I, when international passports were introduced for reasons of military security."[129] It thus seems ironic, a century later, that the majority of migrants seeking entry and/or asylum in other nations do so in flight from war and conflict, rather than as potentially desiring to undermine or destabilize a host nation. Moreover, it is only recently that the approach to migration has shifted from the previous paradigm, in which "free movement across state borders was still much more frequently constrained by emigration restriction than by immigration controls."[130] While there are still a few nation-states today that seek to prevent their citizens from departing, the more common stance is that of nation-states seeking to restrict– often quite forcefully and unevenly– who is permitted to enter and remain in their territory. These issues all converge around borders, which have taken on new significance– as well as ambiguous meaning– in the era of globalization largely driven by capitalistic economic values rather than universal human ones.

Bauböck explores the phenomenon of dual citizenship as a possible means of resolving these tensions, or at least clarifying some of their underlying foundations. In his view, "a plurality of citizenships for migrants is compatible with democracy under transnational arrangements that determine which rights will be protected and which duties can be enforced by which state."[131] Yet this presumes that both states in question are functioning well and can provide the requisite environment in which the rights, services, duties, and rewards of citizenship can be enjoined and enjoyed. The weakness in this argument is manifest by the great majority of refugees and migrants, for whom at least one

[129] Bauböck, "Citizenship and Free Movement," 345.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid., 349.

of the states in play has failed to establish the conditions in which citizenship is practically feasible. Sometimes the first state in which refugees and migrants arrive after leaving their native one is itself weak, beset by strains on its own population, or otherwise barely capable of supporting an influx of people. This has become true as the Syrian refugee crisis persists in Europe; in closing their borders to non-EU citizens, some of the wealthier and more well-resourced EU nations have obstructed the flow of refugees and caused their numbers to swell in Greece and various Balkan states ill-equipped to handle them. The same applies in the case of escalating violence and deteriorating rule of law in the Central American countries of the Northern Triangle– El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.

In these situations, there is often a call to radically adjust the concept of borders to one that is much more open and permissive of the free movement of people. After all, as Chandran Kukathas notes, throughout the world "every day, large numbers of people cross borders that separate one political jurisdiction from another."[132] The borders characterized by military fortification, official checkpoints, and other human means of control garner a great deal of attention, but there are many others that are no less clearly defined yet passed with great ease. Regardless of how clearly defined and "built up" they may be, Kukathas claims that borders are understood today as reflecting the tensions between citizens and foreigners. These tensions fall most squarely and practically upon the authorities made responsible for minding those borders, often at the behest of economic and political forces beyond their control, forces over which citizens, migrants, and refugees also have little, if any, influence. In theory, "the authorities within borders are responsible for attending to

[132] Kukathas, "Expatriatism," 324.

the interests of those within their jurisdiction rather than keeping others out,"[133] but in practice, a great burden is placed on border officials to assess everyone wishing to enter and to enforce laws that clearly deny entry to many individuals.

Concluding Thoughts

Writing about the European Union in 2005, Benhabib observed that "the conflict between *sovereignty* and *hospitality* has weakened in intensity but has by no means been eliminated."[134] That conflict has gained renewed vigor on the national level in the past two years in many parts of Europe, but has been matched by groups on smaller and more local levels– provinces, cities, towns, individual families and citizens– striving to offer hospitality and support to migrants and refugees within the social and legal frameworks surrounding them, motivated by cultural, moral, religious, and other values. Perhaps to a prophetic degree, Benhabib envisioned "a shrinking of the effectiveness of popular sovereignty and the emergence of a sovereignty beyond the boundaries set by the rule of law."[135] This trend is often considered in economic terms, evident in governments' acquiescence to the realities of globalization and their construction of laws that facilitate the movement of goods, capital, and other immaterial items across borders more easily than that of certain classes of people deemed threatening or undesirable within a social context focused on the accumulation and preservation of wealth and privilege. As Benhabib notes, "the losers in this process are the citizens from whom state protection is withdrawn, or, more likely, who

[133] Kukathas, "Expatriatism," 326.
[134] Benhabib, "Borders," 675.
[135] Ibid.

never had strong state protection in the first place."[136] War, violence, persecution, and climate change are other contemporary contexts in which such state protections are intentionally withdrawn or unintentionally lost as governments, through both action and inaction, fail to provide for the human needs and dignity of their citizens.

In such a context, a renewed understanding of human solidarity is necessary. In a homily he gave on the island of Lampedusa in summer 2013 at a camp for migrants rescued from perilous efforts to cross the Mediterranean Sea from Africa to Europe, Pope Francis, only months into his pontificate, powerfully offered "some thoughts meant to challenge people's consciences and lead them to reflection and a concrete change of heart."[137] Lamenting the drowning deaths of so many men, women, and children "trying to escape difficult situations to find some serenity and peace… looking for a better place for themselves and their families,"[138] he urged his audience– in theory, a broad swath of the globe, given the coverage his message received– to resist and escape forces that have made them "complacent and closed amid comforts which have deadened their hearts."[139] With respect to the tangle of laws, policies, and disconnection from suffering that have made many insensitive to the plight of migrants and refugees, Francis powerfully asserts, "when humanity as a whole loses its bearings, it results in tragedies like the one we have witnessed,"[140] in which hundreds of men, women, and children drowned at sea. He offered no concrete solution; only an uncomfortable claim: "we are a society which has forgotten

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[136] Benhabib, "Borders," 676.
[137] Pope Francis, "Visit to Lampedusa," Vatican City: Vatican Press, 2013.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.

how to weep, how to experience compassion… the globalization of indifference has taken from us the ability to weep!"[141]

Renewed human society can orient communities, cities, nation-states, and the global community to consider the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of citizenship enjoyed in affluent and prosperous areas of the world, as well as ones in which this concept functions well even without needing to provide exceptional wealth. The forces of conflict, economics, and climate change that will increasingly drive flows of migrants and refugees in the 21st century challenge all countries to consider their rights and duties to provide basic human rights to all people. Considering the gap between, on the one hand, the standards of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Catholic Church's teaching of universal human dignity, and on the other hand, the reality that such rights and such dignity are violated, marginalized, and ignored on a daily basis in much of the world, it is true that "the human rights corpus, if fully implemented, would alter the fundamental character of any state, its cultures, and society."[142] Yet the social and political upheavals occurring throughout the world carry no less potential to fundamentally alter the condition of the world and its people, not necessarily for the better.

Consequently, citizenship is but one concept that may need to evolve and be more firmly supported as a human right. Benhabib has noted "a return to *citizenship in the city* as well as *the transnational institutions* of the EU."[143] She also observes that "democratic legitimacy requires that all those whose interests are affected by collective decisions in which they have a stake– as workers, parents, residents– also have a say in these

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[141] Pope Francis, "Lampedusa."
[142] Mutua, "Universalism in Human Rights," 52.
[143] Benhabib, "Borders," 675.

decisions."[144] Whether they receive official legal status or not, migrants and refugees have this stakeholder status in the communities where they settle and strive to build lives for themselves, their families, and their new neighbors. Even further, all are stakeholders in a global community that is increasingly interconnected and interdependent. Citizenship seems poised to receive some change and adaption to better reflect this reality, and better support the ideals of universal human rights and solidarity for the benefit of all.

[144] Benhabib, "Borders," 676.

Chapter 3: Migrant People, Pilgrim Church: Practical Ecclesiology and Theological Justice for Communities on the Move

For many years, I have been involved in ministry with Latin American parish communities in the United States, first in St. Louis and currently in Boston. I have traveled through many countries in Latin America, doing ministry and gaining a deeper lived experience of the social, cultural, and religious environment in both urban and rural areas. Most recently, in summer 2015, I spent five weeks with a small group of Jesuits along the migration corridor from the so-called Northern Triangle (El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala) through Mexico and into the southwestern United States. We accompanied hundreds of men, women, and children as they made the risky journey. While I had been aware for years of the complex issues of migration in the lives of parishioners I've met in St. Louis and Boston, participating more deeply in the daily experiences of migrants– predominantly at shelters along the route operated by volunteers having some degree of affiliation with local churches and faith communities– raised new questions and added greater weight to knowledge that I had previously acquired.

Aware that many members of my parish community in Boston have migrated to the United States from the "Northern Triangle" region of Central America and formed strong communities in this city rooted in their common membership in the parish, I've become more curious about their experience and practice of their Catholic faith during the weeks that they spent in transit. In each migration shelter, I noticed the extent to which a sense of community formed, given the differing lengths of time that individual migrants stayed at each shelter, whether or not they were traveling with any family members, and how many different countries were represented. This sense of community, in turn, affected the

migrants themselves; the shelters were, in effect, the only "homes" that they encountered along their journeys, the only places where they could count on sturdy shelter, safe space, reliable provision of food, and a relatively stable environment in which to contemplate their next steps and future prospects. As I continue to reflect upon this migration experience in light of my ongoing ministry with Latin Americans, and where that fits into the broader ministry of the Catholic Church, I find myself desiring a better sense of connection and integration between these spheres of faith and practice. In this chapter, I argue that a viable practical theology capable of addressing the complex reality of migration involves an ecclesiology grounded in the people of God on pilgrimage, drawing robust and attentive engagement with their life circumstances and their faith into mutually constructive dialogue with the Christian tradition and its various lived expressions. Although I focus on the Mexican migration corridor, such an approach would surely have much to offer to the dialogue in Europe concerning the migrants and refugees arriving there from the Middle East, Afghanistan, northern Africa, and other regions of the world.

It is important to bear in mind that great variation exists within the various levels of the Catholic Church with respect to concepts and experiences of ecclesiology writ large. Individuals and communities at the parish level may have a strong sense of solidarity and connection to families and relatives in their local regions, but a less developed notion of communion and solidarity with the universal Catholic Church as it exists in diverse forms in different places, and in different ethnic, socioeconomic, or even liturgical environments. Awareness of the concept of the Catholic Church as a faith community on pilgrimage through the world surely varies widely, and does not necessarily connect to the concept, or even the practical experience, of migration. Although there is a degree of intentional and

autonomous choice in embarking on a pilgrimage and emigrating from one's home, migration is quite often driven by concerns for one's own life, safety, and dignity– as well as that of one's family– to a degree not found in the motivations of the vast majority of pilgrims. Pilgrimage is often oriented toward renewal and rediscovery in a spiritual key; migration is largely a matter of survival. Yet the special attention being drawn and given to migrants and their plight on diverse levels of the Church– from Pope Francis to clergy, religious, and laity from small parishes in Mexico– suggests potential connections between faith, ecclesiology, and migration. Using a praxis-based ecclesiology to reflect upon my experiences with migrants in transit and in receiving communities, I hope to show that their insights and wisdom can represent a needed link between how the Church sees itself, how it forms its members in a faith exhorting practical action oriented towards justice, and how ministry with and for migrants is consistent with the Church's mission and purpose.

Context: The Mexican Migration Corridor

The Mexican Migration Corridor runs the length of the country, beginning with northern and southern branches on the border with Guatemala, narrowing through the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Veracruz and Oaxaca states, then splitting into three branches after Mexico City: a western route through Guadalajara north towards Sonora and Baja California states, a central route towards Chihuahua and Coahuila states, and an eastern route through San Luis Potosí towards Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas states. In terms of destinations in the United States, the western route leads towards San Diego, Los Angeles, Tucson, and Phoenix, the central route leads towards the cities of Ciudad Juarez and El Paso straddling the United States-Mexico border, and the eastern route leads towards the cities

of southern Texas: Laredo, McAllen, and Brownsville on the border, San Antonio and Houston in the interior. Much of the territory between these cities is sparsely populated, particularly north of Mexico City, therefore migrants often travel long distances between locales where they can easily rest, replenish supplies, and obtain various services. Those distances become even more arduous as, according to a recent article in *Commonweal*, an increasing number of migrants "are walking most of the way from Central America to the U.S. border,"[145] a distance of more than two thousand miles, as the prospect of riding the freight train– known as "The Beast"– that travels these routes becomes more perilous, the result of increased migration enforcement by Mexican authorities as well as greater violence by Mexican gangs.

The corridor is defined by numerous attributes, some of which are fixed, while others are dynamic and fluid. The physical geography of Mexico varies widely from the sub-tropical jungles and wetlands of the south to the mountainous interior to the deserts of the north, all risky terrain for migrants to traverse on foot when other transportation options are unavailable or risky. This geography also dictates the arrangement of the ground transportation infrastructure used by the vast majority of migrants. The cities and regions through which large numbers of migrants pass became natural locations for the humanitarian aid shelters established by churches, religious communities, volunteer groups, and private citizens, sometimes with a level of support from the Mexican government. Thus, as word spread among migrants about the locations of these shelters and the services they offered, the corridor became more defined by this chain of shelters. In fact, most shelters distribute maps of the migration corridor to all whom they serve; one

[145] Joseph Sorrentino, "A Long Walk Through Mexico," *Commonweal,* November 13, 2005, 10.

even features it as a prominent mural outside the main office. Furthermore, as conditions along the corridor change– Mexican authorities intensifying apprehension and deportation of non-Mexican migrants, enhanced security measures on the freight trains many migrants catch, fluctuations in assaults and kidnappings by local gangs and drug cartels– migrants adjust their timing and path from shelter to shelter, town to town, as they gradually move northward.

Migrants who are able to reach the United States border meet a new set of challenges and difficult choices. The ongoing intensification of United States Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) activity along this border has become starkly evident in imposing steel fences, walls, and conspicuous surveillance equipment, in addition to the extensive patrols conducted in both urban and rural areas through which the border runs, a policy that seems posed to continue with even greater intensity. The Kino Border Initiative (KBI), a binational project of the Society of Jesus in the transborder city of Nogales– a small portion in Arizona, the majority in Sonora– that engages in educational work and political advocacy on the northern side and direct humanitarian aid, legal support, and pastoral counseling on the southern side– recently commissioned a report[146] that detailed significant levels of abuse of migrants and separation of families in the process of apprehension and detention of migrants by CBP officers. The report notes that "to make unauthorized and irregular entry into the U.S. territory more difficult and to make unauthorized immigration and repeat attempts at entry after deportation less likely"[147] is a clear goal of the CBP, yet one

[146] Michael Danielson, "Our Values on the Line: Migrant Abuse and Family Separation at the Border" (Report prepared for Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States, September 2015).
[147] Ibid., 6.

that has resulted in "a number of negative and unintended consequences"[148] that verge on official sanctioning of abusive treatment as a deterrence policy. As CBP jurisdiction extends one hundred miles from any border or point of entry into the United States, including all of the nation's coastal metropolitan areas, migrants who do manage to cross the border still face an arduous and extensive journey to escape the greatest risk of arrest, deportation, and detention. Many are caught by officers staffing checkpoints on highways– such as Interstate 19 between Nogales and Tucson– or by vehicular, horseback, and helicopter patrols in the deserts and ranches of the Southwest. In the KBI study, "more than one-third of deported migrants interviewed suffered some type of abuse or mistreatment at the hands of Border Patrol agents and while in DHS [Department of Homeland Security; CBP's parent agency] custody."[149] Sadly, this is not a new experience for many of them; as Joseph Sorrentino writes in his article on the Mexican corridor, "almost all the thirty-five migrants I interviewed told me they had been assaulted during their journey."[150]

Although the KBI study did not ask migrants why they had left their homelands, Sorrentino's interviews and research present clear evidence: "as bad as the poverty is, it's the violence that's driving people out. Honduras has the world's highest murder rate, El Salvador the fourth highest, Guatemala the fifth… perpetrated by… the most vicious gangs in the Americas… People will continue migrating north until conditions in Central America improve."[151] The fact that migrants who experience this level of violence and displacement in their homelands, encounter further dangers and hardships along the journey, and face additional abuse upon arrival in the United States contrasts sharply with the rationale for

[148] Danielson, "Our Values," 6.
[149] Ibid., 6-7.
[150] Sorrentino, "A Long Walk," 11.
[151] Ibid., 10, 12.

"the increased criminalization of unauthorized immigration"[152] enforced by the CBP, namely, that most migrants are dangerous individuals who will threaten communities in the United States. Quite the opposite; the majority of migrants desire, and would work to uphold, the very community stability and reliability of social order that has collapsed in their own countries, a point often overshadowed, if not outright ignored, in rhetoric that paints migrants as criminals who destabilize the communities in which they come to reside. Moreover, the "2004 memorandum of understanding between the U.S. and Mexico [that] stipulates that it is DHS policy to protect the unity of families"[153] has been sorely neglected given the evidence that "two out of three (64.6%) migrants who crossed into the United States with immediate family members and were deported to Nogales were separated from at least one of those family members by the Border Patrol during the process of detention and deportation."[154] These and other findings indicate that, as Giaocchino Campese has written, "if there is one constant in U.S. border policy, it is hypocrisy."[155]

A Practical Theology for the Phenomenon of Migration: Identity and Activity

The phenomenon of migration stirs a complicated host of questions, emotions, issues, and responses. The voices of migrants are often neglected or drowned out in the increasingly raucous debates about policy, economics, and social and cultural identity as receiving countries wrestle over how to respond to thousands of migrants reaching and crossing their borders. The Catholic Church's engagement with migration has taken on

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[152] Danielson, "Our Values," 13.
[153] Ibid., 14.
[154] Ibid., 15.
[155] Giacchino Campese, "¿Cuantos Más?: The Crucified Peoples at the U.S.-Mexico Border" in *A Promised Land, A Perilous Journey*, eds. Daniel Groody and Gioacchino Campese (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 279.

various forms, from Pope Francis's repeated calls for mercy and hospitality as a response to migrants' plight, to the involvement of religious communities and laypersons in developing, staffing, and sustaining the array of shelters along the Mexican Migration Corridor. Some bishops have been particularly outspoken in support of migrant's rights and a comprehensive reform of immigration policy in the United States; one Catholic and several Protestant bishops serving in southern Arizona have written a set of personal and spiritual reflections on their pastoral involvement– and that of their congregations– in the immigration issue. They affirm, in both word and deed, that "Christians have always been sent, like Jesus, to serve those who are poor and marginalized. Our presence on the border of our country is where we believe Jesus directs us to be."[156] Extending the actions taken by individual Christians in response to the reality of migration, and the concrete experiences of migrants, into a broader attitude of the Church that reflects its very nature is a step that seems to follow from– and perhaps implicitly motivates– these diverse and somewhat scattered ministries. Across diverse settings and communities, "the Church's inner unity moves it to be a sign and instrument of unity in the world; its catholicity calls it to be a sign and instrument of diversity in unity for all to see,"[157] expressing the Church's nature as a community of disciples charged by Christ to imitate his loving service and presence among the poor and the marginalized. Developing and articulating a praxis-based ecclesiology that presents the Church's migration through earthly time and space towards eternal life with God as intimately bound up with the migration of the vulnerable from places of war, chaos, and violence to places of peace, justice, and community would be a deep, forceful

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[156] Kirk Smith, "Foreword," in *Bishops on the Border: Pastoral Responses to Immigration*, eds. Mark Adams et al., (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2013), x.
[157] Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 299.

counterpoint to rhetoric and action that meets migrants with suspicion, fear, abuse, and rejection.

A practical theology oriented toward ecclesiological questions of identity, evangelization, and mission inevitably involves attention to the various environments in which the Church and its members are found. Such attention inherently requires a measure of dialogue between the Church and the world, just as the Second Vatican Council noted. Particularly in its pastoral document on the Church, *Gaudium et Spes*, "the Council summoned the people of God to be attentive to the aspirations and laments of all people, both in the church and in contemporary society."[158] In subsequent decades, "this new semantics of dialogue contributed to a new practical grammar of the church, in which it was now assumed that practices of dialogue are necessary to realize the church's identity and mission."[159] The contours of that dialogue varied widely enough that some concerns were raised about the Church's mission being distorted by secular and political issues; liberation and feminist theologies faced criticism for promoting values and causes that could be interpreted to be at odds with certain values claimed by more conservative voices in the Church. Fervent debate and palpable tension arose as "Catholics shaped by neo-Scholastic theology [who] conceived of God as the sovereign One who creates the world, the Lawgiver who establishes the order of the world accessible through natural law and divine law"[160] perceived the emergence of "new ways of thinking about God [that] gave greater attention to the dialogical nature of the Triune God."[161] As the Church strove to

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[158] Claire Wolfteich, ed., *Invitation to Practical Theology: Catholic Voices and Visions* (New York: Paulist Press, 2014), 236.
[159] Wolfteich, *Invitation to Practical Theology*, 234.
[160] Ibid., 243.
[161] Ibid.

reinterpret itself for the contemporary world and project that identity into concrete situations, it became vulnerable to neglecting the necessity of internal dialogue about how it saw and expressed itself. Wolfteich notes that "just as there are many other social laments that deserve widespread attention and collective action… there are other ecclesial laments that merit attention in parishes and dioceses."[162] Mission and ecclesiology depend deeply on one another, and both require honest and discerning dialogue.

The Second Vatican Council's decree on mission, *Ad Gentes Divinitus*, "attempted to point to the missionary nature of every local church and not to confine missionary practice to exotic (i.e., non-Western) places with the work carried out by women and men with specialized vocations and training."[163] It also sought to reorient the concept of missionary work by making it a universal responsibility capable of being fulfilled anywhere and at any time. Missionary activity was to be carried out "not with the morbid urgency of saving souls, but with the joyful motive of sharing the unsearchable riches of Christ, done in ways that model Jesus' practice of openness, listening, gentleness, and vulnerability."[164] An ecclesiology modeled on these principles, and attentive to "Jesus' inclusive ministry [revolving] around the marginalized and sinful people of his time,"[165] improves the Church's ability to grasp and articulate its identity as the people of God relying on divine grace for their growth in holiness, and progressing along that path through their ministry with all their neighbors.

Contemplating and expressing the identity and activity of the Church as a whole, a living, dynamic community manifest in cultures and societies throughout the world, is a

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[162] Wolfteich, *Invitation to Practical Theology*, 248.
[163] Ibid., 258-259.
[164] Ibid., 259.
[165] Ibid., 264.

central task of ecclesiology. In the half-century since the Second Vatican Council, this task has, by necessity, involved grappling with the opportunities and challenges raised by the Church's interaction with the cultural and social environments in which it wishes to exist. George Weigel's multi-faceted concept of evangelical Catholicism, largely influenced by his study of (and concerns about) the Church in the West, urges "deeper reflection on the missionary heart of the Church."[166] Examining its history in the lands that became the United States, Timothy Matovina attends to the "encounter and conflict of peoples, primarily the southward-moving French, the northward-moving Spanish, the westward-moving British, the natives who already lived on the land, and the slaves and immigrants who settled among them."[167] In such a presentation of the Catholic Church and its people, he argues that today's experience of migration is nothing new, but rather an inherent aspect not only of our ecclesial history, but also our national history. Looking at the present and future of the Catholic Church in the United States from a Hispanic ministry perspective, Hosffman Ospino asserts, "at the heart of evangelization one encounters the conviction that the Church is in a permanent state of mission whose ultimate aim is to guide women and men to a transforming encounter with Christ."[168] The history and mission of the Church in the United States has long involved the contributions of people from many different countries, languages, and cultures, sharing their faith in common yet often being divided along traits deeply entwined with personal and communal identity. Matovina notes this as "a central and long-standing feature of U.S. Catholicism: the varied attempts to incorporate

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[166] George Weigel, *Evangelical Catholicism: Deep Reform in the 21st-Century Church* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 5-6.
[167] Timothy Matovina, *Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America's Largest Church* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 6-7.
[168] Hosffman Ospino, *Hispanic Ministry in the 21st Century: Present and Future* (Miami: Convivium Press, 2013), 291. [All citations are my translations from the original Spanish]

diverse groups into a unified body of faith."[169] A notable ecclesiological accomplishment in the United States, "national parishes built unity by allowing newcomers to integrate in their own time and, to an extent, on their own terms rather than those of their established predecessors."[170] The Church appears as a community whose journey and development are marked by the processes of immigration, inculturation, and integration undergone by the diverse groups comprising it.

Preserving the Church's Identity along Journeys of Migration and Life

In order to navigate this path, the Church must be firmly rooted in its sense of itself as individuals and communities unaware of their identity are prone to wandering and becoming lost, bereft of any reliable landmarks by which to orient themselves. As an example, Weigel claims, "the Church in Europe has been in free fall throughout the postconciliar years because too many of its people ceased to believe that the Gospel is true."[171] Although other factors are surely at play, his observation allows for a helpful contrast with a renewed emphasis on the life of Christ for the Church's identity and mission: "evangelical Catholicism begins not with *knowing about* Jesus, but with *knowing* Jesus."[172] Such a relationship with Jesus, fundamental to the life of the Church and to each member of the faithful, is often developed through formal and informal catechism; parents, grandparents, clergy and religious, teachers, and other figures hand down the faith from one generation to the next. Weigel notes the importance of such catechism and formation for ensuring "a deeper evangelization that can no longer be imagined to have taken place

[169] Matovina, *Latino Catholicism*, 43.
[170] Ibid., 48.
[171] Weigel, *Evangelical Catholicism*, 51.
[172] Ibid., 57.

through the ambient culture,"[173] fitting his concerns about the decline of Catholicism in the West. Conversely, among Hispanics, "it is in the family and the community that Latino Catholics primarily form our cultural and religious identity,"[174] a task made more arduous given the facts that "thousands of Hispanic families live divided because of transnational separation, long hours of work and the ongoing struggle to adapt to a new culture."[175] Indeed, "85 percent of immigrant Hispanic teenagers have lived apart from one or both parents for a time span of at least six months."[176] A Church that sees its vitality as dependent on its identity, which relies heavily on its transmission from one generation to the next, "must creatively articulate models and resources for the formation in the faith and evangelization that can be shared in distinct communities"[177] whose mission is to serve, teach, and form the faithful.

The same structures and resources– family, culture, education, social services– that influence migrants along their journey from sending country through transit countries to receiving countries have parallels in the Church's evangelization and faith formation; the degree of their presence or absence has profound effects on the individuals comprising these communities. As one example, Matovina notes that often young Hispanics "are not offered pastoral care and religious formation in an appropriate sociocultural context for them, and they end up either being unchurched or seeking an ecclesial community elsewhere."[178] This represents an immense potential loss, both in demographic and mission terms, for "outreach to young people 'on the margins of social and congregational life' is

[173] Weigel, *Evangelical Catholicism*, 64.
[174] Ospino, *Hispanic Ministry*, 286.
[175] Ibid., 287.
[176] Matovina, *Latino Catholicism*, 223.
[177] Ospino, *Hispanic Ministry*, 294.
[178] Matovina, *Latino Catholicism*, 232.

nothing less than 'the gospel call.'"[179] It also points to the vital role of faith formation for the vitality of the Church in the present and the future. Although he tends to overlook the role of popular religion in Catholicism in Hispanic and other non-European cultural settings, Tom Beaudoin notes that "researchers have found that the constellation of beliefs and practices that individuals consolidate during adolescence and early adulthood more or less become a permanent part of [their] identities."[180] The question of why so many become "secular Catholics… trying to live their secularity, which often includes their own sense of spirituality, with much more investment than their ecclesiality"[181] is– or perhaps ought to be– as much of a concern to the Church as the flow of migrants through various parts of the world has become to governments in the United States and Europe. The tools and methods of practical theology seem applicable to both concerns, and bringing them into closer dialogue with one another could also bridge the racial and cultural divides evident in Western hostility to migrants and refugees.

As Wolfteich asserts, "'Catholic practical theology' should be understood as a dialogical contribution to a larger discourse;"[182] thus its application to issues of migration or ecclesiology offers experiential wisdom and insight to these areas individually and together, as well as to the Church and the world more broadly. If "practical theologians do and should concern themselves with the hermeneutical investigation of lived religion,"[183] then arguably their tools and methods are not solely applicable to purely theological matters. Therefore, practical theology can speculate about a connection, even a merely

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[179] Matovina, *Latino Catholicism*, 241.
[180] Tom Beaudoin, "Secular Catholicism and Practical Theology," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 15 (2011), 22.
[181] Ibid., 25.
[182] Wolfteich, *Invitation to Practical Theology*, 330.
[183] Beaudoin, "Secular Catholicism," 26.

tangential one, between indifference to migrants among many citizens and leaders in certain receiving countries on the one hand, and the perceived indifference of secular Catholics in those same countries to the mission and identity of the universal Church on the other hand. The former concern speaks to questions of social cohesion, the latter to concerns for ecclesial communion; both involve "making theological sense of how contemporary people practice relating to the sacred in their lives,"[184] or at least the call that external forces, persons, or faith itself makes on their personal lives and actions.

Beaudoin's notion of deconversion– leaving formal affiliation with a faith community– can parallel the historical amnesia that appears in resistance to migration in Europe and the United States. In the ecclesial realm, "the deconversion perspective emphasizes the process by which a particular faith praxis is left behind or transcended;"[185] one could argue that individuals opposed to receiving migrants into their countries, yet are themselves the children, grandchildren, or great-grandchildren of migrants, have undergone a secular version of this process, though it must be noted that this seems to apply mostly to descendants of European migrants. If, as Johann Metz claims, "the formation of identity always begins with the awakening of memory,"[186] then ignorance or rejection of our ecclesial, social, cultural, and demographic heritage erodes our identity in ways we may fail to realize. A renewed ecclesiology that presents the Church as a community journeying through space and time towards fullness of life and communion with God and one another could inject claims of theological justice into the "personal, emotional events and stories… expressing the ways people have learned of holding life

[184] Beaudoin, "Secular Catholicism," 27.
[185] Ibid., 28.
[186] Johann Metz, *Faith in History and Society: Toward A Practical Fundamental Theology* (New York: Crossroad, 2007), 75.

together."[187] Carrying out such a task must draw on the missionary traits of the Church's identity, and be grounded in practicing a theological approach "that will encourage people to live with integrity whatever their faith praxis must be."[188] Approaching such a significant demographic group– those who could be considered "deconverted"– is an uncompleted task full of potential for the Church, and insofar as "practical theologies… have a potential contribution to make to understanding a 'mission to' (as well as 'mission from') this emerging culture of secular Catholics,"[189] it is one that cries out for attention, echoing the cries of migrants from lands long plagued by war, violence, and poverty. The Church also, arguably, has a duty to proclaim "the unbelievable faith and resilience of the human spirit found among the migrants"[190] who cross– mostly on foot– mountains, jungles, oceans, and deserts in search of a better life for themselves and their families.

Against the critiques of those who fear a potential return to the perceived errors or excesses of liberation theology and similar movements with political overtones, Metz asserts that "the political tendency of a political theology is valid only if its theological tendency is valid as well."[191] Whatever good a theological movement, attitude, or practice might intend, it must be theological in essence and orientation. What Metz claims for one crucial area of theology– "for the sake of the truth that is proper to it, every Christology is nourished by praxis: the praxis of discipleship"[192]– could be claimed for ecclesiology and missiology as well. There are fundamental truths about the nature of the Church and its call to draw all people into relationship with God that cannot be fully taught apart from

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[187] Beaudoin, "Secular Catholicism," 30.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Ibid., 32.
[190] Campese, "¿Cuantos Más?" 272.
[191] Metz, *Faith in History and Society*, 60.
[192] Ibid., 62.

experience, and cannot be fully articulated without being practiced. Claiming the existence of a neat and tidy separation between the Church and the world, the spiritual and the secular, one's faith life and one's social life, is ultimately a false characterization that creates a divided self. Metz assures his audience that "the social dependence of moral action should certainly be taken to be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for defining Christian praxis;"[193] the religious dimension is no less essential, and also no more sufficient in itself. Although synthesizing these spheres of one's human existence can be deeply challenging, even painful, Metz rightly asks, "who will deny that Christian praxis must not only be concerned with one's own being a subject before God, but also has to be concerned precisely with how persons can become and live as subjects in situations of misery and oppression?"[194]

A Practical Ecclesiology in an Age of Migration

Attempting to draw connections between an ecclesiology that sees the experience of migrants mirroring the narrative and trajectory of the Church entails a vision of each that attends to both the individual and the communal level. Amid the contemporary secular environment that prizes the individual, sometimes at the expense of the communal or social, fearing the self-negating power it perceives lurking there, developing a tenable concept of solidarity is crucial. Making the effort to enter into relationship with those around us, as an essential aspect of our respective spiritual journeys, "requires that one hold oneself responsible… in order to *keep on being* a subject… [and to] fight against men

[193] Metz, *Faith in History and Society*, 66.
[194] Ibid., 64.

and women's being oppressed and held in contempt, in order to *become* a subject."[195] Migrants are human subjects, no more and no less than those who debate about immigration legislation, who rescue them from danger at sea and on land, who vocally criticize their presence, who minister to their needs with generosity, and so on. This truth must be affirmed if any meaningful dialogue and lasting positive change in the current reality of migration is to occur. Along the Mexican Migration Corridor this summer, many of the migrants I met seamlessly wove stories about their hardship and suffering with assertions about their faith. Metz claims that "it is absolutely true that authentic religion can be found in a life lived under oppression;"[196] migrants bear witness to this, and thus offer potentially dangerous memory and unsettling truth to those who are reluctant to encounter and acknowledge this oppression and the individuals whom it harms.

Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder contend that "the church is *only* the church insofar as it focuses on God's reign… as it realizes that it is called beyond itself."[197] Tracing various stages in the Church's sense of itself as fundamentally mission-oriented, they see it growing "by being faithful to each context… [where it is] called forth by its Lord to share and continue his mission."[198] One of the great challenges arising from my summer experience with migrants in Guatemala, Mexico, and the United States, building on years of ministry in the United States with migrants from countries ranging from Mexico to Chile, is bearing witness to their faith and their stories, and their influence on my own. If "mission is communitarian, or better, ecclesial… done on behalf of the Christian community,"[199] then I

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[195] Metz, *Faith in History and Society*, 71.
[196] Ibid., 79.
[197] Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 9.
[198] Ibid., 31.
[199] Ibid., 8.

ought to be able to rely upon the wider Church for support and resources in such an endeavor. If I should find such aid to be lacking, then perhaps this suggests that the Church is in need of evangelization in this regard. Bevans and Schroeder implicitly suggest that the Church as a whole does stand in need of reorientation in light of "two new realities today: a post-Christian West and a post-Western Christianity."[200] They see one of the strongest voices raised to address this context in the language of the Second Vatican Council's dogmatic constitution on the Church. In this document, *Lumen Gentium*, "the major image of the church… is that of the church as the pilgrim people of God… a group of people in a common search for the kingdom or reign of God."[201] As the Church works to grasp and incorporate this image of itself, individuals and communities on the local level are called to carry that process forward. Just like the spread and success of indigenous movements that Bevans and Schroeder cite to claim "the fact that ordinary Christians are ultimately the ones who can both sense the constants and engage the context"[202] of mission, as governments and political parties struggle to resolve, or simply ignore, the conflicts and entrenched poverty that give rise to most of the current flows of migrants, the most effective work is being done by individuals on small scales. Bevans and Schroeder ask how this grassroots origin of ministry and advocacy for migrants might take on a missiological tone; it seems to be a matter of how theological and secular visions of the human person and society interact amid the tensions involved in the phenomenon of migration. How the choice– for individuals and the Church as a whole– to stand with or against migrants in their dignified hopes and devoted efforts for a better life will reshape the Church is a

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[200] Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 242.
[201] Ibid., 250.
[202] Ibid., 271.

crucial ecclesiological question. How their decision– and its influence on public opinion and public policy– will affect migrants in their hopes, dreams, struggles, and suffering is a matter of theological and social justice.

In practical terms, this calls for an effort to preserve the safety, dignity, and integrity of individuals and families who migrate to the fullest possible extent. The KBI report documents family separation as a significant and widespread form of abuse and injustice experienced by migrants who come into the custody of CBP agents in various ways. The Church is a community that sees its origin in the loving self-revelation of a triune, fundamentally relational God, incarnated in a human being, born and raised in a human family, who nevertheless expanded the notion of family to include all fellow human beings living in relationship with God. Religious orders, lay associations, even ordinary parish communities present an image of families in the local manifestations of the universal Church, and through their ministry support the families who pass along faith and practice from one generation to the next. Reflecting on its own identity within this ecclesial perspective, the Society of Jesus collectively celebrates how "we have again and again been privileged to know ourselves as *one* in the Lord: one united, apostolic body seeking what is best for the service of God in the Church and for the world."[203] This sense of itself as a religious family is intimately tied to, and supportive of, its sense of mission: "it is as a worldwide community– and, simultaneously, as a network of local communities– that we seek to serve others across the world… we bear a common responsibility for the welfare of

[203] John Padberg, ed. *Jesuit Life & Mission Today: The Decrees & Accompanying General Documents of the 31st-35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus* (Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2009), 733 [GC 35, Decree 2, #2].

the entire world and its development in a sustainable and life-giving way."[204] This claim is rooted in Catholic social teaching about the common good, which asserts that "the common good will not be attained by excluding people… we can't enrich the common good of our country by driving out those we don't care for."[205] A renewed practical ecclesiology along these lines would be a powerful statement, in both word and deed, in a context of ignoring, rejecting, or casting aside migrants and their plight.

Concluding Thoughts

The Christian faith has guided people for centuries in diverse contexts throughout the world. The Church has evolved throughout history, as the mystical body of Christ making Christ present and manifest in the world, and as a human institution striving to carry out the task of evangelization, faith formation, and reconciliation entrusted by Christ to each generation of disciples. Reading this ecclesiological journey and the arduous odysseys undertaken by migrants in light of one another is a significant and necessary contribution that practical theology can make to the Church and the world at a time when both sorely need such wisdom and guidance. In engaging with the secular world, the Church hopes for a renewal of faith, and is urged to see that this does not entail a rejection of worthy theological, aesthetic, and social advances through the course of human history. In fleeing violence, poverty, and other forms of oppression, migrants hope for a better life for themselves and their families, a dream that includes the possibility of later returning to the lands and homes that may have felt great reluctance to leave. For those of us in the United States, the migration of tens of thousands of Central American men, women, and

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[204] Padberg, *Jesuit Life & Mission*, 741 [GC 35, Decree 2, #20].
[205] Kerwin, "Natural Rights," 195.

children through the territory of Mexico, our southern neighbor, and their impact on our country and the Catholic Church here calls us to take stock of our own heritage as migrants, and our spiritual journey that longs for salvation, harmony, and peace. A step toward that harmony is realizing that most of the forces assaulting and threatening migrants are the very ones that we ourselves fear. So too are the deepest values of migrants– peace and safety, honest labor, responsibility to family and society–the very ones that we in the United States claim to champion. Our shared Christian faith ought to help us recognize these common hopes and dreams, fears and anxieties, social and religious values, bridging the gaps of suspicion and prejudice that undermine the flourishing of us all. Doing so requires a renewal of trust, a willingness to tell our stories, and openness to the wisdom and experience that we bring, individually and communally, to our lives and faith. As the Thirty-Second General Congregation of the Society of Jesus affirmed in 1975, reflecting on its identity and its mission a decade after the Second Vatican Council concluded, it entails "the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement."[206] Enhancing an ecclesiology rooted in the image of migration would improve the Church's vision of itself as a people on the move, striving to authentically live its faith, transform the world according to God's desires for human flourishing, and bear witness to its true nature.

[206] Padberg, *Jesuit Life & Mission*, 298 [GC 32, Decree 4, #2].

Conclusion: Renewing Faithful Dignity and Solidarity with Migrants and Refugees

The preceding chapters have shown that migration is inextricably tied to human nature, human rights, and the full course of human history, not just the contemporary era of hypermobility. Migration may be understood in various ways, but it is fundamentally "any type of movement, whether temporary or permanent, voluntary or forced, of individuals and groups of people crossing territorial boundaries."[207] Such a broad concept invites us to reflect on the notion that all human beings– for even traditional societies tend to move from place to place in search of food– are migrants, and thus invited to solidarity with one another throughout the world as people on the move. Many theologians would add the observation that "migration is not only a social reality with profound implications but also a way of thinking about God and what it means to be human in the world."[208] Elaine Padilla and Peter Phan, mindful of the harsh, dangerous, and undignified living situations that drive many migrants to move, stress that "at the personal level, migration causes much dislocation to the migrants as well as their families… in spite of this, migrants relocate themselves, compelled by circumstances and forces beyond their control such as extreme poverty, war, violence, and political persecution."[209]

The hostility against migrants and refugees in contemporary political and social crises about their movement and their fate not only overlooks the role of globalization and the policies of wealthy nations in creating the conditions driving them from their homelands, but also fails to recognize the common human dignity and basic human rights

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[207] Elaine Padilla and Peter Phan, "Migration and Christian Theology" in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, eds. Elaine Padilla and Peter Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 2.
[208] Ibid., 5.
[209] Ibid., 4.

of one and all, instead deepening divisions among us. As Gustavo Gutiérrez aptly asserts, "globalization is an ambiguous process that has brought about an ambiguous world. The idea behind the term is that of one world, and yet we are going to end up with two."[210] The very fact of migration reflects, on the part of migrants, both "a 'desire for something more' and a 'refusal to accept the way things are,' escaping 'conditions of violence, starvation, or deprivation'"[211] antithetical to their survival and flourishing. Gutiérrez claims that the parable of Lazarus and the rich man is playing out in the inequalities of globalization, and specifically the consequent flows of migrants: "we recognize that poor nations are lying at the door of rich nations, and the latter are ignoring the former… some people in developed countries react to this fact by rejecting the poor and the migrant."[212] Advocacy for migrants and refugees carried out by Christians, Jews, and Muslims rises from the fundamental place of movement in the narratives of these Abrahamic faiths. Amid all their possible interpretations, one can ask, "What would be a viable theological engagement with land, community, and livelihood seen under the aspect of migration?"[213]

A specifically Catholic response– though certainly not confined to Catholicism in terms of its details, aspirations, and impacts– is rooted in a deeply felt responsibility to the poor and oppressed. Efforts to translate this concern into effective practice in a pluralistic society where Christian values are among many that compete for influence entails bringing the Gospel to bear on issues like migration and catalyzing meaningful social change rooted

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[210] Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Poverty, Migration, and the Option for the Poor," in *A Promised Land, A Perilous Journey*, eds. Daniel Groody and Gioacchino Campese (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 79.
[211] Marion Grau, "Circumambulating Exodus-Migration-Conquest: A Theological Hermeneutics of Migratory Narrativity" in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, eds. Elaine Padilla and Peter Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 19.
[212] Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor," 76.
[213] Grau, "Exodus-Migration-Conquest," 12.

in faith and action. Just over a century ago, the Social Gospel movement was born as Walter Rauschenbusch recognized "that the Kingdom of God was not an apocalyptic vision that could be passively postponed, but a prophetic call for society's transformation in the here and now."[214] Believing that "the Church, the organized expression of the religious life of the past, is one of the most potent institutions and forces in Western civilization. Its favor and moral influence are wooed by all parties. It cannot help throwing its immense weight on one side or the other,"[215] he envisioned it claiming its prophetic heritage and becoming a major player in efforts to build a more just society in the United States. Moreover, Rauschenbusch believed that the social crisis he encountered at the opening of the twentieth century developed when "the moral forces in humanity failed to keep pace with its intellectual and economic development,"[216] a claim that remains strikingly apropos today, as dubious arguments about security and stability fail to resolve tensions over migration policy in the United States, further weakening confidence in a broken system and inconsistent laws that grow increasingly out of touch with social, political, and economic realities. Rauschenbusch desired that "the Church should help public opinion to understand clearly the difference between the moral qualities of the competitive and the communistic principle, and enlist religious enthusiasm on behalf of that which is essentially Christian,"[217] and indeed, it continues to do so.

A rough contemporary of Rauschenbusch, Reinhold Niebuhr clearly saw the ability of the nation to create a narrative and command a loyalty to it that would trump moral

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[214] Paul Rauschenbusch, ed., *Christianity and the Social Crisis in the 21st Century* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), xi.
[215] Ibid., xix.
[216] Ibid., 182.
[217] Ibid., 321.

concerns or objections, a position that the Church would be called upon to refute. He alleged that "patriotism transmutes individual unselfishness into national egoism… the unqualified nature of this devotion is the very basis of the nation's power and of the freedom to use the power without moral restraint."[218] Moreover, in believing themselves to be guardians of the health of the nation, governmental and political leaders can easily be swayed by concerns of prosperity, security, authority, and prestige, rather than service and justice on behalf of those within and beyond their territory's borders, attitudes that have become clearly manifest in the United States and several European nations. Niebuhr now reads as ominously prescient amid the failure of many governments to develop a comprehensive, just, and sustainable strategy for responding to the tens of millions of migrants and refugees moving throughout the world. He believed "a society of nations has not really proved itself until it is able to grant justice to those who have been worsted in battle without requiring them to engage in new wars to redress their wrongs."[219] Today, those battles may involve military action, but more often they include the ravages of economic injustice, environmental degradation, religious persecution, and other affronts to human dignity. Niebuhr seemed consigned to accept that "the most significant moral characteristic of a nation is its hypocrisy;"[220] it falls to a nation's population– leaders, citizens, and migrants alike– to refute that dark assessment.

The Second Vatican Council gave great impetus to a transition in the Catholic Church toward a more engaged pastoralism, a greater sensitivity to the diverse expressions of humanity in the world's cultures, and a renewed relationship between traditional Gospel

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[218] Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), 91.
[219] Ibid., 111.
[220] Ibid., 95.

values and practice action to foster the well-being of all people in a world increasingly overshadowed by war, persecution, economic injustice, and environmental degradation. Theology was enabled, as Gustavo Gutiérrez has said, to become "'God-walk instead of [merely] 'God-talk.'"[221] An outgrowth of the Church's declaration that "the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men [sic] of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well"[222] has been the argument "that theology should address the oppressed first and, only then, policy-makers, citizenry, and the Church with a disturbing message"[223] about the latter groups' complicity in sinful, oppressive structures. Moreover, churches have evolved to see themselves not merely as settled purveyors of catechesis, counsel, and sacraments to those who come to parishes out of faithful routine, but more powerfully as "a lifeline… an interim haven for those who have lost one home and do not as yet have a new one… an 'eye [in] the hurricane' of 'the indifferent, destructive forces in the world.'"[224] The care and attention that many priests, religious, and lay men and women offer in their ministry to and accompaniment of migrants embodies this lifeline, but is only an initial step on the path of converting larger communities and entire societies to greater concern and practical action on behalf of the poor and the vulnerable. The fact that "migrants– Catholic and Protestant, frequent and rare church-goers, men and women– draw on sacred images and local clergy

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[221] Susanna Snyder, *Asylum-Seeking, Migration and Church* (Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2012), 16.
[222] Austin Flannery, ed. *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* (Boston: St. Paul Books and Media, 1992), 903.
[223] Snyder, *Asylum-Seeking*, 32.
[224] Ibid., 198.

to prepare for the hardships and uncertainty of the migration journey"[225] ought to encourage churches and faith communities that their services are needed and their convictions are sound. As studies have found that "regardless of the particular faith or even the level of individual religiosity, undocumented Latin American migrants preparing for the journey north to the United States permeate their leave-taking with spirituality and the search for religious support,"[226] individuals and communities are called to respond with the resources of their places of worship and their faith to these clear desires of migrants.

Susanna Snyder notes that this situation is "nudging churches to renew their liturgical practices and self-understanding,"[227] becoming more truly relational, restoring and expanding the practice of "one-to-one, face-to-face, embodied relationships, which have a desire to help the 'other' in need at their heart."[228] Gemma Cruz observes that "migration is, indeed, redefining religious landscapes worldwide… migration brings religious diversity both across and within religious traditions."[229] She stresses that "migrant congregations also bring a more profound meaning to what it means to be church since the "church" is not just the site of liturgical celebration but also their refuge in times of crisis and their home when they want to celebrate their communal identity."[230] Their

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[225] Jacqueline Hagan, "Faith for the Journey: Religion as a Resource for Migrants" in *A Promised Land, A Perilous Journey*, eds. Daniel Groody and Gioacchino Campese (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 5.
[226] Ibid. ,14.
[227] Snyder, *Asylum-Seeking*, 208.
[228] Ibid., 198.
[229] Gemma Cruz, "A New Way of Being Christian: The Contribution of Migrants to the Church" in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, eds. Elaine Padilla and Peter Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 96.
[230] Cruz, "A New Way," 113.

example thus challenges the broader Christian community "to become what the church must be: sanctuary for 'refugees' (and for everyone in need)."[231]

Given the reality that many migrants find their way to urban areas, and that cities have become prominent in political and legal debates about local and national policies regarding migration in many parts of the world, it is important to recall that cities as we know them today depend on various forms of migration for their very existence. As Dale Irvin notes, "the most important component that seems to have appeared in the emergence of urban social form… was the differentiation and specialization among the inhabitants of the city."[232] Tracing the evolution of cities through history, he notes that migrants formed a particularly important class of specialized inhabitants, often by maintaining expanding trade networks that enriched cities connected to them. When he asserts that "the simple reality was that the more strangers that a particular city could support, tolerate, or sustain, the greater was its eventual size, wealth, and influence over other cities,"[233] he makes a case for the necessity of migrants for a flourishing city. Although the exploitation of migrants for the benefit of native urban elites is as old as migration itself, "systems arose for protecting the enslaved, artisans, and merchants (those resident aliens) from uncontrolled violence to insure prosperity by regulating social behavior of all,"[234] in previous centuries. Ironically, many of today's migrants are fleeing from cities and other regions where those economic and legal systems of protection have broken down.

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[231] Cruz, "A New Way," 113.
[232] Dale Irvin, "Migration and Cities: Theological Reflections" in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, eds. Elaine Padilla and Peter Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 75.
[233] Ibid., 77-78.
[234] Ibid., 84.

Writing in 1986, in the context of an increasingly globalized economic system, the Catholic bishops of the United States called attention to the power of economic structures to foster flourishing human communities, or to create deep and entrenched divisions between the wealthy and the poor. "Every economic decision and institution must be judged in light of whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person"[235] is a fundamental assertion that echoes throughout this letter. Its practical corollary is both individual and communal; on the one hand, "all members of society have a special obligation to the poor and vulnerable,"[236] on the other hand, "society as a whole, acting through public and private institutions, has the moral responsibility to enhance human dignity and protect human rights."[237] This approach finds concrete application in the preferential option for the poor, which is "not only a question of social and pastoral commitment… [but also] truly a theocentric option because Christians are called to be witnesses"[238] to Jesus and the Gospel. While the bishops are drawing significantly on Catholic social teaching in these statements, their assertions are directed toward a broader audience: "human dignity, realized in community with others and with the whole of God's creation, is the norm against which every social institution must be measured."[239] They also insist that the faithful are obliged to participate in civic life in such a way that justice will be upheld for all. Beyond educating themselves on policy issues and voting for candidates and measures capable of developing a just economic system, "the various subgroups within our

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[235] United States Catholic Conference. *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the Economy* (Washington DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1986), #13.
[236] Ibid., #16.
[237] Ibid., #18.
[238] Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor," 81.
[239] United States Catholic Conference, *Economic Justice*, #25.

society [must] sharpen their concern for the common good and moderate their efforts to protect their own short-term interests."[240]

Irvin synthesizes these observations of economics and urban studies with historical theology and ecclesiology to assert that "the city of God is currently a pilgrim city whose entire body of citizens are sojourners or even exiles… the ekklesia of Christ is a city of migrants, a migrating city, a city of pilgrims and exiles, a city on the move, a city that lives in the midst of other cities, and a city whose citizens live by faith according to the laws of another age."[241] Drawing such a strong parallel between physical settings of cities (and the local churches located within them) and the broader realities of a global Church as well as globalization in general situates ministry with migrants at the heart of the Church's identity. His claim implies that "every ecclesiology ought to have migration as both its starting point and its ending point. There is no *koinonia* that does not simultaneously entail passageways, migration, exile, and of course 'being sent.'"[242]

The pastoral, spiritual, and theological levels of migration[243] are ultimately rooted in the physical space that migrants occupy and travel through; as Daniel Groody notes, "biblical geography reveals a spiritual geography, asserting that what is chronicled on the surface as a physical journey is in fact an archetypical elaboration of the soul's journey to God."[244] Having traveled often to the Sonoran desert, he is quite aware that "the parallels of

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[240] United States Catholic Conference, *Economic Justice*, #318.
[241] Irvin, "Migration and Cities," 87.
[242] Ibid., 88.
[243] Daniel Groody, "The Spirituality of Migrants: Mapping an Inner Geography" in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, eds. Elaine Padilla and Peter Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 140.
[244] Groody, "The Spirituality of Migrants," 142.

the immigrant narrative to the Exodus story are striking (Exodus 13:17-17:7)."[245] Particularly in the case of migrants from Latin American, their journeys are driven as much by economic insecurity as fear of violence in their home countries. Either way, "it is not so much for wealth as it is for dignity, and for an environment where they can develop and grow as human beings and move beyond the struggle for survival"[246] that they embark upon harrowing journeys.

Niebuhr, recognizing that "it is impossible completely to disassociate an evil system from the personal moral responsibilities of the individuals who maintain it,"[247] effectively forced social hypocrisy into the open. He affirmed that the Gospel bears "a prudential strain in which the wholesome social consequences of generous attitudes are emphasised."[248] Given his rather negative view of society, he placed his hopes on the moral reform of individuals, which would in turn spread through their religious and community networks. Ultimately, he claimed, these groups must be supported by the hope that comes from one another and the religious tradition in which they stand. Pope Francis has built his pontificate around fulfilling that hope through powerful statements motivating and validated by practical action. His apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* carries a clear and engaging assertion, "the joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus,"[249] placed in contrast with a sobering assessment of today's society: "the great danger in today's world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a

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[245] Groody, "The Spirituality of Migrants," 143.
[246] Ibid., 144.
[247] Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 249.
[248] Ibid., 265.
[249] Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 2013), #1.

blunted conscience."[250] The exhortation goes on to address a number of themes related to faith and its encounter with the world, from the individual to the global level, but at its heart, it strives to proclaim that "we become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being."[251]

This truth "can become an important impetus in the ministry of reconciliation and a compelling force in understanding and responding to migrants and refugees,"[252] an effort demanded by a vision of "Jesus as the immigrant God… who migrates to his people in love, wanting to draw all people into the reconciliation of the divine embrace."[253] It assures us that "our commitment to the poor and the migrants is concerned with their human dignity, which includes holding their own destiny in their hands… each person become the subject of his or her history."[254] A century ago, Rauschenbusch preached the necessity of "a combination between the faith of Jesus in the need and possibility of the kingdom of God, and the modern comprehension of the organic development of human society,"[255] to motivate practical Christian action to alleviate the social crisis of his time. Today, Pope Francis envisions a creative and mutually informing relationship between the Gospel and the world, reflected in the encounters between Christians and their fellow human beings. Divine grace supports and inspires "missionary disciples who take the first step… boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the

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[250] Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #2.
[251] Ibid., #8.
[252] Padilla and Phan, "Migration and Christian Theology," 5.
[253] Groody, "The Spirituality of Migrants," 151.
[254] Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor," 84.
[255] Rauschenbusch, *The Social Crisis*, 72.

crossroads and welcome the outcast."[256] Today's migrants and refugees stand at the crossroads, often quite literally, between nations, religions, and races. The Gospel urges Christians, and strongly encourages all people, to see each migrant and refugee "not merely an individual to be respected in accordance with norms established by law, but a person who challenges them and whose needs become an obligation for their responsibility."[257] Today, "churches have to rediscover their prophetic role within society and raise their voices against deceptive and unilateral readings of immigration."[258] Moreover, "the eschatological horizon of the immigrant reality also leads us to consider ways in which the crucified peoples of today are integrally related to the salvation of the world."[259] For, as Ignacio Ellacuría and others have affirmed, "crucified peoples unmask the sin of the world and expose its need for conversion, redemption, and renewal."[260] If we are to live the Gospel, in our hearts and in our communities, with generosity, devotion, and authenticity, we must work for the safety, acceptance, and love of all migrants and refugees as our brothers and sisters in Christ.

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[256] Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #24.
[257] Jonathan Yan, "An Asian Theology of Migration and Its Interreligious Implications: Insights from the Documents of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC)" in *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, eds. Elaine Padilla and Peter Phan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 134.
[258] Campese, "¿Cuantos Más?," 292.
[259] Groody, "The Spirituality of Migrants," 152.
[260] Campese, "¿Cuantos Más," 284.

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