

Unwanted People and Desired Citizens

Contemporary Attitudes, Challenges and Perceptions
of Migration and Integration



Edited by

**Cezary Smuniewski, Andrea Zanini,
Cyprian Aleksander Kozera, Błażej Bado**

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Contents

Introduction	7
<i>Agostino Massa</i>	
International Migration and Transnational Social Protection: Theory and Practice	9
<i>Ilona Urych</i>	
Migrations and Their Meaning for State (In)security. Outline of the Problem	19
<i>Cyprian Aleksander Kozera, Paweł Bernat, Cüneyt Gürer, Błażej Popławski</i>	
Immigrants <i>Ante Portas</i> and Desirability of People on the Move: Selective Perceptions of Forced Displacement and Voluntary Migration from Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe	35
<i>Izabela Stańczuk</i>	
Legal Status of Foreigners in Light of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland	51
<i>Małgorzata Czerwińska</i>	
Freedom of Movement at the Regional Level	69
<i>Sławomir Chomonicz</i>	
Taking up Employment by Ukrainians in Poland. Polish Legal Status Before and After the Outbreak of Russia's War Against Ukraine	83
<i>Przemysław Wywiat</i>	
Reliable Aid. Support of the Polish Armed Forces for Ukrainian War Refugees after 24 February 2022	95

<i>Ewa Maria Marciniak</i>	
Ukrainians in Poland After the Outbreak of War. Possible Types of Social Presence	107
<i>Alina Betlej, Krzysztof Jurek, Iwona Niewiadomska</i>	
Integration of Ukrainian Immigrants in Poland. Analysis of Selected Problems	119
<i>Andrea Tomaso Torre</i>	
Between Perception and Reality. Migration to Italy in the Last 20 Years	135
<i>Maria Stella Rollandi, Andrea Zanini</i>	
Economic Interest and Good Government: Foreigners and Social Control in Early Modern Genoa	151
<i>Luisa Piccinno</i>	
Foreign Labor in the Port of Genoa: Privileges, Integration and Conflicts (15 th –19 th Centuries)	169
<i>Daniela Tarantino</i>	
“Migrating or Staying.” The Church’s Magisterium on the Migration Phenomenon in the Post-Covid Era for an “Inclusive” Citizenship	187
<i>Błażej Bado, Cezary Smuniewski</i>	
In Search of Freedom? Migrations of Pacifists According to Peter Brock	207

“Migrating or Staying.” The Church’s Magisterium on the Migration Phenomenon in the Post-Covid Era for an “Inclusive” Citizenship

Abstract

“Nobody should be forgotten!” This is the title of the weekly bulletin of the Migrants and Refugees section of the Department for the Promotion of Integral Human Development. The lockdowns related to COVID-19 have severely weakened world economies and the number of people in poverty has increased worldwide. As stated by Pope Francis in the message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees to be celebrated on 27 September 2020, “The crisis we are facing does not make us forget many other emergencies that bring with them the suffering of many people,” reminding us how this emergency can only be overcome by acting as a global community. Based on the recent literature on the topic contained in the contributions published on the website www.diresom.net, the aim of the research is to examine the ways in which the Catholic Church deals with the migration phenomenon at the time of the coronavirus. For this reason, the project will look at how various Catholic actors have developed guidelines to guide local communities in possible actions aimed at helping migrants and refugees during the pandemic. Alongside the initiatives carried out to deal with the pandemic emergency, the Church underlines the need for an integral approach to the migratory question, which places the human person in all its dimensions at the center, with profound respect for his dignity and his rights, among which stands out religious identity. This right is very important, because it is a constitutive element of personal identity and a factor of belonging. At the current historical moment, a reflection on the basis of the Papal Magisterium and the action of the Migrants and Refugees section of the Department for the Promotion of Integral Human Development, underlines hospitality, service, the interreligious dialogue able to promote a “dialogical” right to protection of integral human development while respecting religious identity and moving along the paths of the Church “in Exit” and “inclusive” citizenship.

Keyword: Pontifical Magisterium, migration, emergency regulations, religious identity, inclusive citizenship

1. Introduction

“Do not be afraid to walk on the path of fraternity and to build bridges between individuals and between peoples in a world where many walls are still erected out of fear of others. With your actions you make visible a poor Church and for the poor, an outgoing Church that draws near to people who suffer.” This is the exhortation that Pope Francis made on 25 February 2017 during the audience with the Catholic Delegation for Cooperation of the French Episcopal Conference, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation. The words of the Pontiff do not simply express a “cultural choice,” however enlightened it might be, but a precise mandate of the Church that Pope Bergoglio promotes, in continuity with the conciliar ecclesiology and in the wake of his predecessors. Interreligious dialogue and ecumenical openness in a context of religious freedom seen as a space in which to promote and respect the culture of peace, represent two fundamental values of the Council’s thinking, which sees an inseparable link between the construction of peace and a social life in which coexistence is based on the freedom of individuals, respect and promotion of their dignity within the framework of solid anthropological principles (Cananzi 2016: 45–46). The pontifical magisterium, therefore, wants to spread the social dimension of evangelization, which it sees in the social inclusion of the poor, in the adoption of a style of life of solidarity, in the application of economic practices that are attentive to the person, in the care of human weaknesses, welcoming others as its main pillars. The exhortation stresses how the relationship between the Gospel and culture can be composed insofar as awareness of the risks arising from the “globalization of indifference” is acquired and the path of dialogue is taken, in which the encounter of charity and reciprocity help to overcome the difficulties of “mystical adherence to faith in a pluralistic religious context.” (Ravasi 2017: 8–10)

In particular, with the exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, addressing the themes of the repercussions of Christian preaching, Pope Francis stresses that faith cannot be lived only within, but that in order to produce abundant fruits it must be expressed in daily life, in relations with others, in the dynamics that build social coexistence. Reconciliation between the Church and modernity, therefore, is feasible through an evangelization which, keeping in tune with its own time without losing its “sacredness,” will be able to find the essential keys to establishing a culture of dialogue and reciprocity (Bartolomei 2015). Addressing the universal Church, the Pope

reaffirms his conviction that he wants a Church that is concerned not with consolidating its borders but with seeking an encounter capable of communicating the "joy of the Gospel," thus responding to his missionary character. Mission, in fact, is not a mere appendage of one's life, but something rooted in one's being that must push each man to meet the other. The tension between the unity of the Church and cultural diversity, in fact, can prove fruitful if we understand "the inescapable social dimension of the proclamation of the Gospel, to encourage all Christians to always manifest it in their words, attitudes, actions." (Francis 2013: 258) For this to happen, the Church, as Benedict XVI stated precisely during her resignation from the Petrine ministry, must be "vigorous" and courageous in facing the challenges of rapid social transformation and the fluidity of the "questionibus magni ponderis pro vita fidei." The Gospel teaches that acceptance, protection, integration and promotion are not utopias, but concrete attitudes of the Church which finds its roots in the Word of God and opens its doors (Czerny 2018: 16–17).

It is precisely the most relevant challenges of what we could define the "epochal change" that Pope Francis, in the *Evangelii Gaudium*, turns his pastoral gaze to, recognizing the evils of the world and analyzing them with a positive approach in which the protagonist is "the People of God" on a journey through history, with its joys and sorrows, which is incarnated in the "peoples of the earth," each of whom has its own culture that neither threatens nor undermines the unity of the Church (Francis 2016a). Thus, evangelization becomes a form of a "respectful and kind" conversation in which, above all, it takes charge of the person to whom the Gospel is preached. It is by following this path that the inescapable social content of the Christian message, without losing its contemplative spirit, can be revealed and fulfilled, overcoming the "globalization of indifference," a prelude to the "culture of discarding" that builds "existential peripheries" of an authentic community life, to face the great social and cultural challenges of our time at a civil level (Francis 2013: 8). First comes the challenge posed by migration.

2. Religious identity and immigration. A complex relationship

In the context, like the present one, of feelings, fears and conflicting reactions to this phenomenon, the Church invites all those who arrive and those who welcome to exercise their responsibility, even in the sound of

recognition and legitimate manifestation of mutual fears and expectations (Francis 2016b). “To have doubts and fears is not a sin,” says the Pontiff in the homily in Lampedusa on 8 July 2013, “sin is to let these fears determine our answers, condition our choices, compromise respect and generosity, nourish hatred and rejection.” (Francis 2013: 8) For newcomers, “recognizing and welcoming” means respecting the culture, laws and traditions of the countries in which they are welcomed, understanding the concerns for the future. For local communities, “recognizing and welcoming” means opening a door to the wealth derived from diversity, avoiding prejudice and understanding the fragility, hopes and potential of the foreigner. On this path of mutual knowledge and the exercise of responsibilities, the virtue of prudence comes to the rescue, which means responsibly evaluating the costs, benefits and conditions for genuine integration. Integration that must coincide with a commitment to action and faith which, as Paul VI has already emphasized, must affect all people in their totality (Czerny 2018: 10–15). From the words of the Magisterium of Pope Francis four actions arise forcefully to be carried out at all levels: welcome, protect, promote, integrate “those who flee war and hunger or are forced by discrimination, persecution, poverty and environmental degradation to abandon their lands.” (Francis 2018a) Conjugating the four verbs mentioned above in concrete life is certainly a complex task, but it is precisely the Church, which has a centuries-long experience in the field of hospitality, which must indicate with its Magisterium the ways and contexts to do so, incorporating them in the Twenty Points of Pastoral Action that outline the itinerary that local Churches, parishes, Catholic organizations and all those realities that can collaborate spiritually and institutionally must follow. These points, as reported in the same document, are based on “good practices” that characterize the tangible response of the Church to the needs of migrants and refugees, proposed as a series of practical considerations to be used to complete and deepen the dialogue with the rulers (Migrants and Refugees Section, Integral Human Development 2019). Pope Francis, in continuity with the teaching of his predecessors – it suffices to mention the coordinates outlined in the Encyclical *Caritas in veritate* of Benedict XVI for the joint adoption of normative instruments aimed at the protection and promotion of the human person through a “policy developed from a close collaboration between the countries from which migrants depart and the countries to which they arrive” (Benedict XVI 2009) – in the homily of 6 July 2018 in St. Peter’s Basilica for the Eucharistic celebration of migrants on the fifth anniversary of the Apostolic Journey to

Lampedusa, underlines how, faced with today's migration challenge, "the only sensible answer is that of solidarity and mercy (...) because a just policy is one that puts itself at the service of the person, that provides adequate solutions to guarantee security and respect for the rights and dignity of all." (Francis 2018b)

The Pontiff understands how doubts and fears cannot be underestimated, how unfortunate experiences and problematic results have occurred along the path of integration, and how they can continue to occur, but at the same time he is aware of how all the institutions and people involved, through more accurate information, are able to offer a realistic vision and open to the future. In order to avoid the easy fall into victimhood and face with force and determination the migration challenge, the media play a role of great responsibility. Since the beginning of his pontificate, Pope Bergoglio has attributed particular importance to the communicative aspect, on which the Pontiff has based his magisterium, considering the media as important tools for spreading the Gospel message, also through the action carried out. The Department of Communication must promote and implement that project of an "outgoing" Church that responds to the "missionary dynamism" inherent in the Word of God to "reach all the peripheries that need the light of the Gospel," (Francis 2013) and contribute to strengthening the relationship between the Curia itself and the outside world, continuing in that ecumenical dialogue inaugurated by the conciliar ecclesiology (Tarantino 2018: 443–46). In this context, the media can unmask stereotypes and provide correct information, they can make a fundamental contribution to the social "conversion of attitudes" of prejudice and resistance, and to the construction of a "culture of encounter" that does not imply the loss or estrangement of one's religious and cultural identity.

The identity of the collective subject, in fact, "is the quality that makes it possible to distinguish it from other subjects of a similar nature, and to know it in its various aspects." (Lillo 2015: 360) Thus understood religious identity represents, therefore, "the set of beliefs, values, belonging that an individual has in specifically religious matters (...) (becoming) a specific aspect of the sphere of consciousness." (Pino 2015: 370) In this way, religious identity becomes "in an extreme case a constitutive factor of personal identity, characterized by strong expansiveness and voracity towards other profiles of individual identity, and by militancy in the public sphere (...). In fact, religion is a powerful factor of belonging, creates strong ties between those who share the same religious convictions and, consequently, also

strong dividing lines between adherents and non-adherents to a certain religion.” (Pino 2015: 373)

We could say that, in a particular way, religious identity understood as religious belonging, in the current historical-social situation, has increasingly assumed a global dimension: the disintegration of national borders, secularization of different principles and traditions, mass emigration, cultural pollution, multiplication of fundamentalisms, have put into a crisis the concepts of “religious territory” and “religious belonging,” causing, on one hand, an injury to the instruments prepared and used by confessions to delimit their presence in the world. On the other hand, they have made it difficult for nation states to define the dimensions of the legal meaning of religious identity understood in this way. The main problems inherent in the legal and constitutional relevance of religious identity boil down to four issues: protection of the formation of religious identity, which includes all problems related to freedom of choice, training and indoctrination; protection of the integrity of religious identity, in which not only internal beliefs but also external behaviors are expressed; inadmissibility of different treatment of religious identity as compared to other forms of identity, including the exercise of religious freedom, including the use of symbolism; protection of religious feelings, whose main manifestation is the affirmation not to offend one’s religion (Lillo 2015: 375–381). The fact that “religious affiliation has an important constituent component, based more on respect for the constitutive norms,” must therefore be taken into consideration in determining the regulatory aspect of the religious phenomenon and “freedoms” and prescriptive rules of conduct. This means “that to be considered members of a religious group, in order to share the relevant religious identity, it is necessary to submit, and generally to reiterate, certain rituals through which membership in that community is entered and maintained.” (Pino 2008: 137)

Certainly, in a multicultural society, in which inevitably there are groups also defined by their religious faith, the ways in which this presence could be “managed” can be different (Pino 2013: 166). The relationship between religiosity and integration of foreign citizens is addressed by the international doctrine, which has worked out two theses of particular interest based on the concept of “evolution” of religiosity: the thesis of religious assimilation, as regards which a decline in religious practice has been observed in the second generation of immigrants, which is believed to favor assimilation into a welcoming society; the thesis of reactive religiosity, which instead highlights an increase in religiosity in the second

generation of immigrants, concentrating their studies on the most radical manifestations of this religiosity, underlining the "reactive" dimension and questioning the so-called "linear" concept of assimilation processes (Barbagli, Schmoll 2014: 3–6).

Although it is the task of the state systems to develop appropriate legal channels to regulate properly the relations between different cultural and religious communities that live in their territories in a way that avoids conflicts and ensures a space for all to enjoy the freedom of worship and expression of their own identity, the theme of religious identity is not ignored by the Church, which understands well how differences can coexist peacefully only through dialectical dialogue between religions, and between each religion and the historical, cultural, anthropological context in which religions are practiced (Cimbalo 2011: 41–44).

Management strategies in Italy have given rise to different models of community aggregation, such as "ethnic," according to which communities are organized according to the origin, language and traditions of a specific group; "international" in which, favoring the use of colonial languages, it aims at the aggregation of believers generically "non-Italians," "intercultural," aimed at encouraging encounter between Italians and immigrants, even within the communities of faith (Naso, Pittau 2015: 184). This is also possible because "the State does not limit itself to formally guaranteeing freedom and religious pluralism, but is activated, even substantially, through a series of pro-active interventions (...) aimed at supporting and promoting the religious phenomenon, in order to make the enjoyment of the religious freedom of its associates and of the religious institutions to which they may affiliate possible." (Lillo 2017: 33) To ensure that "the effective enjoyment of the fundamental rights of freedom is not made solely dependent on the discretionary indication of the government of subjects considered inclined to the observance of constitutional loyalty (...) a general discipline of religious freedoms could determine the certainty and concreteness of the rules that guarantee all individuals and all spiritual organizations access to open up opportunities in the profession of a religious faith." (Parisi 2018: 11–12) For this dialectical dialogue to take place in the current European context "infested" by mass migrations, it is necessary "to question the possible models of integration of the different communities according to the criteria that allow preservation of a sufficient core of identity To recognize one's own cultural specificity before the new European citizens and, at the same time, accompany them in the process of integration in the territory in a harmonious manner and

without the creation of “islands” that would end up feeding intercultural and “interreligious conflicts.” (Botti 2017: 1)

In this sense, Pope Francis, in the Message for the 2016 World Day of Migrants and Refugees of, recognizes that the question of “identity” is not secondary. In order that the “identities” of those who welcome and those who are welcomed may be enriched through reciprocal exchanges and changes arising from the new circumstances of life, it is fundamental, as the Pontiff states, to strengthen solidarity with others as a requirement in the response to God’s free love, “(...) solidarity, cooperation, international interdependence and equitable distribution of earthly goods are fundamental elements to curb those imbalances that prompt people to leave their environment.” (Francis 2016b) The Pope points out how “the Church has spread to all continents thanks to the ‘migration’ of missionaries convinced of the universality of the message of salvation of Jesus Christ.” (Francis 2016a)

It is precisely intercultural pastoral care that can represent a privileged instrument for protecting the religious identity of migrants and natives, at a time when the concept of religious identity is no longer linked to that of localism.

3. Religious identity and intercultural pastoral pluralism. Some reflections

The phenomenon of cultural pluralism produced by human mobility must increasingly be considered in the context of a migratory pastoral care that respects otherness through a relationship of dialogue between ethnicity and globalization, between a particular Church and the universal Church, and needs commitment to translate and interpret the relationship between faith and culture. It has been therefore necessary at all levels to promote initiatives and activities to safeguard ethnic, religious and cultural identity of migrants and avoid ghettos. At the same time, interaction with a local community must be safeguarded, within the pastoral perspective of the Church called to the service for all the People of God, which reminds us that acceptance and integration are not circumstantial facts, but they are rooted in the identity of the Catholic faith (Natoli 2012: 245–247). Intercultural pastoral action necessarily starts from the perspective of the Church as a communion, called to serve natives and migrants, being the People of God, finding, developing and promoting, from the missionary point

of view, the models that correspond with the Process of interculturality present in the same territory and in the same particular Church, taking into account linguistic and cultural differences and, precisely for this reason, seeking formative paths for an interreligious encounter rooted in the identity of faith (Natoli 2016: 255–261). An encounter with migrants and refugees professing other religions is a fertile ground for the development of a sincere and enriching ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. The most appropriate instrument for protecting religious and cultural identities of the host and the migrant is precisely the culture of dialogue, the basis of the pastoral care for migrants that we saw in the *Erga migrantes caritas Christi* of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants of Travellers of 2004, that updates what was indicated in the *Motu Proprio Pastoralis migratorum cura* of Pope Paul VI of 15 August 1969, and it represent fixed point from which to begin reflecting on the challenges posed today by the phenomenon of migration.

At a historic time when the migration issue is no longer an emergency, but has almost assumed a structural character, it is certainly necessary to develop national and international policies that influence local realities by promoting peace processes as well as social and economic development. They should strengthen the awareness of the need for a broader justice that allows the weakest and marginalized to reintegrate into the social tissue and live with dignity. Pope Bergoglio strongly reiterates to the civil and political world that religions cannot and should not be "privatized" thus reducing them to the silence and darkness of each one's conscience, or marginalization of the closed enclosure of churches, synagogues or mosques. In short, it would be a new form of discrimination and authoritarianism. Due respect for the minorities of agnostics or non-believers should not be imposed in an arbitrary manner that stifles the beliefs of the majority of believers or ignores the richness of religious traditions. In the long run, this would foster resentment more than tolerance and peace (Francis 2013).

But precisely the transition from a "culture of discarding" to a "culture of inclusion and legality" requires an awakening of consciences and responsibilities that, on the part of the Church, can be reached through a theologically perceived pastoral ministry oriented towards the culture of encounter and dialogue as a style and instrument of the Church *ad extra*. In this sense, in *Evangelii Gaudium*, the Pope, promoting a kind of "religious sentimental education," rejects the idea that religions are relegated to the mere private sphere of individuals, stating that "a healthy pluralism that truly respects others and values them as such does not

imply a privatization of religions.” (Francis 2013) And it is precisely in the challenge of immigration that Pope Bergoglio sees the opportunity to enhance the dialogue between religions, so that an alliance between religions can be established in defense of human dignity and social justice. The interreligious dialogue, as the ideal for the Pontiff, should promote concrete actions that reduce the growing levels of urban poverty and help initiate processes aimed at guaranteeing social peace, causing the weakening of any kind of fundamentalism and fanaticism. The preservation of the religious and cultural identity of immigrants in the host countries must go hand in hand with recognition and respect for their religious and cultural values (Gallo 2016: 5–8). From the beginning of his pontificate, Pope Francis, following the thought of John Paul II, pointed to the right to religious freedom, together with the right to life, as an essential axis of a country’s democracy: “Reason recognizes religious freedom as a man of fundamental right that reflects its highest dignity, that of being able to seek the truth and adhere to it, and recognizes in it an indispensable condition to be able to unfold its full potential.” (Francis 2014) Sanctioning the right to religious freedom means being able to concretely promote the growth of interreligious dialogue. The Pope expressed himself in this regard: “The ideal of interreligious dialogue, in which all men and women of different religious traditions can dialogue without discussion. This allows religious freedom.” (Francis 2015a)

And precisely to make the material and spiritual assistance to migrants by the local Churches more effective – also through “adequate” pastoral structures, within the Dicastery for the Service of Integral Human Development – set up by the Pontiff in 2016 – there is a special section dedicated specifically to following up the problems of migrants, refugees and victims of war, favoring and coordinating “the initiatives of Catholic institutions that commit themselves to respect the dignity of each person and to affirm the values of justice and peace, and to help the peoples who are in need,” maintaining “relations with associations, institutes and non-governmental organizations, even outside the Catholic Church, committed to the promotion of justice and peace,” doing everything possible to achieve a greater “sensitivity in favor of peace, commitment to justice, and solidarity with the most vulnerable people such as migrants and refugees.” (Sanfilippo 2018: 208–209) The culture of encounter, in the papal magisterium, is based on the vision of the other as a “neighbor” a bearer of values and dignity, which in a reciprocal relationship allows for arrival at the “port” of a freer, richer and fuller religious and cultural

identity, where monologue is replaced by dialogue. Pastoral theology, with its attention to the dialogue between the different identities of the recipients, can and must contribute to the reflection on the sense of being and acting as Church, since "To be Church means to be the People of God, according to the great plan of love of the Father. This implies being God's reminder in the midst of humanity. It means announcing and bringing God's salvation to this world of ours, often lost, which needs answers that encourage, give hope, give new vigor to the journey." (Francis 2013)

4. Religious identity in the face of the Coronavirus. A journey uphill for a new culture of citizenship

The engine for promoting the culture of encounter is based on the value of dialogue, that dialogue which saw in Paul VI's encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* a kind of a manifesto of its urgency and essentiality, and in the documents of Vatican II its full demand for development. In a conciliar way, in fact, dialogue is above all an anthropological theme which, in connection with the content of the Holy Scriptures, also becomes a theological and ecclesiological theme (Zani 2017: 21). For an authentic culture of dialogue to be established, the Church must not prejudge theological debate, listening to the experiences of the faithful (Lingua 2015: 41–42). In tune with the "signs of the times" and in line with the Council's thinking, Pope Francis stresses how evangelization always implies a path of dialogue, which the Church must develop from the light of faith, whose action must also be exercised through legal instruments and through the application of canon law which, today more than ever, must have the capacity and courage to deploy its intrinsic "sociability" than in the application, more than in the interpretive moment, finds its explanation (Tarantino 2019: 215–225).

The universal Church, as a legally structured reality rooted in divine law, has in canon law an indispensable element for its own life and for its saving mission, since the tools it uses have the ability to capture the revealed data through a specific method of research, knowledge and execution (De Paolis 2003: 155). In fact, the content of the main documents dealing with human mobility in its entirety, which show how there is continuity between one document and another, find a suitable place in the Code of Canon Law. In the challenges posed by the pandemic today, the Church can demonstrate, both in its cognitive and normative dimension (the first dimension is functional to the ordained role of canon law in the

mission of the Church, the second differs canon law from theology and pastoral law and is linked to its productive function), how canon law can innovate without betraying its essence, protecting tradition, guaranteeing *depositum fidei*, respecting the inviolability of divine principles, through a paradigm shift consisting of a plurality of shared techniques and methods that evolve, are replaced, complemented, integrated to achieve the *salus animarum, suprema lex Ecclesiae* (Fantappiè 2015: 54–55).

It is in the pastoral care of human mobility that the Church reviews “the structural principle of its legislation, whether at the territorial or personal level.” (Sabbarese 2018: 148) Indeed, religion is not only a cultural fact because it can stand out from the scope of a given culture and communicate to other cultures, that is, it can acquire a transcultural dimension (Viola 2006). The theme of religiosity of immigrants, therefore, with all the implications in terms of identity constructions, aggregations, practices social solidarity, cultural reworking, links with the past and the land of origin, requires a specific pastoral, in which “respect for diversity must be combined with inclusion and solidarity” and strengthened by “a common and convergent effort to defend and promote human rights of all, migrants and non-migrants” and through “creative interaction and participation in paths that promote interculturality and responsible citizenship.” (Lussi 2006: 235–236) At the current historical moment, when the state of COVID-19 emergency threatens to compromise the delicate balance of a pluralistic, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, it is particularly timely to reflect on it in the light of conciliar principles and the papal magisterium, underline a hermeneutic of welcome, service and interreligious dialogue capable of promoting a “dialogical” right that facilitates integral human development while respecting religious identity, on the paths of the Church “on the way out,” “No one must be forgotten!” is the title of the Weekly Bulletin of the Migrants and Refugees Section of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development. Lockdowns linked to COVID-19 have severely weakened the world’s economies, and the number of people living in poverty worldwide has increased exponentially. The state of alarm generated by the international health emergency has had a negative impact on people who have been forced to flee their country, aggravating their disorientation, marginalization, vulnerability, and hindering access to essential services.

Protecting their rights is complicated. As Pope Francis stated in the message of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees on 27 September 2020, “the crisis we face must not make us forget other emergencies that bring with them the suffering of many people,” which add to the “experiences

of precariousness, abandonment, marginalization and rejection by the COVID-19," (Francis 2020) reminding us how this emergency can only be overcome by acting as a global community. Various Church bodies have therefore developed guidelines to guide local communities in possible actions to help migrants and refugees during the pandemic. The suggestions include an invitation to institutions to provide timely and truthful information in several languages on health and safety measures, as well as to ensure a network of helpdesks. At the same time, information campaigns are launched on how the coronavirus is spread and on the importance of following specific hygiene practices, in addition to those already prescribed by the regulations approved by the various governments. In parallel with the initiatives implemented to deal with the emergency caused by the pandemic, the Church has stressed the need for a comprehensive study of the issue of migration that puts the human person at the center in all its dimensions, with profound respect for their dignity and rights, including respect for religious identity (*Migranti e rifugiati* 2020).

This right, based on the values that inform the secular legal systems, stands out both from the legal point of view – because it is linked to religious sentiment and its free formation as well as its constitutionally guaranteed manifestation – and from a socio-political perspective – in this case, as a constituent element of personal identity and a factor of belonging, capable of generating deep bonds between those who share the same religious convictions and raising so many barriers of separation between "us" and "the other." Overcoming this dichotomy is possible on the basis of an authentic interreligious dialogue that is part of the intercultural dialogue. Within this dynamic, the awareness of diversity can represent a source of enrichment and a stimulus for community growth. Indeed, the development of *traditio ecclesiae* at the present moment, and from what the Second Vatican Council proposed in relation to this question, also passes through an encounter with the migrants who suffer (Cozzoli 2019). It should be carried out through a pastoral that Pius XII already felt in the *Exsul* family as an indispensable commitment of the Church through an effective missionary action aimed at facilitating the process of adaptation and construction of coexistence societies. From here, at the present moment, Pope Francis, taking advantage of the contributions of the human and social sciences, has defined integration – within an ecclesiological perspective (Baggio 2020) – in the sense that "it is neither assimilation nor incorporation, but a two-way process, which is based essentially on mutual recognition of the cultural wealth of the other." (Francis 2017)

The Pope, on 8 February 2021, during the audience with the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See, referring to the health, economic and social consequences of the pandemic, recalled that “The year that has just ended has left behind a trail of fear and despair, along with many pains, and has placed people in a spiral of detachment and mutual distrust, urging States to erect barriers” and contributing to aggravate other “strongly interrelated crises such as climate, food, economic and migration.” (*Il Papa* 2021) If the future of our societies is to be “in color” enriched by “diversity and intercultural relations,” it is necessary, the Pontiff stresses, that the Church continue to go “to the streets of the existential peripheries to heal those who are wounded and seek those who are lost, without prejudice or fear. Thus, if we want, we can transform borders into privileged places of encounter, where the miracle of an ever greater flourishes.” (Francis 2021)

The challenge is complex and the “concrete mechanisms” of welcome and closeness must be assumed by all the parties involved (Montesano 2021: 77). It should be noted that the title chosen by the Pope for his annual message on the World Day of Migrants and Refugees on 25 September 2022 is “building the future with migrants and refugees.” This also means recognizing and valuing what each of them can contribute to the construction process in an essentially inclusive citizenship project, which puts the inhabitants of the existential suburbs at the center. And precisely in the wake of this project is the message for the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees to be celebrated on 24 September 2023, with the intention of promoting a renewed reflection on a law not yet codified internationally: the right not to have to emigrate, that is, the right to remain in one’s own land. “The forced nature of many current migratory flows requires careful consideration of the causes of contemporary migration,” reads a note of the Dicastery for the Service of Integral Human Development. “The right to remain is earlier, deeper and wider than the right to emigrate. It includes the possibility of sharing in the common good, the right to live in dignity and access to sustainable development, all rights that should be effectively guaranteed in the nations of origin through a real exercise of co-responsibility by the international community.” (*«Liberi di scegliere se migrare o restare»* 2023) Because, as Pope Francis states in *Evangelii Gaudium* (nn. 217–237), for a sustainable education to responsible citizenship it is necessary that all respect some guiding principles: superiority of time over space (initiating processes rather than occupying positions), prevalence of unity over conflict (boldly seeking a way to resolve the conflict in order to achieve unity), prevalence of reality over idea (and this is what leads

the good Christian to active participation in solving the problems present in society), superiority of a part (allowing the coexistence of different and contradictory elements in order to achieve the common good).

For Pope Francis, the "medicine" capable of "curing" the evils of the world and the crises of humanity can be summarized in two key words: fraternity and hope. In the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, the Pope stresses that the vocation to citizenship must be based on the concept of universal fraternity; in turn the foundation of an "open" society, the realization of which takes place through three steps that can also take on a political value: "recognize, appreciate and love every person beyond the physical closeness, beyond the place of the world where he was born or where he lives, appreciating the other, that is, in esteeming him for what he is: he means assenting and giving value to his difference, which is manifested in his freedom," "love the other, that is to choose consciously to bind one's existence to his good," (Baggio 2021) so that from fraternity can arise freedom and equality capable of creating the reality of a common good.

For the "medicine" of fraternity, hope and open and inclusive citizenship to be effective, indispensable is the presence of competent "doctors" in the Church, i.e. theologically and spiritually well-trained priests, capable of helping people on their way, including through digital tools, which cannot in any case be considered substitutes for traditional forms of daily pastoral care, so as to achieve greater inclusiveness in support, proximity, closeness and accompaniment of individuals in an increasingly multi-ethnic, multicultural, multi-confessional and "digitized society." Then you will be able to find the way to cure a planet troubled not only by the pandemic, but also by the virus of indifference and neglect, so that the demolition of the walls is followed by the construction of bridges, but of solid and imperishable bridges that do not collapse with the intense passage of peoples on the way, and that succeed in building an intercultural society that is an expression of the "civilization of love" awaited by the Second Vatican Council.

5. Conclusions

The presence of conflicts in various parts of the third and fourth world and the increase of terrorism challenge all of us in terms of the commitment to a peaceful world. We need to build peace in our minds, as stated in 1945 by UNESCO. But peace education must promote citizenship education in

a global perspective, to create an inclusive society without losers. Thus, obvious is the importance of involving in the process of peace education all subjects: both institutional and forming part of the world of formal education, but also non-formal, including the churches, and informal, as the mass media and new information technologies, for planetary humanism in an educational ecosystem. There is need for policy action, national and international, more courageous to have reference to the values of civilization and the imperatives of equity and mutual respect on a universal level that can leverage strategies of cooperation in which each person and country can feel a substantial part of the world (Moliterni 2016: 205–217).

To this end, Pope Francis calls for a generous and convergent commitment towards “a courageous cultural revolution.” A first signal is the adoption of an outgoing and always dynamic attitude, which helps the educator not to be afraid of making a work of inclusion, but encourages them to patiently innovate their work by discovering new perspectives every day (Francis 2015b). Bergoglio always frames education within a broad vision of society, as a vital context of meeting and assuming common commitments for the construction of a civil society. To educate means building a nation: the educational task must consist in awakening the feeling of the world and society as home (Sarhou-Lajus 2018: 2).

Moreover, education in integral ecological thinking is an inclusive method: an inclusion that enables concrete men and women to escape extreme poverty and become worthy authors of their own destiny. Being inclusive, education is a “remedy” against the culture of “discarding.” This is why education is called with its pacifying force to form people capable of understanding that diversity is not an obstacle to unity; on the contrary, it is indispensable to the richness of one’s own identity and that of all. A special task in this educational process is entrusted to religions, as stated in the Abu Dhabi Declaration of 4 February 2019 and in the encyclical *Fratelli tutti*. Education thus understood becomes the main driver for the creation of inclusive citizenship, capable of placing the person to be educated at the center according to a sound anthropological vision; to invest with professional quality creativity and responsibility of the best energies, implementing a long-term planning; to train people who are willing to serve the community according to a healthy anthropological vision to place themselves at the service of the community according to the Gospel spirit. They are three objectives through which a new humanism can be “composed” inspired by the Christian message, but aimed at renewing the whole of society. In this sense, education for inclusive citizenship

is an act of active love and a free gift towards others, whereby we not only recognize them, welcome them but we help them to be more deeply themselves, free and loving of the true, the good and the beautiful, even in their diversity, thus reinforcing their own unique and unrepeatable, historical and cultural identity (Mastantuono 2021: 21–37).

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