"Welcoming the Stranger": A dialogue between Scriptural understandings of and Catholic Church policies towards migrants and refugees and pastoral praxis in the migrant and refugee pastoral care bodies within the Archdiocese of Perth

Judith M. Woodward
University of Notre Dame Australia

Follow this and additional works at: http://researchonline.nd.edu.au/theses

Part of the Religion Commons

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
Copyright Regulations 1969

WARNING
The material in this communication may be subject to copyright under the Act. Any further copying or communication of this material by you may be the subject of copyright protection under the Act.

Do not remove this notice.

Publication Details

This dissertation/thesis is brought to you by ResearchOnline@ND. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses by an authorized administrator of ResearchOnline@ND. For more information, please contact researchonline@nd.edu.au.
Abstract

Growth in human movement around the world has been one of the phenomenal aspects of globalization since the Second World War. Among these ‘people on the move’ those whom the United Nations Humanitarian Commission for Refugees has described as ‘persons of concern’ – refugees, displaced persons etc. – have increased at an alarming rate. They are now well in excess of the global population growth rate over the same period. Many of these have moved into adjacent poorer developing countries but increasingly many are seeking asylum, either through official United Nations’ channels or through on-shore arrivals, in developing nations. This poses serious issues for national governments and societies in relation to national boundaries, citizenship criteria and the religious-ethnic compositions of their populations.

Among the global institutions which are concerned with this phenomenon of ‘people on the move’ are the Christian Churches, especially the Catholic Church, at universal, national and regional levels. As the largest global Christian institution and with representation at the United Nations, the Catholic Church is primarily concerned with the human dignity of these people on the move and the special care they deserve as they penetrate their new societies and reconfigure their new settlements and their ethnic compositions. Such concern spills over into an ontological exploration of ‘the stranger’ in the context of Hebrew and Christian Scriptures and how migrants and refugees in the form of these new arrivals, many of whom are non-Catholic and non-Christian, are...
leading to a ‘new catholicity’ which is ecumenical and dialogical.

Given this scenario, this thesis makes use of the methodology of practical theology to explore the Scriptural bases for the Church’s imperative to reach out to ‘the stranger’, the sojourner, the alien in our midst; to examine the Church’s teaching on the migrant and the refugee; and, finally, to place these teachings in dialogical relationship with the empirical practice of agencies within one particular region of the Australian Church – the Archdiocese of Perth in Western Australia. By so doing, it demonstrates how an ongoing dialogue between ‘theory’ in the form of Church teaching and ‘praxis’ in the form of empirical practice and reflection on that practice can lead to new and more innovative interaction between the two. It also shows how, ultimately, this can give rise to a deeper and Christologically-based relationship between ‘the stranger in our midst’ and the Church’s faithful, especially those who extend care to the ‘stranger’. Because it is not confined only to Catholic migrants and refugees in its study, it also shows how the many-faceted ‘other’ entering our society displays to us the many faces of the one God we worship and enables us to extend our awarenesses of ourselves as Christian and Catholic as we attempt to cater for the spiritual and pastoral needs of the migrant and refugee.
Declaration of Authorship

This thesis is the candidate’s own work and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in this or any other institution.

To the best of the candidate’s knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.
Acknowledgements

My deepest gratitude is extended to my supervisor, Reverend Professor Peter Black, without whose unfailing patience and wise guidance I could never have completed this thesis.

I would also like to express my warm thanks to all those who generously shared with me their knowledge and insights. Such people include personnel from the six agencies for migrant/refugee pastoral care in the Archdiocese of Perth as well as other people interviewed.

Special thanks should go to Dr Glenn Morrison, Fr Anthony Paganoni CS and Sr Anne Tormey RSM who, during the period of my candidature, provided pertinent advice.

I also wish to thank the Research Committee of University of Notre Dame for its facilitation of this thesis and also the School of Philosophy and Theology which provided me with support, a ground-floor office, photocopying and other facilities.

Finally, heartfelt appreciation to Anne O’Ryan and Sr Anne Tormey who acted as proof-readers.
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACBC</td>
<td>Australian Catholic Bishops’ Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACBCPL</td>
<td>Australian Catholic Bishops’ Commission for Pastoral Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACMRO</td>
<td>Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACSJC</td>
<td>Australian Catholic Social Justice Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASeTTs</td>
<td>Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwell Reader</td>
<td>The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARAD</td>
<td>Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catechism</td>
<td>Catechism of the Catholic Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMC</td>
<td>Catholic Migrant Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>(Centrecare) Catholic Migrant Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compendium</td>
<td>Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIAC</td>
<td>(Federal) Department of Immigration and Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERCJCE</td>
<td>Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERCM</td>
<td>Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erga migrantes</td>
<td>Erga migrantes caritas Christi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HarperCollins</td>
<td>The HarperCollins Study Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEC</td>
<td>(Aranmore College) Intensive English Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHSS</td>
<td>Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Multicultural Apostolate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHHC</td>
<td>Mercy House of Hospitality Carlisle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MRC</strong></td>
<td>(St Vincent de Paul) Migrant Refugee Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Jerome</strong></td>
<td>The New Jerome Biblical Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PCPCMIP</strong></td>
<td>Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refugees</strong></td>
<td>Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TPV</strong></td>
<td>Temporary Protection Visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN</strong></td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNHCR</strong></td>
<td>United Nations Humanitarian Commission for Refugees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Contents

Abstract i  
Declaration of Authorship iii  
Acknowledgements iv  
Abbreviations v  
Contents vii  
Introduction 1  
I What, Why and How?  
   Research questions 10  
   Definitions of essential terms 15  
      Practice 15  
      Migrants and refugees 17  
      Rights and obligations of and toward migrants and refugees 20  
      Pastoral care 22  
Methodology 25  
   The methodology of contextual theology 25  
   The methodology of practical theology 28  
   Qualitative methodology 33  
   The methodology of oral history 36  
   The methodology of dialogue 39  
Structure of the dissertation 40  
II The Alien, the Sojourner and the Stranger in Hebrew and Christian Scripture  
   Introduction 42  
   Hebrew Scripture, the alien and the stranger 45  
      Responses to the stranger in Hebrew Scripture 45  
      Migration as a key metaphor in Hebrew Scripture 52  
      Hospitality as an integral element in the treatment of Israelite religious and national identity in Hebrew Scripture 57  
   The stranger in Christian Scripture 61  
      Jesus as the ‘archetypal stranger’ 62  
         Jesus as a benchmark of behaviour 62  
         Jesus’ identity as the Son of God 63  
         Jesus as a wanderer, refugee and outcast 64  
      Jesus and hospitality to the stranger 66  
         Jesus as the ‘supreme host’ 66  
         The host as servant 72  
   Hospitality to the stranger and the developing identity of early Christianity 74  
      The mission of the early Christians – perceptions, implications and nature 75  
      Hospitality to the stranger versus the stranger as enemy and threat 77  
      Implications for a developing Christian identity 78  
Conclusion 81
III  Social Justice Foundations for a Study of Pastoral Care to Migrants and Refugees

Introduction 84
Dignity of the human person, social justice and equity 87
  The concept of ‘human dignity’ 87
  The concept of ‘integral development’ 89
  The principles of ‘solidarity’ and the option for the poor 91
  The principle of the ‘common good’ 93
Human rights and duties 96
The right to religious freedom 103
Social doctrine and inculturation of the faith 107
  The Church’s recognition of the centrality of culture to human dignity 108
  Inculturation of faith and evangelization 110
  Religious pluralism and inculturation 114
Conclusion 116

IV  Rights and Responsibilities of the Universal Church Toward Migrants and Refugees

Introduction 117
Historical survey of documentation 118
Questions of definition 124
The specific rights of migrants and refugees and the responsibilities of the Church and the host society toward them 128
  Inalienable rights of the migrant and refugee 128
  Rights of emigration, non-migration and non-refoulement 129
  The right to live peacefully and without discrimination 132
  The right to religious freedom 134
  Economic rights and obligations 135
  Rights of migrant and refugee families 136
  The importance of compassionate awareness 138
Issues of spiritual and pastoral care toward migrants and refugees 139
  A common concern for the spiritual and pastoral welfare of ‘people on the move’ 139
  Questions of how and where spiritual and pastoral care to migrants and refugees can be administered 142
  Advice regarding those who administer to migrants and refugees ‘Subjects’ not ‘objects’ 148
Conclusion 151

V  Migrants, Refugees and the Australian Church

Introduction 152
The changing ethnic and cultural composition of the Catholic Church in Australia 153
  The Western Australian scene 156
  The growth of non-Christian religions 160

viii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary national ecclesial policies and attitudes toward migrants</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and refugees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing attitudes</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Australian episcopal advocacy on behalf of migrants and</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refugees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘I am a stranger: will you welcome me?’</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Who is my neighbour?’</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality, solidarity and assistance toward asylum seekers</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian episcopal initiatives regarding pastoral care to migrants</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and refugees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The grace of migrants and refugees to the Church</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrants and refugees as a pastoral challenge for the Church</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building bridges</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and re-education</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI Empirical Praxis Toward Migrants and Refugees in the Archdiocese of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Origins, Mission and Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origins</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of mission</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Welcoming the stranger’ – what stranger and how?</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII Empirical Praxis Toward Migrants and Refugees in the Archdiocese of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Challenges and Problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing ethnic and religious composition of clientele</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding issues</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it appropriate to speak of Catholic pastoral care to migrants and</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refugees?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing issues for the future</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Openness to the face of the other’ – a two-way process</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A dialogue between Church views on migrant/refugee pastoral care and</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>praxis in the Archdiocese of Perth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary sources</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary sources</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews and discussions</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION
Since the Second World War the ongoing growth in global human movement, both voluntary and involuntary, has expanded to a point where it is of major concern to both secular and religious authorities at global and national levels. Moreover, the proportion of refugees and asylum-seekers among these “people on the move” has increased at an alarming rate. This is demonstrated statistically in the United Nations Humanitarian Commission for Refugees’ analysis of its category, “persons of concern”. Numbering 19 million in 1997 and 21 million by 2000, this group had subsided to 17 million at the end of 2003 but was back to 19.2 million at the end of 2004. By the end of 2008 the UNHCR estimated that there were some 42 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, including 15.2 refugees, 827,000 asylum-seekers and 26 million internally displaced persons. Of these some 25 million, (10.5 million refugees and 14.4 million IDPs), were falling under the UNHCR’s responsibility. Available data by sex indicates that women

1 Silvano Tomasi CS, “Migration and Catholicism in a Global Context”, Solange Lefebvre & Luis Carlos Susin, Migration in a Global World (London: SCM Press [Concilium], 2008), 15, points out that in 2005 there were some 191 million international migrants around the world, nearly two and a half times the count in 1965; “a pace that is well in excess of the global population growth rate over the same period.” Figures from UNHCR, Statistical Yearbook, 2006: Trends in Displacement, Protection and Solutions and UNHCR, Global Report 2006: Challenges and Achievements (both Geneva, 2007).
2 This phrase, which includes migrants, refugees and other globally itinerant people such as ship and air personnel, tourists and students overseas, was used by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People in the title of its first significant document, The Church and People on the Move (Vatican City, 1978). Thereafter the Pontifical Council is referred to as PCPCMIP.
3 Thereafter referred to as UNHCR.
6 Idem.
and girls represented almost half this number (49%), while some 44% were children under the age of eighteen.  

Such growth of refugees and displaced persons has been of concern not only to the UNHCR but also to the Christian Churches, other world religions and the governments and societies of developed and developing nations. Despite the decline numerically of “persons of concern” by the end of 2003, in 2004 alone 676,000 appeal applications for asylum or refugee status were submitted to national governments or to UNHCR offices in 143 countries. By the end of 2006 refugee numbers again began to rise and by 2007 the global figure of refugees stood at 11.4 million, including 1.7 million people considered by the UNHCR to be in a refugee-like situation. During 2008 the UNHCR assisted in the resettlement of more than 67,000 refugees, while sixteen countries reported the admission of 88,800 resettled refugees during 2008 with or without UNHCR assistance.

Available statistical evidence confirms that most refugees flee first to neighbouring countries, generally in the developing world, and thus remain within their region of origin, exacerbating the problems and tensions of that region. Thus, in 2000 an Australian Parliamentary research paper pointed out that “it [was] the poorer countries of the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe that [were] carrying the bulk of the

7 Idem.
9 This figure does not include 4.6 million Palestinian refugees who fall under the responsibility of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East.
10 UNHCR, 2007 Global Trends, 6.
11 UNHCR, 2008 Global Trends, 2.
That this is still the case is evident from UNHCR statistics which show that developing countries are host to four fifths of the world’s refugees, many in camps. Nevertheless, what has been noticeable since the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century is the parallel between the rise in refugee numbers and the growth in numbers of applications for asylum in Western liberal democratic nations. Thus the USA was the main receiving country in 2007 for new asylum-seekers. While included in the list of receiving nations in the developed category, in this “globalization of asylum-seeking” Australia has been viewed as a “small player.” According to UNHCR data for the years 1998 to 2000 Australia had received far fewer applications for asylum than had comparable Western liberal democratic nations such as Germany, France or the United States and had a lower per capita intake of asylum-seekers.

However, given its smaller population and its particular topographical circumstances, Australia has made a major contribution to the resettlement of refugees from refugee camps. Over the decade up to 2000-2001 Australia’s annual refugee intake averaged

---


13 UNHCR, 2008 Global Trends, 2.

14 Ibid., 14. Out of the 548,000 new asylum claims lodged in 2007 worldwide, an estimated 50,700 or about 10% were submitted in the USA. Other developed nations which were important destination points for asylum seekers were France (29,4000), the United Kingdom (27,900), Canada (27,900) and Greece (25,100).


about 12,000; “the highest per capita off-shore intake in the world.”\textsuperscript{17} The section on “Australia” in the \textit{2003 UNHCR Statistical Yearbook}\textsuperscript{18} shows that Australia has experienced a steadily rising percentage of refugee and asylum-seeker applications since 1994, although this declined slightly in the final years of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century and the early years of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lcccccccccc}
Refugees & 57,575 & 62,145 & 67,313 & 66,074 & 69,745 & 64,918 & 60,246 & 57,895 & 59,436 & 56,258 \\
Asylum-
seekers & 5,829 & 20,742 & 15,240 & 12,677 & 10,003 & 10,320 & 10,896 & 11,583 & 7,291 & 3,021 \\
Total & 78,341 & 79,748 & 75,238 & 71,142 & 69,478 & 66,727 & 59,279 & & & \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

The above data is reinforced by a more recent chart from the Federal Department of Immigration and Citizenship\textsuperscript{20} showing Humanitarian Programme figures by category 2003-04 to 2007-08.\textsuperscript{21}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lcccccccc}
& 04 & 05 & 06 & 07 & 08 \\
Refugee & 4,134 & 5,511 & 6,022 & 6,003 & 6,004 \\
Special Humanitarian & 8,927 & 6,755 & 6,836 & 5,275 & 5,026 \\
Onshore Protection & 788 & 895 & 1,272 & 1,701 & 1,900 \\
Temporary Humanitarian Concern & 2 & 17 & 14 & 38 & 84 \\
Total & 13,851 & 13,178 & 14,144 & 13,017 & 13,014 \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Another factor to be taken into account is the considerable and growing range of ethnic and religious diversity this refugee and displaced persons intake has represented since 1945. Diverse groups of displaced persons and refugees have included Europeans, both

\textsuperscript{17} Millbank, “The Problem with the 1951 Refugee Convention”, 9.
\textsuperscript{18} UNHCR, 2004 Global Refugee Trends, “Country Studies”, Section A – “Refugees, Asylum-seekers and Others of Concern to the UNHCR – Australia”.
\textsuperscript{19} These figures need to be placed in the wider context of Australia’s resettling of refugees and displaced people since 1945 up till c. 2002 to the extent of almost 600,000 people. See Murphy, “The Unwanted Stranger”, 179.
\textsuperscript{20} Thereafter referred to as DIAC.
Jewish and non-Jewish, Latin Americans, Buddhist and Christian Vietnamese and other South-east and East Asians, Chinese, Muslim and Christian refugees from ex-Yugoslavia and Catholics from East Timor. Most recently, in conformity with the global trend in offshore visa grants, Australia’s migrant/refugee intake demonstrates a swing to more people, especially Muslims, coming from northern and sub-Saharan Africa, Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, as well as Christian and Buddhist refugees from Burma and Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{22}

Such growing ethnic diversity of migrants, refugees and displaced people settling permanently in Australia has important ramifications for not only the ethnic composition of Australia’s population but also its cultural and religious make-up.\textsuperscript{23} While Christianity is still the majority religion in Australia, the number of persons who are followers of other major world religions like Judaism, Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism is steadily increasing. In particular, the numerical increase of Muslims in Australia has been of concern to Australian governments as well as a subject of controversy among Australian citizens. This concern is also associated with the rise in global terrorism, the association of this terrorism with Muslim extremists, Australia’s participation in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the activities of Muslim extremists in Indonesia, most especially in Bali. Manifestations of such concern are the increased consciousness of Australian Federal Governments of the need to secure the country’s territorial boundaries and to look carefully at applications for asylum and resettlement in Australia together with the question of who is eligible for citizenship.

\textsuperscript{22} UNHCR, \textit{2007-8 Offshore Visa Grants by Top Ten Countries of Birth}.

\textsuperscript{23} See Ch. 5 for a fuller discussion on the changing ethnic and religious profile of the Australian and, in particular, the Western Australian populations.
This growing ethnic, cultural and religious pluralism of Australia has and continues to present many issues and challenges of acceptance, integration, hospitality, stewardship and pastoral care, both material and spiritual, for not only the Australian governments and society in general but, in particular, for Australia’s mainstream Christian religious institutions. In the aftermath of World War II the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Council\textsuperscript{24} was quick to respond to the needs of newly arriving migrants and displaced persons from war-torn Europe.\textsuperscript{25}

Since the mid-1970s issues of policy and pastoral care for migrants and refugees have become increasingly complex for the Catholic Church in Australia, as for other Christian Churches. In particular, the growing arrival and need for integration of non-Christian groups into the Australian community, together with the growth of racism and fear in the wider community toward peoples of other ethnicities, especially Muslims, have highlighted questions of ethical responsibility for and obligations toward “the other”, “the stranger/outsider”, in response to Hebrew and Christian Scripture. For the Catholic Church in Australia a search for answers to such questions has meant a continuing reappraisal of the Church’s social justice teaching in relation to migrants and refugees in the light of Scripture. It has also involved a critical examination of policies and practice, in an endeavour to provide appropriate and compassionate pastoral care and support to both non-Christian arrivals and Catholic migrants, old and new, and their descendants in the Australian community.

\textsuperscript{24} Thereafter referred to as the ACBC.
\textsuperscript{25} Again, see Ch. 5.
The rise in on-shore asylum-seekers and refugees from c.1980, together with the previous Australian Federal Government’s harsh legislation in relation to these people and its establishment of onshore and offshore detention centres and temporary protection visas\(^{26}\), has involved the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Council in monitoring and criticizing government policy.\(^{27}\) Similarly, the relevant agencies and bodies of the Catholic Church in Australia which work with migrants and refugees have found that a substantially increasing number of their clientele are refugees, including on-shore asylum seekers; a substantial number of whom are non-Christian. This necessitated the need to seek a suitably compassionate response to such people while working within both the universal Church’s policies on evangelization and the Australian Federal legal framework and, often, with the underpinning of federal and state government finance.\(^{28}\)

In the light of the foregoing this thesis has timely relevance. While studies have been carried out on the Hebrew and Christian scriptural treatment of “the stranger” and “the alien” in relation to migrants and refugees\(^{29}\), little study has been made of the wealth of Church documentation, both magisterial and national, which either relates to or deals directly with issues and problems of migration, voluntary or involuntary. Similarly, at the diocesan level, very little investigation has been pursued with regard to the policies and practices of Church agencies extending pastoral care and support to migrants and

---

\(^{26}\) Thereafter referred to as TPVs.

\(^{27}\) The ACBC’s responses have been investigated in Ch. 5.

\(^{28}\) Such issues and others are explored comprehensively in Chs 6 and 7 in relation the Perth Archdiocesan agencies and bodies which exercise pastoral care toward migrants and refugees.

refugees. This is certainly the case in the Archdiocese of Perth. Reflective and analytical material on issues of the Australian Church’s outreach to migrants and refugees, inculturation and the challenges presented to the Church by the changing ethnicity and religious affiliations of more recent migrants and refugees is valuable but dated. What is very much needed is a more contemporary examination of the Perth Archdiocesan pastoral practices towards migrants and refugees which takes account of the changing historical situation.

Most significantly, my hope is that my research will contribute to a fresh way of perceiving and evaluating Church policy and practice toward migrants and refugees; one which takes more serious account of the practice and reflections of those who are “doing” the work as distinct from those who are “studying”, “teaching” or “researching” theology. Nancy Eisland, in her book on the disabled and the Catholic Church, makes two points that are germane to my thesis: that “[t]he struggle for wholeness and justice begins with the practices and habits of the [C]hurch itself” and that the validity of Church tradition and policy will be tested by its ability to animate a received practical wisdom for the Church.

The intention of this thesis is to evaluate local policy and practice in the light of magisterial and national Church documentation and Scriptural understandings and to examine magisterial documentation and national policy from the perspective of local empirical practice and the reflections on it by those who are providers of this practice.

---

30 See Ch. 6, 189.
31 Nancy Eisland, The Disabled God (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1994), 95 and 111.
Such evaluation is intended to both challenge the usual “top-down” approach to critical evaluation of Church performance and to extend the parameters of professional, academic-based theology by considering the views and theological reflections of especially lay people operating in the field. In summary, my research is designed to be part of the ongoing process of reflective praxis in which theology is assessed in the light of practice. In turn, practice is meditated upon in the light of Scripture and Church tradition, giving rise to an amended theory that is itself critiqued in the light of further practice.³²

CHAPTER ONE

WHAT, WHY AND HOW?

This chapter examines first what are the thesis’ subject matter and the research questions which it investigates. Then it considers the “why” of the thesis, namely, the specific hypothesis it argues, elaborates and defends, and defines terms basic to that hypothesis. This is then followed by an examination of how the hypothesis is explored, i.e. the methodologies which are utilized in the thesis. Finally, an outline of the overall structure of the thesis is provided.

Research Questions

This doctoral thesis has as its central research question the relationship between Scriptural understandings and Catholic Church teachings on migrants and refugees and the policies and pastoral practices being exercised toward migrants and refugees in the Archdiocese of Perth, Western Australia. Such a broad and complex question requires three subsidiary questions for it to be comprehensively “unpacked” and explored. The first asks how Hebrew and Christian Scriptures as well as Catholic tradition understand the migrant/refugee and the rights and obligations of Christians toward migrants and refugees. The second investigates the ways and the degree to which these scriptural and theological understandings are manifested in the policies and empirical practice of six agencies which provide services and extend pastoral care to migrants and refugees within...
the Archdiocese of Perth. The third question involves a dialogue between Scripture and Church teaching, on the one hand, and the policies and empirical practice of the six agencies studied, on the other. It also explores the extent to which the latter offers theological and practical reflections which could have a significant impact on Church teaching on migrants and refugees and understanding of their needs and how Catholics theologically understand the concept of ‘the other’ in relation to their Christian faith.

The methodology underpinning these questions arises out of the perceived importance to theology by practitioners of contextual and practical theology of the concept of praxis.\(^{33}\) My intention is to move away from what Douglas Hall describes as “the conventional pattern in theology”, i.e. the initial enunciation of a theory and then the application of it.

In contradistinction

\[
\text{[praxis thinking] insists that thinking that occurs apart from involved participation regularly entails an ideological taint, and it suggests that far too much theory represents what is in fact a flight from the real world. Praxis is thought emerging in deed and deed-evoking thought.}^{34}\]

Praxis, inspired by critical reflection and involving creative action, is both transformative and liberating.\(^{35}\) It arises out of theory but proceeds to modify that theory by modifying the reality from which that theory originally arose. Dermot Lane explains that the move to praxis in theology emerged out of a reaction to the purely theoretical and conceptual within Christianity\(^{36}\); what Brian Kelty refers to as “a paradigm-shift … in theological

\(^{33}\) See 28 ff. for a fuller development of praxis methodology.

\(^{34}\) Hall, *The Steward: A Biblical Symbol Come of Age*, 16. My highlighting. Hall’s definition of “praxis” is only one of a number of definitions.


thought ..., a movement from essentialist thought to reflective action”37 or, earlier, what Edward Farley had referred to as the need to break out of two paradigms - “the clerical paradigm” and “the theory-to-practice paradigm”.38

This reaction or shift was manifested as early as the 1980s, both in European political theology39 and Latin American liberation theology.40 The common ground for these two theologies is their turning toward praxis as a new methodological way of doing theology; a way which reflects a growing emphasis on experience rather than theory and an understanding of humanity from the “inside out” rather than the “outside in.” This approach arises out a strong commitment to and solidarity with other human beings and, therefore, demands a close analysis of the human situation from the perspective of life being lived as well as from theory. This way of doing theology provides

39 Johann-Baptist Metz is a pioneer in the adoption of praxis in European political theology. In his Faith in History and Society – Toward a Practical Fundamental Theology (New York: Seabury Press, 1980) he emphasizes the importance of praxis as an important source of human understanding.
40 Gustavo Gutiérrez, A Theology of Liberation (London: SCM Press, 1988), revised edition, is the pioneer par excellence in the development of praxis in liberation theology. He sees it as being at the heart of liberation theology and involving a “preferential option for the poor” as the locus of God’s presence in the world and the human encounter with Christ. For him the adoption of a praxis approach leads to a radical questioning of the social order and the ideology on which it is based which, in turn, gives rise to a commitment to change the social system. Hence, for Gutiérrez orthopraxis or “right praxis” is transformative. During the 1960s and the 1970s liberation theology had enormous influence, despite criticism from the Magisterium, especially the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. In more recent times its relevance to contemporary society, both in the Third and the First Worlds, has been questioned. Thus, Christopher Rowland in Rowland (ed.), The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology (Cambridge UP, 1999), 248, argues that the high point of the liberation theology movement may have passed by the end of the 1990s and Ivan Petrella in The Future of Liberation Theology: An Argument and Manifesto (Aldershot, UK & Burlington, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 144, asserts that liberation theology has stagnated and is unable to move beyond mere discourse. However, he emphasizes that it still has the promise of becoming a theological force if it “can again place the development of historical projects at the heart of its self-understanding”. Nevertheless, neither writer denies its significant influence on theology as a discipline. Practical theology, together with Feminist and Black theologies, owe much to liberation theology, not least its emphasis on the use of the personal experience of the poor and the marginalized and its stress on the “doing” of theology.
a place where religious belief, tradition and practice meets contemporary experiences, questions, and actions and conducts a dialogue that is mutually enriching, intellectually critical, and practically transforming.41

Lane makes the crucial point that “Christian theology is always incarnate theology; a theology critically correlating the Gospel vision with the human situation.”42 He bases this statement on John’s introduction to his Gospel that Jesus Christ is “the Word become flesh,”43 Lane also has in mind both the challenge to the Church from the Second Vatican Council to examine “the signs of the times” and interpret them in the light of the Gospel44 and John Paul II’s statement that “Man [sic.]45 is the primary route that the Church must travel in fulfilling her mission.”46 In like vein, liberation theologians, Sergio Torres and John Eagleson, contend that the Christian religion is theory based in human action.47 Similarly, scholars and practitioners of contextual theology, like Stephen Bevans48 and the South African Institute for Contextual Theology49, argue strongly that theology needs to be liberated from its elite academic and ecclesial contexts and viewed as “theology for [and of] the people”. They also argue that theology needs to be seen within the particular socio-cultural context in which it arises; that it should begin “from the context of real life,

—Lane, Foundations for a Social Theology, 67.
—Jn 1: 14.
—From today’s more gender-aware perspective the language utilized in much Church documentation is gender discriminative and exclusive.
—Bevans, Models of Contextual Theology.
with the concrete, not the abstract”\(^50\), “in the praxis of those trying to understand how the Gospel is taking root in local circumstances amid shifting realities.”\(^51\)

Therefore, the overall argument of my thesis contends that for the Catholic Church to carry out authentically its mission in the world to migrants and refugees it needs to engage in a continuous critique of its teaching and perceptions as enunciated in Church documentation, not only in the light of Scripture, but also in relation to empirical practice as expressed in the pastoral work of national and regional agencies toward migrants and refugees. However, because praxis is much more than simply empirical practice, an indispensable aspect of my research is an examination of the reflections on such pastoral care by those providing it.\(^52\) Overall, then, the work involves an appraisal of Church teaching and policy toward migrants and refugees through the lens of both empirical practice and reflections upon it.

Throughout this work I follow David Tracy’s view that praxis, in the sense of action arising out of theory and critical reflection,

\(^50\) Ibid., 17.
\(^51\) Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, ix. Metz agrees with this argument, contending that all praxis is imitative of Christ, His example and His suffering, *Faith in History and Society*, 9.
\(^52\) It was originally hoped that a significant survey of the reflections of migrant and refugee clientele of the pastoral care agencies/bodies within the Archdiocese of Perth could have been carried out but this has proved to be impossible, largely because of two reasons. The first of these concerns linguistic issues. Especially with the ethnic, and therefore linguistic, diversity of especially refugees entering Australia in the last decade the range of languages as well as dialects represented is vast. Also many of the new refugees are just in the early stages of learning English. Secondly, and even more importantly, many of the refugees are suffering considerable trauma from their experiences in their home countries and in refugee camps; trauma exacerbated by the process of settling in a new and foreign culture. This is especially the case for those refugees who have spent time in Australian detention centres. Consequently, not being a trained trauma counsellor, I did not wish inadvertently to add to this trauma through a process of interviewing, nor would the agencies have permitted this. However, a few migrants and now well-integrated refugees did offer their reflections and these have been incorporated into the thesis with their formal consent.
... is theory’s own originating and self-correcting foundation, since all theory is dependent minimally, on the authentic praxis of the theorist’s personally appropriated value of intellectual integrity and self-transcending commitment to the imperatives of critical rationality.  

Such an approach allows me to engage in a critical, interactive dialogue. The first protagonist in this dialogue is the teaching of the Catholic Church with regard to migrants and refugees and what is believed to be desirable policy and pastoral practice toward them. This teaching is examined in relation to the second protagonist of the dialogue - the actual policies and pastoral practices followed by migrant/refugee agencies/bodies within the Archdiocese of Perth and the reflections upon these by those who are directly involved in implementing them.

**Definitions of Essential Terms**

As well as praxis, other terms which need clarification are “practice”, “migrant” and “refugee”, “rights and obligations” and, above all, “pastoral theology”.

**Practice**

Terry Veling insists rightly that

> [p]ractical theology is less a thing to be defined than it is an activity to be done. In this sense it resists our attempts to pin it down and define it. Practical theology is more ‘verb-like’ than ‘noun-like’. In many ways, we would be better to speak of ‘practicing theology’ rather than ‘practical theology’.

As practical theology is one of the fundamental methodologies utilized for this research, together with the concept of “praxis” which underpins it, what I define as “practice”

---


would seem to be crucial. Such a view is reinforced by the fact that I have explored the practices of six agencies of the Archdiocese of Perth which provide or have provided pastoral care to migrants and refugees.

The *Webster’s Dictionary* definition of the noun “practice” emphasizes “actual doing; habitual action, custom; repeated performance to acquire skill; the exercise of a profession.” In like vein its definition of the verb “practise” stresses activities such as to put into practice; to perform; to do habitually; to exercise, as a profession; to exercise oneself in, or on, in the performance of in order to maintain or acquire skill; to train by practice.

As these definitions indicate, practice is a structure or regular pattern of repeated behaviour; what Duncan Forrester describes as “a patterned activity with an inner or outer coherence.” With regard to the latter, Don Browning indicates that “[a]ll our practices … have theories behind and within them.” When practice is associated with the exercise of a profession it usually involves goals or desired positive effects which are generally agreed upon by practitioners of the profession together with inherent notions of excellence or standards. Particularly relevant to the Church agencies I am investigating is the concept of “habitus” which involves sound ethical choices that are grounded in Scripture and related to development of certain attitudes of mind and heart which become inherent.

---

56 *Idem*.
60 See 32-33 for further discussion on “habitas”.
The foregoing indicates that practice “is not an isolated matter; it takes place in … solidarity with others,”\textsuperscript{61} even when it is carried out by an individual rather than a group or organisation. Practices are also “bearers of traditions and histories … in the sense that they have developed within communities over extended periods of time.”\textsuperscript{62} Such realizations lead to the importance of transformative practice in which the emphasis is on ongoing reflection upon the meaning of the behaviours practised; a concept which lies at the heart of praxis.

\textbf{“Migrants” and “refugees”}

Migrants are defined as those people who migrate voluntarily from their countries of origin to another country, for example Australia.\textsuperscript{63} Such migrants may have migrated for a variety of reasons – economic, political, religious and/or social – but, essentially, their migration is one of choice. By contrast, refugees are defined initially according to the United Nations’ 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. These state that a refugee is

\begin{quote}
… someone, who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it.\textsuperscript{64}
\end{quote}

Implied in this definition is the involuntary nature of migration for a refugee, i.e. the lack of choice. As with the term “migrant”, the refugee may be an adult or a child, the latter

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{61} Forrester, \textit{Truthful Action}, 4.
\textsuperscript{62} John Swinton & Harriet Mowat, \textit{Practical Theology and Qualitative Research} (London: SCM Press, 2006), 20. Especially religious practices can come to be considered as ‘normative’.
\textsuperscript{63} This is the definition of an “external” migrant as distinct from an “internal migrant”, i.e., one who migrates from one region within their country of origin to another, for example, from a depressed rural area to an urban one.
\textsuperscript{64} See \url{www.unhcr.ch}.
\end{flushleft}
being accompanied with family or kin or else alone. However, it is generally agreed that the 1951 and 1967 definitions of a refugee are now too limiting in relation to “the diversity and complexity of forced population movements that are occurring today”\textsuperscript{65} and which are not necessarily the result of persecution. Consequently, the United Nations has made amendments to this basic definition to allow for situations outside of the Second World War “displaced persons” scenario. The first of these amendments came in 1969 with the African Convention on Refugee Problems and the second in 1984 with the \textit{Cartagena Declaration}. Both widen the criteria on which the definition is based to relate to changing global and national circumstances.\textsuperscript{66}

Other definitional issues arise out of the generic use of both terms. The term “migrant” often includes “refugee” and it should be recognised that most “refugees”, if they settle permanently in the country of asylum, will become migrant citizens of refugee origin. The term “refugee” itself is used also to cover a broad range of specific terms which come under the UNCHR’s phrase “persons of concern.” Such people include not just refugees but also asylum-seekers, returnees, internally displaced persons and others such as stateless persons. Overall, the UNHCR argues that “any person who [has] applied to be granted refugee status” should be termed an “asylum-seeker whether they are in the

\textsuperscript{65} Millbank \textit{et.al.}, “The Problem with the 1951 Refugee Convention”, 15.
\textsuperscript{66} The African Convention on Refugee Problems amended the 1951 Convention by including “people fleeing external aggression, internal strife or events seriously disturbing public order” within their countries of origin, while the \textit{Cartagena Declaration} included “persons who have fled their countries because their lives, safety or freedom have been threatened by generalised violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights, or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order”, \url{www.unhcr.ch}, cited in Don McMaster, \textit{Asylum Seekers: Australia’s Response to Refugees} (Melbourne: Melb. Uni. Press, 2001), 25.
country in which they have sought asylum lawfully or unlawfully.” More useful in the
Australian context is the definition of “asylum-seeker” given by Sandie Cornish –
“asylum-seeker has come to be used to delineate those refugees whose status is still
undetermined.”

Another controversial definitional category is that of “economic refugees”, i.e. those who
flee economic conditions that threaten their lives and physical safety. As the PCPCMIP
points out, such people need to “be treated differently from those who emigrate simply to
improve their [economic and social] position.” More recently, this category has come
to be associated with the relatively new category of “climate change” or “environmental
refugees”, the number of whom are growing in response to the effects of climate change
as well as huge natural disasters like the tsunami of Boxing Day, 2004.

Other “grey”

---

67 www.unhcr.ch. It should be noted that the UNHCR definition of “asylum-seeker” contrasts markedly
with the popular view, often expressed in the Australian media and also shared by certain government
personnel, especially of the previous government under Prime Minister John Howard, which views asylum-
seekers as “illegal immigrants.”

68 Sandie Cornish, The Call to Hospitality: Catholic Teaching on Refugees (North Sydney: ACSJC, 2002,
Booklet 44). Her definition relates to the need in Australia since c.1980 to distinguish between refugees
and overseas visitors who arrived in Australia legally but who have overstayed their visas and become
genuinely illegal. They need to be distinguished from off-shore refugees in transit camps and other
locations outside Australia who are applying formally for refugee status and resettlement, and on-shore
asylum-seekers placed in detention camps within Australia while their applications for refugee status are
being processed.

Afterwards referred to as Refugees. This document was published in collaboration with the Pontifical
Council Cor Unum.

70 As early as November, 2005 the United Nations’ affiliated group, Environment and Human Security, was
estimating that there were at least 20 million environmental refugees worldwide, more than those displaced
by war and political repression combined. Stefan Lowgren, ‘Climate Change Creating Millions of ‘Eco-
refugees’, reproduced in National Geographic News, 10th November, 2008,
www.news.nationalgeographic.com/news2005/11/118_501118_disaster_refugee/html. In the Australian Federal Parliament concern has been shown for the inhabitants of Pacific islands whose
homes are becoming inhabitable because of rising sea levels. See the Sydney Morning Herald report, 5th
two bodies most concerned with the issue of climate change and refugees are Catholic Earthcare Australia
(www.catholicearthcareoz.net) and Caritas Australia whose online newsletter, OzSpirit, produced an issue
areas of definition arise with cases of “child migrants” and “skilled migrants”. The former were sent out to Australia in the early decades of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century by various British government and religious bodies to be cared for in institutions sponsored mostly by Christian churches or fostered out to particular families. Both the now adult “child migrants” and the continuing phenomenon of skilled migrant workers pose important social justice issues for Church and State.

Overall, given the complexity of and overlapping nature of definition, the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council\textsuperscript{71} sums up the situation well when it states:

Tags such as ‘not genuine’ or ‘economic refugee’ usually fail to recognize the complexity of the push and pull factors between immigration in general and asylum-seeking in particular. … While the post World War II world order recognized political refugees as the group deserving special consideration, the contemporary situation demands a more magnanimous approach.

In the end there is a continuum between asylum-seekers and other migrants; the former being distinguished by the kind and degree of their actual and perceived need to emigrate – the aspect of ‘desperation’ or ‘flight’ in their departure – and the lengths to which they are willing to go in leaving their country of origin.\textsuperscript{72}

“Rights and obligations” of and toward migrants and refugees\textsuperscript{73}

The term “rights” refers to the basic expectations which a human being can legitimately expect by virtue of being a human being. These cover a variety of categories that are expressed most comprehensively in the papal encyclical, \textit{Pacem in Terris}.\textsuperscript{74} This encyclical lists comprehensively individual and group rights which are reinforced by a similar enunciation of human rights in \textit{Gaudium et Spes}.\textsuperscript{75} Such listing of human rights is

\textsuperscript{71} Thereafter referred to as the ACSJC.
\textsuperscript{72} \textit{I am a Stranger? Will You Welcome Me?} (North Blackburn, Victoria: Collins Dove, 1991), 45-46.
\textsuperscript{73} This section is developed more comprehensively in Chapter Three which examines the social justice foundations for a study of pastoral care to migrants and refugees.
\textsuperscript{74} \textit{Pacem in Terris}, #13, in Walsh and Davies, \textit{Proclaiming Justice and Peace}, no pages cited.
\textsuperscript{75} \textit{Gaudium et Spes}, #26.
followed in *Pacem in Terris* by a parallel listing and grouping of reciprocal obligations or responsibilities of human beings to one another, both as individuals and in community.\(^{76}\)

In particular, John XXIII argues forcibly that

\[
\text{[o]ne of the fundamental duties of civil authorities … is to coordinate social relations in such fashion that the exercise of one man’s rights does not threaten others in the exercise of their own rights nor hinder them in the fulfilment of their duties.}\(^{77}\)
\]

For Christians such basic rights and related obligations arise out of the concept of the dignity of the human person as a divinely created being made in the image of God. This concept is spelt out clearly in many of the seminal documents of Vatican II\(^{78}\) as well as in successive writings of Popes and Synods of Bishops.\(^{79}\)

The thesis’s definition of rights of and obligations towards migrants, and especially refugees, will be informed also by the United Nations’ 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. These indicate that migrant/refugee rights are similar to the rights of citizens in a liberal democracy. Such rights encompass non-discrimination, freedom of religion, right to acquire property, real estate or personal property, equal protection for intellectual property and artistic rights, right to and for non-profit associations, equal access to courts of law, right to work, right to housing, equal access to public education and to public relief and assistance, right of freedom of movement within a country of asylum and no penalty for illegal entry.\(^{80}\) Above all, according to the United Nations the

\(^{76}\) *Pacem in Terris*, #28 - #38.

\(^{77}\) *Redemptor Hominis*, #11.

\(^{78}\) *Gaudium et Spes* and *Dignitatis Humanae* in particular.

\(^{79}\) Adequate testimony is provided in collections of Church documents such as Davies & Walsh, *Proclaiming Justice and Peace*.

\(^{80}\) Articles 3-4, 13-17, 21-23, 26 and 31, [www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch). In recent years the last article has become a most controversial article in Australia because of the previous Australian Federal Government’s mandatory detention policy for all people arriving without a valid visa.
“most important right a refugee has is the right not to be returned to a county where they may be persecuted.”

**Pastoral Care**

In exploring especially the second subsidiary question of the thesis the issue of what is “pastoral care” is raised. Tomasi refers to three distinct areas of action which have marked the direct involvement of the Catholic Church with migrants and refugees. The first is material and psychological assistance provided by parishes, voluntary groups and charitable entities; assistance that covers provision of essential information with regard to resettlement in the new society. Second are the specialized pastoral services provided by the Church which

both strengthen the immigrant community as a base for healthy adaptation and link the newcomers to a wider social reality of … national institution[s] such as the Church.

Thirdly, comes Catholic advocacy on migrants’ and refugees’ behalf. Tomasi also speaks of the need in these three forms of

collaboration and dialogue with other religious and humanistic traditions, with political and civil groups, and with public officials in promoting respect and the implementation of the human rights of migrants.

This research investigates basically the work of the specialized pastoral services within the Archdiocese of Perth in relation to the Church’s teaching on migrants and refugees. However, such practices do not exclude material and psychological assistance as well as

---

81 Quoted in Kerry Murphy, “Refugees in Australia: the Unwanted Stranger”, 178.
82 See 10.
83 Tomasi, “Migration and Catholicism in a Global Context”, 19.
84 *Idem.*
spiritual care. A classic definition of modern Christian pastoral care is that it consists broadly
of all ways a community of faith, under pastoral leadership, intentionally sponsors the awakening, shaping, rectifying, healing and ongoing growth in vocation of Christian persons and community, under the pressure and power of the in-breaking kingdom of God.\footnote{James W. Fowler, “Toward a Practical Theology of Pastoral Care” in \textit{Faith Development and Pastoral Care} (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 21.}

So, for Christians, activities of pastoral care enable the manifestation of discipleship in practical ways. At the outset, however, it must be emphasized that pastoral care is not only the prerogative or vocation of Christians. As will be demonstrated, migrant/refugee pastoral care within the Archdiocese of Perth has involved a diversity of people: Catholics – clerical, religious and lay, both practicing and non-practising, other Christians, those with other religious allegiances or with no religious allegiance.

However, there is a very real relevance still to pastoral care of what in the Middle Ages was known as the \textit{cura animarum} or the care or cure of souls.\footnote{Brian Kelty, “Practical Theology: A Change of Direction in Theology”, 120-121.} In this regard it is instructive to reflect on the relevance of the Matthean text to a theology of pastoral care to migrants and refugees.

\begin{quote}
… I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing. I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.\footnote{Mat 25:34(b)-36.}
\end{quote}

At first sight a strong material emphasis is present in this text. Thus, in contradistinction to Tomasi’s statement that it is the parishes and Church charities which, predominantly, provide material assistance, specialized pastoral services, especially those
migrant/refugee agencies classified as “service providers”, do so as well. They provide not just food, clothing, furniture etc. but also housing, teaching migrants and refugees English and information about essential matters of acculturation and daily living in Australian society.

A deeper reading of the text shows it can also be seen to relate to spiritual as well as psychological issues of migrant refugee pastoral care. Hence, “I was sick and you took care of me” is relevant to not just health and medical issues but also the importance of compassion and empathy shown by professional pastoral carers to the traumas suffered by their “clients” in their countries of origin and in refugee camps as well as through the process of relocation in a new and alien country. Similarly, “I was in prison and you visited me” can be related to the realization of how refugees are imprisoned spiritually and psychologically by their experiences of torture and violence and the importance of commencing the process of liberation through such specialized pastoral care mechanisms as counselling as well as deep and empathetic listening. It is also applicable to the dilemmas faced by both migrants and refugees in relationship to matters of inculturation and acculturation. Finally, the text can also be seen to encompass the activities of migrant chaplains and territorial priests in attending to the particular sacramental and worship needs of Catholic migrants and refugees. In this context the words of Henry Nouwen that authentic “[p]astoral care responds to the human person by offering them hope and a reason to live” are especially pertinent.88

Overall, Fowler’s description of pastoral care as “an ecology of care” which involves a “network of independent relationships”, as well as an “ecology of vocation” in which the community of faith, working with the wider community and government, prioritizes and invests of itself, its time and resources is especially pertinent.\textsuperscript{89} It involves, for professional Church agencies and personnel providing migrant/refugee pastoral care, a state of not only “being-in and working-with-the-world” but “being-challenged-in-the world”.\textsuperscript{90}

**Methodology**

Overall, my study has required the utilization of five distinct, albeit related, methodological approaches dictated by the topic of my thesis and the related research questions. These are the methodologies of contextual and practical theologies, qualitative methodology, including the methodology of oral history, and the methodology of dialogue.

**The Methodology of Contextual Theology**

Bevans defines the process of contextual methodology in this way.

> [C]ontextual theology [takes] two things seriously: the experience of the past (recorded in scripture and preserved and defended in tradition) and the experience of the present, that is, context (individual and social experience, secular or religious culture, social location, and social change). … [W]hat makes contextual theology precisely contextual is the recognition of the validity of another locus theologicus: present human

\textsuperscript{89} Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, 21.

experience ... And so today we speak of theology as having *three* sources or *loci theologici*: scripture, tradition, and present human experience.\(^{91}\)

Consequently, in my research I have needed to be aware of both the historical and contemporary political, socio-economic and religious frameworks in which Australian Catholic migrant/refugee pastoral care is situated and the implications of these frameworks for the presentation of my writing as well as those coming from Scripture and Church tradition. A pertinent example of the former resides in the effects on Australian society, economy and psyche of the increasing number of non-Christian people seeking asylum in Australia. Because of this phenomenon it is essential to consider Church tradition, teaching and policy in an ecumenical and non-Christian framework. This is accented by the recent major document from the PCPCMIP which stresses interreligious dialogue.\(^{92}\)

Given its emphasis on taking account of both the past and the present, an important aspect of contextual methodology is that of inculturation of the Gospel. Consequently, there is a need in this research to explore the ways in which the Church has viewed culture in relation to evangelization as well as the social justice implications of such evangelization for migrants and refugees. Such people represent not only a diversity of religions but also a plethora of cultures which, in relation to Catholicism, influence how they worship and practice their faith.\(^{93}\)

---

\(^{91}\) Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, xvi, and 4. My use of italics is reproduced from the original text. Rowland, *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*, 9, makes the valid point that all interpretative approaches are contextual. However, this does not deny the relevance of the methodological approaches which Bevans discusses in his book.


\(^{93}\) These issues are examined in the later sections of Ch. 3.
The use of the term “inculturation” is influenced by John Paul II’s definition:

The intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity and the insertion of Christianity in the various human cultures

and reflections on that definition by the North American theologians, Jesuits John Coleman and Joseph Fitzpatrick and Stephen Bevans SVD. Coleman signals the necessity of distinguishing carefully between the terms “inculturation”, “acculturation” and “enculturation”. However, his definition of inculturation as “faith, both incarnating in and transforming a culture” relates to evangelization in a too narrow and monodirectional sense and does not take into account the issue which Fitzpatrick raises; namely, that the concept of “inculturation” also relates to

the problem of cultural integration or cultural pluralism [which arises] when Christians [and non-Christians] of a particular cultural background migrate to an area of a different language and culture.

This is an important consideration for this research. Thus, Bevans’s argument that “contextualization” is a more adequate term than “inculturation” is apposite to this research because it deals with issues facing the Church in inserting Christianity into a different culture. It also gives rise to an authentic contextual theology or theology of inculturation in which the cultural and religious identity of the non-Christian is taken into account, together with social change and the regional and global contexts in which the

---

94 *Redemptoris Missio*, #37. This definition is supplemented by that given in the International Theological Commission’s *Faith and Inculturation*, 1987,156, #8.
95 Text of a lecture on “Evangelizing the Culture: Is It Possible?” presented by John W. Coleman SJ at the University of Notre Dame Australia in April 2005. Professor Coleman presented me with an online copy of his lecture as well as permission to make use of it, albeit with appropriate acknowledgement.
“contextualization” is proceeding. Bevans distinguishes six models through which contextualization proceeds – translation, anthropological, praxis, synthetic, transcendental and countercultural. Of these the model of “praxis”, as it is utilized by the methodology of practical theology, is the one which is most significant for this research.

The Methodology of Practical Theology

The methodology of practical theology is especially applicable to an exploration of the writing’s subject matter because of its concentration on “the concrete ecclesia” in the world and its knowledge that is a “practical knowing … in which experience and critical reflection work in concert.” David Tracy’s description of practical theology as “public theology”, a discipline by which all theologies engage with society, is, therefore, pertinent to this research, as is its focus of engagement - praxis, “the originating and self-correcting foundation of theory, … sublating theory, not vice-versa.” As indicated earlier, the methodology of practical theology places a priority on “doing” rather than “hearing”. It is “an attempt to give priority to ‘we will do’ – to human action” and “is given over to a passion for what could yet be, what is still-in-the making, in process, not yet, still coming (‘Thy kingdom come’).”

As the above comment implies, the methodology of practical theology is permeated by a strong social justice ethos; an ethos which allows people to become subjects rather than

---

100 Veling, Practical Theology, 3.
just objects of their own faith history.  

Veling, in the tradition of Metz and Gutierrez, describes practical theology as “a theology generated by concern.” He adds that it is a theology which

is typically associated with the quest for justice and liberation, with the plight of the poor and the oppressed, with the need to address the social, political and economic realities that shape the lives of millions of human beings who are too often left to suffer the sickness of the world.

Consequently, in using the methodology of practical theology I have been concerned to seek and reflect on what Elaine Graham describes as “the ‘disclosure’ of alterity” in relation to the migrants and refugees and pastoral care towards them. This research is intent also to utilize practical theology’s strategies which “will engender new perspectives on human experience and Divine reality” and to liberate what Metz refers to as “the dangerous memories”. These memories, which Metz relates to memories of suffering, cover both the lived experience of those who extend pastoral care to migrant and refugees and the migrants/refugees themselves as well as that which is inherent in Scripture and the lived tradition of the Church.

Methodologically, then, the main purpose of practical theology is to come to a point where interpreted religious belief, tradition and practice can encounter contemporary experience, questions and actions in such a way that neither is prioritized. Instead, Tracy observes that the task of the practical theologian is

---

101 Thomas H. Groome, “Theology on Our Feet; A Revisionist Pedagogy for Healing the Gap between Academia and Ecclesia” in The Blackwell Reader, 60-1.
102 Veling, Practical Theology, 217.
103 Ibid., 175.
104 Elaine Graham, “Practical Theology as Transforming Practice”, The Blackwell Reader, 106.
105 Idem.
106 Metz, Faith in History and Society, especially Ch. 11.
to establish the mutually critical correlation of the interpreted theory and praxis of the Christian fact and the interpreted theory and praxis of the contemporary situation.  

Hence it is vital “to mediate between the Christian tradition and the specific problems and challenges of the contemporary social context” in such a manner that new and challenging insights into both Church tradition and the practical situation contribute to the development and shaping of new theories and practices of both the Church and the world. In this sense “practical theology is a fundamentally missiological discipline”, aiming not just at understanding but also change.  

Practical theology has an interactive trialectical relationship with the other branches of theology - exegetical, historical, systematic and fundamental, as well as Scripture and Church tradition. This, in turn, becomes a multidimensional relationship when practical theology, other theologies, Scripture and Church tradition interact and dialogue with other scholarly disciplines and present experiences and situations in a particular socio-historical context. Hence, for practical as for contextual theologians, “contextualization is a theological imperative.” Moreover, the methodology of practical theology is “a collaborative endeavour which listens to many different voices.” In particular, as the thesis demonstrates from its empirical observation of pastoral practice to migrants and refugees, I have needed to ask

\[107\] Tracy, “The Foundations of Practical Theology”, 76.
\[108\] Swinton & Mowatt, Practical Theology and Qualitative Research, 25-7.
\[109\] James Fowler, “The Shaping of Christian Lives”, 150-1. The diagram which accompanies his statement and which excellently sums up his argument is more extensively developed in Don Browning, “Pastoral Theology in a Pluralistic Age”, Practical Theology, ed. D. Browning, 189.
\[110\] Bevans, Models of Contextual Theology, 3.
\[111\] Emmanuel Lartey, “Practical Theology as a Theological Form”, The Blackwell Reader, 131.
questions about who it is that are engaged …, what the social location of the persons are, who benefits from what is done, who is excluded by the way things are done and who are oppressed by it.\textsuperscript{112}

With regard to the research Lane’s perception that “the praxis of one [or more] subjects is never innocent but always part of a larger network of social and organic relationships”\textsuperscript{113} is germane. Thus, it is essential in my use of the methodology of practical theology to be open to the reality of social change and its effect on the nature and quality of pastoral care to migrants and refugees as well as on their composition and needs.\textsuperscript{114}

Essentially, the praxis model of practical theological methodology places an emphasis on inductive reasoning, namely, the discovery of an underlying pattern from empirical observation of practice.\textsuperscript{115} At its heart is the view that Christian truth is found by reflectively examining committed action. However, another model of practical theology – that of applied reasoning which emphasizes deductive reasoning – is also pertinent to this thesis because of its application of Scriptural and Church teaching to a particular practical situation.\textsuperscript{116} The model of critical correlation is also important in that it brings Scripture and Catholic tradition into dialogue with Christian practice\textsuperscript{117} through the medium of Perth Archdiocesan agencies which extend pastoral care to migrants and refugees.

The role of the practical theologian in the process of critically examining empirical practice is hermeneutical, involving both interpretation and understanding. In the case of

\textsuperscript{112} Idem.
\textsuperscript{113} Lane, Foundations for a Social Theology, 7
\textsuperscript{114} Bevans, Models of Contextual Theology, 5-7. It is in this sense that Veling, Practical Theology, 215, uses the analogy of “a rolling stone” to describe practical theology.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., 46-52.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 58-61.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 61-65.
Scripture and Church tradition, the practical theologian is provided with faith memories which have not only been preserved but interpreted in relation to the needs of the present. Moreover, contemporary practical experience has been refracted in the minds, emotions and past experiences of those people and groups consulted. In this regard the practitioner, him or herself, is not immune. Consequently, the imperative of the practical theologian is to be as open as possible to both the lived past and the present as well as to experience which goes beyond the verbal or the written.

Above all, however, practical theology is not just practical; it is also theological. Its preoccupation is with the human person both as *divinitas* and *humanitas*. Abraham Heschel’s statement is apposite to practical theology.

> Concern for the human person as held in God’s vision and anticipation, on the one hand, and, on the other, a regard for the person’s concrete situation.

Therefore, using a methodology of practical theology involves critically reflecting upon empirical practice and the contemporary situation of pastoral care to migrants and refugees through the lens of lived faith as shaped by Scripture and Church tradition as well as the reverse.

In this regard the “habitus/virtue model” of practical theology has had relevance to the research. French anthropologist, Pierre Bourdieu, speaks of “habitus” as something which “refers to systems of dispositions that are shaped by the experiences of actors in

---

118 Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, Ch. 1.
particular positions in the social structure.” He argues that these work “as a set of loose guidelines that orient abstract systems and concepts” and which “generate and organize practices and representations.”\(^{120}\) In the Christian context *habitus* is a model which holds that truth is to be found in a community of shared meaning such as is revealed in Scripture and Church tradition and, when explored in relation to a particular contemporary situation, can facilitate a process of growth into wisdom and toward the transcendent “Other”.\(^ {121}\) It emphasizes that orthopractice is not just a matter of orthodoxy but also of sound ethical choices which are grounded in the Gospel.\(^ {122}\)

**Qualitative Methodology**

While there is no single, standardized way of doing practical theology, its methodology relies heavily on the social sciences and, in particular, on the methodology of qualitative research. Browning warns that “the practical theologian never has access to either the raw, uninterpreted Christian fact or the unbiased and interpreted reality of ordinary experience.”\(^ {123}\) However, Swinton and Mowatt point out that “qualitative research is one way in which practical theologians can begin to look behind the veil of ‘normality’ and see what is actually going on within situations.”\(^ {124}\) Qualitative research is “multi-method

---


121 David F. Ford, *Self and Salvation: Being Transformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), explores what he refers to as eucharistic habitas which he sees as “a condensation of Christian habitas”, 140, “the practice of selves whose ‘other’ is Jesus Christ”, 168.


123 Browning, “Practical Theology and Religious Education” in Mudge and Poling, *Formation and Reflection*, 80.

124 Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, vi.
in focus.”¹²⁵ Thus, through the utilization of a variety of methods the qualitative researcher endeavours to explore how human beings encounter their world and make sense of it. It is a methodology which is essentially narrative-based in the sense that it relies on “thick description” of what happens and why or, to put it another way, the telling of stories and the recording of data. Thus, for this thesis, the sources are both recorded data, in the form of published material and documents, and the telling of stories via the medium of interviews with relevant personnel of the migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies.

My use of qualitative methodology involves using particular strategies to elicit and analyze the “raw” knowledge gathered in a search for a deeper understanding of the particular situation being examined. These include a collective case study strategy, especially in relation to the study of the pastoral work carried out towards migrants and refugees, grounded theory and critical and hermeneutical analysis. The first – collective case strategy – has involved selecting cases on the criteria that they are recognized organizations extending pastoral care to migrants and/or refugees within the Archdiocese of Perth. This has provided me with the opportunity to study closely the nature, development and quality of that pastoral care as well as any problems and concerns of the personnel. It has also enabled me to examine the evidence gained in relation to data from more formal sources, i.e. Scripture and Church teaching as well as the archival material from the agencies.

With regard to the management of this data a conscious decision was made not to use computer qualitative analysis software to process it. Rather, given the nature of my research, I am in total agreement with the warning from Thomas and Lyn Richards that computers offer no instant solution to the problems faced by qualitative researchers, because the data they handle are particularly resistant to tidy processing methods and the methods they use are very unlike the techniques computers easily support.\textsuperscript{126}

Instead, I have organized data into categories appropriate to my research, coded it according to such categories and cross-referenced it to other relevant data. As the following strategies indicate, it has been subject to close and critical examination.

Thus, the second qualitative strategy utilized - that of grounded theory - has involved the formation of conceptual theories from the data gathered, both from the case studies and from more formal published and documentary material. These have been developed through a method of constant critical comparison and the exploration and testing of the thesis’ questions and hypotheses. They are conceptually “dense” and endeavour to elicit patterns of interaction as well as difference in relation to the dialogical enquiry of the thesis. They are based on multiple perspectives which have been sought systematically during the research process.

The third strategy – close critical and hermeneutical analysis – has involved the employment of a hermeneutic of suspicion in which I have sought to contextualize the

sources and to understand the past in the light of the present and vice versa \(^{127}\) as well as how the relevant groups and individuals have constructed perceived realities. Orally-secured data has been gathered through the collective case strategy; what Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly refer to as “field texts.” \(^{128}\) This data has been viewed as the lived or living experience of those people extending pastoral care to migrants and refugees, in relation to their exercise of that pastoral care. It is important to distinguish such material from the archival and published data and to take into account the peculiar nature of each source of information. Overall, I have placed a strong emphasis on interpretation and understanding of meaning, implicit and inferred, as well as explicit. Awareness has been paid to what Lincoln and Guba refer to as the “interpretative paradigm” \(^{129}\) or the interpretative framework in which the data is placed. This also involves me in being conscious of the questions I have asked and of my personal conceptions brought to the basic data which influence how that data is interpreted.

**The Methodology of Oral History**

As the section on qualitative research indicates, one source of data has been that via interviews with the personnel of the respective migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies of the Archdiocese of Perth and a few other relevant people. Thus the methodology of oral history forms another strategy in the collection and critical analysis of my research. It is a


\(^{128}\) “Personal Experience Methods” in Denzin & Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 1994 edition, 419. “Field texts” are defined as data which is literally gathered in the field through observation, note-taking on such observation, or, in relation to my research, interviewing of personnel working in the field of migrant and refugee pastoral care.

methodology which reinforces the interdisciplinary nature of practical theology.\textsuperscript{130} The purpose of the interviews lies in the realization that to simply carry out an analytical survey of the relevant documentation of the agencies and bodies would only add yet another semi-assimilated layer to the already acquired understandings and descriptive analysis of Scripture and Church teaching. Because “[o]ur lives are living human documents”\textsuperscript{131} lived in relationship, to interview the protagonists in refugee/migrant pastoral care is imperative to gain a fuller understanding of how they practise their beliefs, live their faith and relate to their fellow carers and clientele in the light of their beliefs and faith. Also vital to consider, in cases where these agency personnel are Catholic and Christian, is how Scripture, Church teaching and policy affect their pastoral practice. I have already explained why it had not proved possible to interview a representative sample of the predominantly refugee clientele of the agencies.\textsuperscript{132} Notwithstanding, a strong awareness of the needs and concerns of these people, the importance of memory to them and their “silent sufferings of the inconsolable pain of the past”\textsuperscript{133} permeates the carers’ interviews.

The twenty-six interviews, mainly carried out after documentary research of the archival material of each agency had been completed, were semi-structured and gendered. In other words, the interviewee was informed of the nature and goals of the project and certain standard questions germane to the research which would be asked. The

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[130] Woodward and Pattison, “Introduction”, \textit{The Blackwell Reader}, 13-16. Emmanuel Lartey, “Practical Theology as Theological Form” in the same Reader, 132-3, points out that without the use of oral history the investigation of a particular pastoral practice would lack the vital element of people’s empirical experience and perception in the light of their particular religious, social and cultural contexts.
\item[131] Ballard and Prichard, \textit{Practical Theology in Action}, 64.
\item[132] See 14, footnote 52.
\item[133] Metz, \textit{Faith in History and Society}, 128. This phrase is reproduced also in Lane, \textit{Foundations for a Social Theology}, 81.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
The interviewee was given opportunity to raise issues which he/she considered relevant and there was a mutual interaction and rapport between the interviewee and the interviewer. The semi-structured nature of the interviews and the “give-and-take” between the interviewer and the interviewee during the interview mitigated what Andrea Fontana and James Fey describe as the hierarchical relation [in a typical structured interview] with the respondent being in the subordinant position [and a situation in which] the interview takes place within the cultural boundaries of a paternalistic social system in which masculine identities are differentiated from feminine ones.\textsuperscript{134}

Instead, as the interviewer, I endeavoured to “adapt to the world of the individuals and [tried] to share their concerns and outlooks.”\textsuperscript{135} One way in which this was achieved was to carry out each interview in the workplace of the interviewee wherever possible. Another way was to be sensitive to the language, culture and religious affiliation of the respondent and the agency as well as taking account of non-verbal aspects of the conversation.\textsuperscript{136} Immediately after the interview my observations during the interview were recorded, especially with regard to a seeming reluctance, hostility or hesitation in answering a particular question or discussing a specific issue.

As soon as possible after the interview a transcription was made and a copy sent to the interviewee for his/her comments, corrections or deletions. In no case was a second interview necessary. However, some clarification was occasionally solicited and given. As has been the case with archival and published documents, the transcripts, with


\textsuperscript{135} \textit{Ibid.}, 371.

\textsuperscript{136} These included silences, pauses, body language, variations in volume, pitch and quality of voice, emotional responses, laughter etc.
reference back to the tapes where needed, have been subject to hermeneutical and content analysis. Such analysis has been both individual and collective. With the former, narrative analysis has been important with regard to my awareness that the interviewee has shared a story about him/herself and his/her unique experiences and how this story developed during the interview. With regard to the latter – collective and comparative content analysis – it has been essential to examine the transcripts for emerging common themes as well as differences and to explore how and why the themes and differences relate to one another, i.e. what patterns are emergent. Only in one instance, where two clientele were interviewed together, has discourse analysis been applicable in terms of observing patterns of interaction between the interviewees.

The Methodology of Dialogue

Questions asked of and information gathered from the interviews as well as from the archival documentation of the migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies have been contextual. In other words, they have been informed by my understanding of Scripture and Church teaching and Australian episcopal policy with regard to migrants and refugees. They have also been enlightened by my awareness of the socio-cultural, multi-religious and political contexts in which the pastoral work of the respective agencies is being carried out. Close study of a localized situation of pastoral practice being carried out in a particular multi-socio-political-cultural-religious context necessarily gains in value if it is considered dialogically in relation the wider Church migrant-refugee teaching which is founded in Scripture.
The expectation throughout this thesis, which has informed both its structure as well as its content, is that such a dialogue will shed light on how such wider teaching is being received and where it needs to be expanded or modified so that the Church can provide more appropriate pastoral care to migrants and refugees in given contexts. In like vein, correlation of information from both aspects – the teaching and the practically empirical – can serve to indicate where the empirical praxis of the agencies and their personnel might be challenged. In both regards the dialogue is based on the conviction that praxis and theory can learn reciprocally from one another and, through interactive dialogue, such learning can lead to improved and more redemptive praxis and theory.

**Structure of the Dissertation**

In order to explore adequately the three research questions posed at the commencement of this chapter the thesis has been structured according to the following pattern. This chapter has examined its subject matter, its *raison d’etre*, parameters and methodology. Chapter Two explores the treatment of the alien, the sojourner and the foreigner in Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. Chapter Three then examines Catholic social justice foundations for a study of pastoral care to migrants and refugees while Chapter Four critically considers the rights and responsibilities of the universal Church toward migrants and refugees.

At this point the thesis turns to the Australian scene with first, in Chapter Five, an examination of the documentation and activities of the Catholic Church in Australia, especially that of the ACBC and its related bodies. This chapter also explores in depth
the changing ethnic composition of the Catholic Church in Australia as well as the changes in the religious composition of the Australian population from the time of World War II as well as early Church policies toward migrants. Chapter Six and Seven then go on to explore the empirical praxis toward migrants and refugees in the Archdiocese of Perth. The first of these two chapters considers, in a comparative context, the origins, mission and activities of the six agencies/bodies of the Archdiocese responsible for pastoral care to migrants and refugees. This is followed by Chapter Seven which examines challenges and problems related to the empirical praxis of these same six agencies/bodies.

Chapter Eight concludes by examining pastoral care towards migrants and refugees in a theological context and reflecting on the concept of “otherness”, iconically represented by the migrants and refugees in relation to what is involved in the welcome of the stranger. Most importantly it engages in critical dialogue. On the one hand, this involves the empirical practices and reflective praxis of the migrant/refugee agencies in the Archdiocese of Perth. On the other, it concerns Scriptural understandings, Church teaching and Australian episcopal policy directions in relation to migrants and refugees.
CHAPTER TWO

THE ALIEN, THE SOJOURNER AND THE STRANGER IN HEBREW AND CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE

Introduction

Christine Pohl’s seminal study, Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition, argues that contemporary Christianity needs to recover the “rich and complex” traditions of Christian hospitality as well as its moral dimension. Much of what passes as hospitality today, she argues, either comes under the category of entertainment of family, friends and colleagues, or else is extended to the needy in our society by institutions and social services. As such, hospitality to society’s marginalized is in danger of losing not only its moral but also much of its personalized qualities. In particular, for the Christian, there has been a diminution of the realization of how central hospitality, especially its extension to the stranger, is to fully living the Christian life. Such issues can only be rectified, she contends, by studying
biblical and early Christian church sources, examining the stories they contain about hospitality, and applying these to our modern society and church as well as passing them on to future generations. “Hospitality” is not just a noun but also, in the sense of “being hospitable”, a verb. Consequently, we need models on which to base our own practices of hospitality and, for Christians, our foundational models come from Hebrew and Christian Scriptures.

The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to set the scriptural foundations for a dialogue among Scripture, Church documentation, and the pastoral practice of agencies and bodies which minister to migrants and refugees within the Archdiocese of Perth. Therefore the chapter will examine the treatment in Hebrew and Christian Scriptures of “the stranger”, migration, and hospitality, together with the implications of these issues for early Christianity in its need to adapt to the wider Graeco-Roman arena as it spread outward from the narrower confines of the Judaic world. In its methodological approach to Scripture the chapter is both descriptive and exegetical. In the case of the Hebrew Scriptures, exploration of “the stranger”, the alien, involves examining the symbolic representations of the migrant and refugee as they are used to present the history of the Jewish people and its relationship with Yahweh, His covenant with His chosen people and the “promised land.” With the Christian Scriptures it is necessary to investigate the writers’ desires to help the reader to understand the nature and message of Jesus Christ and the mission of His disciples and

followers. While the main resource for the chapter is *The HarperCollins Study Bible* \(^{138}\), other commentators and commentaries are also utilized.\(^ {139}\) In both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures issues to do with migration, the presence of ‘strangers’ within the biblical Jewish and Christian communities and their contributions to inculturated faith identity are central to and shape the awareness of early Jews and Christians of who they were as the people of God. Brox commences his analysis of “the stranger in early Christianity” with a quotation from a German article which could be applied equally to both early Christianity and biblical Judaism

Throughout history, Christianity has encountered the stranger on a variety of levels. From exclusivism and denunciation to acceptance and assimilation, Christianity has attempted, not always successfully, to include the stranger and frame its thinking and teaching in the thought models of the time.\(^ {140}\)

This chapter is broken into two parts; the first dealing with the alien and the stranger in Hebrew Scripture and the second, the stranger in the Christian Scriptures. Within the first part three broad themes are examined in relation to the Hebrew Scriptures: responses to the stranger, migration as a key metaphor, and hospitality as an integral element in the formation of Israelite religious and national identity. Similarly, in the second part the three broad themes examined are Jesus as the ‘archetypal stranger’, Jesus and hospitality to the


stranger, and perceptions and implications of the mission of the early Christians. All these themes are pertinent to a dialogue between Scripture, Church tradition and the outreach of the Church to migrants and refugees, irrespective of their ethnic and cultural/religious heritage.

Part One – Hebrew Scripture, the Alien and the Stranger

Responses to the Stranger in Hebrew Scripture

A key theme in the Hebrew Scriptures is that of the obligations of the Israelite people to strangers, travellers, foreigners and fugitives.

In the world of the Bible, hospitality is never about entertaining family and friends. Hospitality is about dealing with strangers. To show hospitality to strangers is ‘to receive’ them."^141

That strangers and travellers could expect hospitality from Israelites is expressed early in the Hebrew Scriptures. In particular two stories are foundational to the Israelite tradition of hospitality – first, Abraham, showing of hospitality to the three strangers when they visit him at the oaks of Mamre where he and his people are encamped^142; secondly, Lot’s extension of similar, albeit more limited, hospitality to the two angelic visitors who visit him in


^142 Gen 18:1-8. Joel W. Rosenberg, *HarperCollins*, 27, argues that, even though the divine presence is mediated through the three guests, the three men in the biblical text are to be viewed as strangers and travellers as well as guests.
Sodom. The way in which both occasions are treated in Genesis, especially that involving Abraham as host, clearly indicate that hospitality to the stranger is perceived in Hebrew Scripture as much more than just a social requirement. They demonstrate the Israelite belief that “hospitality to the stranger is God’s wish” and is therefore sacramental.

Abraham’s hospitality to the three strangers is hospitality to God. Abraham hurries to find food, he kneels before his hosts, washes their feet, gives them bread and milk. These are the eternal gestures, the sacraments of hospitality. The vagrant, the wanderer, far from being despised, oppressed, murdered, becomes the occasion of an encounter with God.

Such hospitality on the part of Abraham is made even more significant when one realizes that Abraham is the “archetypal migrant, called to leave all and to become intentionally homeless in a view of a promise yet to be fulfilled.”

Abraham is joined in his hospitality to the three strangers by the rest of his household and community, whereas, in Lot’s case the community refuse to accept the two strangers and act in contradiction of the ancient tradition in which hospitality included protection of guests by the entire community as well as the specific household. Thus, “Lot’s story demonstrates that when hospitality is contrary to the intentions of the larger group, it can be dangerous;

---

143 See Gen 19:1-3. Rosenberg contends that this text can be contrasted to Abraham’s hospitality in the text previously referred to. “Lot’s kindnesses are less impressive but enough to show him as righteous, however minimally”, ibid., 28.
144 Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 22 and 29.
145 Mike Purcell, “Christ, the Stranger. The Ethical Originality of Homelessness”, Migration in a Global World, 64, refers to Derrida’s concept of the paradox of “hostipality”, a situation in which the host is also held victim or hostage by the stranger, to whom he must respond and be responsible. See J. Derrida, On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness (London: Routledge, 2001), 4-5.
146 Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 29. Such a view can be applied also to Christian Scripture in its treatment of hospitality.
147 Purcell, “Christ, the Stranger”, 64.
an act of defiance and of challenge.” In our contemporary Australian scene, such has been clearly demonstrated by organizations and individuals who have shown hospitality to informal asylum seekers.

Unlike other ancient societies, Israelite society was distinctive in that it enshrined hospitality to resident strangers in its legal system. The three collections of the law in the Hebrew Scriptures - Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy - extend this sacrament of hospitality further to include aliens resident among the tribes of Israel and develop a clear code of ethics for Israelites to follow in their treatment of the stranger and the foreigner. “The laws of the Torah put foreigners under the absolute protection of God.”

Even in the exodus from Egypt aliens who had intermarried with the Israelites or who were slaves and servants in Israelite families, providing they were circumcised, were included in Yahweh’s instructions to Moses and Aaron for the first Passover, although other foreigners were excluded. Later in Exodus, during the Israelite encampment in Sinai, the rights of foreigners residing among the Israelite tribes became more explicit and detailed. The Israelites were warned by Yahweh not to oppress the foreigners in their midst and, more specifically, not to “demand labour from ... the alien resident in your towns, or the stranger at your gates” on the Sabbath anymore.

---

148 Pohl, Making Room, 25
149 Crüsemann, “You Know the Heart of a Stranger”, 96. This point is reinforced by Richard in Living the Hospitality of God, 22 ff.
150 Ex 12:43-49.
151 Ibid., 23:9. This text is reiterated more strongly in Lev 19:33-34 with the injunction that resident aliens among the Israelites are to be treated as citizens.
than they should from “your son or daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock.” However, as Leviticus makes clear, such rights were to be reciprocated by obligations from the foreign residents and, if disobeyed, the foreigners were to be punished. Thus, resident aliens as well as Israelites were to observe not only the Sabbath as a holy day but also various religious and purification rituals and social taboos under penalty of death by stoning.

In Deuteronomic law resident aliens and foreigners were included with other landless “problem” groups in Hebrew society (widows, orphans and Levites) and their welfare was provided for in “what virtually amounts to a social safety net.” As with the other groups, alien residents were to be treated equally with regard to justice and wages, provided for in the regulations for harvesting and gleaning, included among the landless groups which, every third year, were to benefit from the tithes levied on Israelite landowners, and every seventh year were among those who benefited from the remission of debt. Alien residents were allowed also to participate in the great cultic

---

152 Ex 20:8 and Dt 5:14.
154 Crüsemann, “You Know the Heart of a Stranger”, 98-99. New Jerome, 52, adds: “As outsiders, often without clan protection, [resident aliens] were vulnerable and often poor”.
155 Dt 1:16; 24:14-15 and 17.
156 Ibid. 24:19-21.
158 Ibid. 15: 1-18. Israelites were permitted to exact a debt from a foreigner but had to make sure that there was no-one in need among them.
festivals of the Israelites. However, once they had reached the promised land, Israelites were “not permitted to put a foreigner over them [as king].”

This code of ethical behaviour towards the stranger and the alien in the midst of the Israelite tribes was underpinned by a basic theological principle which, in its turn, had its roots in the historical experience of the Israelites themselves as migrants, aliens and oppressed human beings, especially in Egypt. Such a theological principle was understood to be “demanded by God’s covenantal relationship with the Hebrew people.”

[T]he Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Crüsemann argues that this theological position underpins all the Pentateuch statements on Israelite relations with the aliens among them.

Israel’s own destiny, as it becomes visible in the present situation as a liberated landowner, derives from the same love of God as a help to those who were strangers at that time. Here divine and human action lie side by side unconfused and unseparated. Precisely in its material possession Israel is governed by the love of God and therefore can also provide a material home for fugitives, of the kind that it experienced itself from God. The love of God in action both in Israel and among strangers at the same time builds a bridge between Israel and the strangers ... . Certainly God chose Abraham and his descendants as a people in whose midst God himself was to dwell. But those who live with Israel, and who are therefore as close to God as his people, are subject to the same regulations and laws in every respect.

159 Ibid. 16:11 and 14. New Jerome, 52, comments: “Special access to Yahweh [was] their protection.”
160 Dt 17: 14-15.
161 See Ex 23:9; Lev 19:33-34 and Dt 24:18.
163 Dt 10:17-18.
Within the Hebrew Scriptures it is not always clear who the stranger is. Once the Israelites entered into the land Yaweh had promised them they found it to be “a geographical and political environment traversed by people on the move”; “a place where the encounter with strangers was a daily experience.” All the rest of humanity the Israelites encountered they categorized as “foreign”. However, as scholars like Pettena, Crusemann and Richard point out in Hebrew Scripture there are various terms which refer to the stranger. Whereas Crusemann and Richard only mention two – the nokri and the ger, Pettena adds two others – the zar and the toshabh. Each of these groups refer to different relationships which existed between foreigners and the Israelites and demonstrate a graduation from “fear” to “respect”. Thus the term zar apparently referred to enemy aliens or a foreign race with no rights whatever in Israel. These were people to be feared by the Israelites. The terms nokri or ben hanekar indicated foreigners who passed through as merchants or travelers, or who might be people residing in the “promised land” – Canaanites, Mohabites or Ammonites; foreigners who were members of opposing groups of people and who did not follow the religion of Israel. They were people to be

---

165 Maurizio Pettena, *Migration in the Bible: The Commandment of Hospitality*, Exodus Series 2 (Quezon City, the Philippines: Scalabrini Migration Centre, 2005), 3. As Pettena adds, Palestine was a corridor between Egypt and Babylon, where caravans of merchants and foreign armies regularly passed by. It was already the home to foreign peoples when the Israelites entered it and they had to fight to possess it. See Josh, especially Chs 1-13.


167 Pettena, *Migration in the Bible*, 4, notes that the term zar could also refer to a stranger within one’s family, e.g. Dt 25: 5, or a stranger who was not part of a community, e.g Isa 1:7 or 61:5, who might even be seen as a “barbarian” in relation to the political establishment, e.g. Ez 7:21.
avoided.\textsuperscript{168} The term \textit{toshabh}, however, demonstrates how foreigners came to be viewed as people needing protection, especially as the Israelites became more secure in their promised land. This term was used to identify aliens or estranged foreigners who were accepted into Jewish society, albeit with limited rights. For example, the Law of Jubilee did not apply to the \textit{toshabh}.\textsuperscript{169}

Alternatively, the term \textit{gerim}\textsuperscript{170} referred to those strangers who not only resided with the Israelite people but who were more fully integrated into Jewish society. It originated from the word \textit{ger}\textsuperscript{171} which originally meant a wanderer or a refugee living outside of his or her place of origin. \textit{Gerim} came to be used to designate all non-Israelites living with or who had come from Egypt with the Israelite people. Such is clearly demonstrated in the Book of Ruth in which Naomi’s Moabite daughter-in-law, Ruth, is acculturated into the Bethlehem community of Israelites, marries her kinsman, Boaz, and becomes the great-grandmother of King David. Pettena refers to the \textit{ger} as “the alien to be respected” and points out that under the Torah they were to have special protection and equality of justice with the native Israelites. He adds; “the status and privileges of the \textit{gerim} derive from the bond of hospitality in which a guest is inviolable, with claims of protection and full sustenance in return for loyalty.”\textsuperscript{172}

\textsuperscript{168} Nevertheless, Pettena, \textit{ibid.}, 5, does alert his readers to the fact that the Hebrew strictures on hospitality applied to the \textit{nokri}, with the prime example being Abraham’s welcome to the three strangers who visit him.
\textsuperscript{169} See either Ex 12: 43-45 or Lev 25:45.
\textsuperscript{170} Sometimes spelt \textit{gherim}.
\textsuperscript{171} Sometimes spelt \textit{gher}.
\textsuperscript{172} Pettena, \textit{Migration in the Bible}, 6-7.
The situation recounted in the Book of Ruth is significant. The Jewish
community’s acceptance of Ruth demonstrates Malina’s hypothesis that in the
world of Hebrew Scripture the reception of strangers occurred in three stages:
first, a stage of testing and reception; second, a point at which the stranger
became a guest under the protection of a patron; and finally, a time of either
total acceptance or rejection in which the stranger-guest was viewed as either
friend or enemy. The story is also important because it shows the way in
which the stranger can also, at times, be “the host”. Thus Ruth cares for Naomi
during the journey from Moab to Bethlehem and during the early time of
Naomi’s resettlement in her hometown. Other examples of non-Israelite
women providing hospitality to travelling prophets are given in the two books
of Kings. Again, these two examples demonstrate the interchangeability of
stranger and host and the workings of God by which the Israelite guests, Elijah
and Elisha, bring their hosts into a special connection with God. Further, the
term “stranger” did not necessarily have to apply only to a non-Israelite; it
could also be used to refer to the Israelites themselves, particularly in relation

173 Malina, “Patronage”, in Pilch and Malina, 151, notes that patron-client relations, under
which hospitality to the stranger was often exercised in biblical times, “is a form of ‘justice’
routed in generalized reciprocity, similar to the justice meted out by relatives to each other in
kinship systems”. He also comments that the word “patron” derives from the Greek and Latin
word for father, pater. So in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures when anyone who is not a
biological father is called “father” the title refers to the role and status of the patron.
174 Malina, 115-117.
175 1 Kings 17:18 in which the widow of Zarepath shares her and her son’s remaining food with
Elijah. and 2 Kings 4:9 where the wealthy Shunammite woman builds a special room and
furnishes it for Elisha when he passes near Shunem.
176 The two above examples were brought to my attention by Pohl, Making Room, 25-6.
to their ancestors in Egypt and other lands\textsuperscript{177} or even to indicate Israelites of a tribe different from one’s own.

**Migration as a Key Metaphor in Hebrew Scripture**

That Israelites themselves knew well, either from direct experience or from their scripture and their history, what it was like to be a stranger, an alien and a wanderer seeking acceptance and refuge, is made manifest in Hebrew Scripture. The theme of the Israelites as sojourners, as migrants, acts as a key metaphor for understanding the Israelites’ relationship with their God, their history and their relationships with non-Israelite strangers.

Biblical commentators\textsuperscript{178} appear to agree that from the end of Chapter 11 and the beginning of Chapter 12 the narrative of Genesis focuses on the formation of Israel as a people called by Yahweh to take control of and populate the land promised to them by their God. “The genealogy of Terah [the first of the ancestors of Israel] makes the important division in Genesis between the story of the nations in 1:1-11:26 and the story of Israel in 11:27-50:26.”\textsuperscript{179} Terah’s descendant, Abram, is called by God to migrate “from your country and your

\textsuperscript{177} Richard, *The Hospitality of God*, 22, uses the example of Moses in the country of Midian and his naming of his son Gershom to indicate their status as aliens resident in a foreign land. See Ex 2:22.

\textsuperscript{178} For example, *New Jerome*, 18-19, Charles M. Laymon (ed.), *The Interpreter’s One-Volume Commentary on the Bible* (William Collins, 1971), 10-11 and Rosenberg, “Genesis - Introduction” in *HarperCollins*, 3. However, Rosenberg, while stating that the book of Genesis has four movements, does argue that “each [my italics] segment tells, in progressively greater specificity, the events leading to the people Israel - the descendants of Jacob’s twelve sons - whose tribes are traditionally believed to have conquered Canaan in the era of Joshua.”

\textsuperscript{179} *New Jerome*, 18.
kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you” and promised that out of himself and his descendants will come “a great nation.”

Abram’s initial migration from Hebron to Shechem is only one of a series of migrations of the emerging Israelite peoples which are related in Hebrew Scripture from Genesis on. “[F]rom Abraham’s departure ... to the child in the manger, in its main lines the Bible is a story of people who depart, set out in search of bread, land and protection, wander about and return.”

In Hebrew Scripture the Israelites never really become a sedentary people. From the time of Abraham onwards their history was one of quest - quest for the land which Yahweh had promised to the Patriarchs; quest to establish and maintain themselves in the promised land; quest to regain their land after their loss of it.

Through all of this the Israelites’ religious and national identity was shaped. Possession of the promised land became a symbol of freedom from absence, liberation from homelessness and insecurity and, above all, of the Israelites’ relationship with Yahweh. As a gift from Yahweh, land became for the Israelites “a sacrament of God’s promise and word” and the searches for it and attempts to regain and maintain it became acts of faith. These searches for land and security together with attempts to regain and maintain them were often expressed in migrations which were both voluntary and involuntary. They

---

181 Crüsemann, “You Know the Heart of a Stranger”, 96.
182 Ibid., 105.
183 Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 27.
were impelled also by three interconnected factors - religious instruction, direct and through theophanies and dreams; military invasion, or political exploitation/repression; and economic issues.

The greatest migration related in the Hebrew Scriptures was initiated by a theophany which led to the role of Moses as the emissary of God in liberating the enslaved Israelites from Egyptian control.\textsuperscript{184} This migration encompassed the forty years of wandering of the tribes of Israel in the wilderness of the Sinai peninsula followed by the crossing over of the Hebrew people into the Transjordan region, on into the land of Canaan to fulfill finally Yahweh’s promise to Abraham. Earlier, a similar direct instruction from Yahweh engendered Abram’s initial migration. Jacob also received direction from Yahweh in a dream\textsuperscript{185} which reinforced his obedience to his father’s intention that Jacob should travel to Bethel to seek a bride from among his fellow Israelites and thus fulfill God’s promise to Abraham.

Factors like military invasion or political exploitation/repression often reinforced direct religious instruction. Thus it was political factors which, together with God’s instructions to Moses, provided the motivating circumstances for the exodus of the Hebrew people from Egypt, i.e., the harsh

\textsuperscript{184} Ex 3:1 - 4:17.
\textsuperscript{185} Gen 28:10-22.
exploitation of them as slaves by the Egyptians.\textsuperscript{186} Again it was political factors - corruption, greed and desire for aggrandizement together with political alliances - which provided the catalysts for the outstanding examples of involuntary migration in the Hebrew Scriptures that occurred following the invasion and conquest of the two Israelite kingdoms, Israel and Judah, by the Assyrian and Babylonian kings in 721 BCE and 587/6 BCE. The first invasion and conquest in 722 BCE, that of the Northern Kingdom, led to a major refugee “problem” for the Southern Kingdom as refugees from the former kingdom made their way there and particularly to Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{187} Ultimately with the invasion of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in 586 BCE the Hebrew people were subjected to a second deportation and a period of captivity and enslavement as well as a time of exile - the Babylonian captivity - an estimated period of fifty years.\textsuperscript{188}

During this time the Israelite people were again placed in the position of aliens, refugees, and slaves and became a people who were in a psychological state of intense mourning for the loss of their promised land and the breaking of their covenant with Yahweh.\textsuperscript{189} Ironically, it was changing political circumstances together with direct action by Yahweh that allowed the Israelites to return to their promised land and endeavour to restore their fractured relationship with

\begin{footnotes}
\item[186] The initial fleeing of Moses from his privileged position as the adopted son of the Pharaoh’s daughter comes about because of Moses’ own response to the cruelty by an Egyptian overseer over one of Moses’ own kin and the Pharaoh’s response to Moses’ action, Ex 2:11-16.
\item[187] This issue is raised by Crüsemann in “You Know the Heart of a Stranger”, 98. He argues that the influx of refugees from the Northern Kingdom led to the rapid growth and the development of new slum-like quarters in Jerusalem.
\item[188] Ralph W. Klein, HarperCollins, 698.
\item[189] See Lam and Ps 137 for examples of this intense mourning.
\end{footnotes}
their God. Thus King Cyrus of Persia in 539 BCE fulfilled Jeremiah’s prophecy by authorizing the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem and permitting all exiles who so desired to return to their country.\(^{190}\)

Finally, that Israelite migration as a result of economic desire or need could and did lead to further migration to escape captivity and enslavement is illustrated in the Hebrew Scriptures. Egypt was frequently the locus of such migrations, especially those motivated by economic considerations. Thus, Abram led his people to Egypt as a result of famine in Shechem.\(^{191}\) Later an even more devastating famine became the prime motivation for the migration of Joseph’s family and kin to Egypt and the reconciliation of Joseph with his father and brothers.\(^{192}\) Joseph’s rise to wealth and power was emblematic of the economic and political successes of a number of “foreigners”, including Hebrews, who had experienced what, in modern terminology, could be described as upward social mobility under the Egyptian Pharaohs. While Joseph’s arrival in Egypt was involuntary, it also points to a number of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who had come to Egypt, together with other “foreigners” to seek their fortune. Economic need, again in the form of famine, this time in Egypt itself, helps to explain the backlash against the Israelites under a later Pharaoh. Consequences of this famine in Egypt, such as the impoverishment of the Egyptian population, greater concentration of Egypt’s wealth into the hands

\(^{190}\) See comment by Klein, 698, in response to 2 Chr 36:22-23.

\(^{191}\) Gen 12.10.

\(^{192}\) Gen 42:1-5. However, such migration is sanctioned by a divine revelation to Jacob not to be afraid, see Gen 46:1-4.
of the Pharaoh and his priests and preferential treatment by Joseph toward his kin and fellow countrymen\textsuperscript{193}, led to the decline of the Hebrew people in Egypt into a captive and exploited people.\textsuperscript{194}

**Hospitality as an Integral Element in the Treatment of Israelite Religious and National Identity in the Hebrew Scriptures**

Overall, the Israelites’ own experience and history as migrants, refugees and sojourners not only “shape[d] a whole further history of the rights of strangers within the Bible”\textsuperscript{195} but were instrumental in the formation of the Israelites’ own religious and national identity. The treatment of the stranger in the Hebrew Scriptures and extension of hospitality to aliens resident with the Hebrew people were closely intertwined with the quest for, the formation and, ultimately, the expression of religious and national identity. Texts like that of Exodus 23:9 which stipulate that Israelites must not oppress the stranger are accompanied by the reminder that the Israelites themselves had been the oppressed “other”. Once again, in the periods of the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions of Israel and Judea and the years of exile and captivity, they were to find themselves in a similar situation.

\textsuperscript{193} Gen 47.13-26.
\textsuperscript{194} See Ex 1:8-14. Also see comment by Rosenberg in HarperCollins, 70.
\textsuperscript{195} Crüsemann, “You Know the Heart of a Stranger”, 98.
The forty years of the exodus were fundamental to the formation of the Israelites and their awareness of Yahweh as He revealed His “Godself” to them through Moses. During this period of wandering in search of the promised land the loosely connected tribes of Israel slowly and painfully became a more consolidated people. As the books of the Pentateuch reveal, for the Israelites this was a time of testing, “of precariousness, of landlessness, but also of grace ... during [which] there emerge[d] a religious tradition in which generosity and hospitality and justice [we]re emphasized.”196 It is particularly during this period that God reveals Himself as a gracious host to the wanderers when he provides manna and quail daily in the wilderness to His ungrateful and hungry people.197 As has already been demonstrated, such generosity, hospitality and justice were given structural expression in the Torah’s strictures on how resident strangers were to be treated, together with other landless groups.

Such a tradition, however, did not commence with the exodus, seminal though that experience was for the Israelite sense of religious and national identity. It had its roots in the history of the Israelite people from the time of Abraham even though during the period of the Patriarchs the people of Israel were far from being a closely united people. Throughout this time, particularly in relation to their interactions with other races and nations198 and their experience

197 Pohl, Making Room, 16. This is a theme to be taken up in Christian Scripture with the images of Jesus as the “living water”.
198 That the Israelite people from very early on in their history were exposed to a multiplicity of other races and cultures is evinced not only in the narrations of their wanderings, their wars and intermarriages with other national groups but also by such stories as that of the attempt of human beings to build the tower of Babel. See Gen 11:1-9. This story provides testimony to
of persecution such as that which occurred in the latter part of the Hebrew residence in Egypt\textsuperscript{199}, the early Israelites were moving to an embryonic sense of national identity which was characterized by their worship of one God YHWH and the circumcision of their male children according to God’s convenant with Abraham. Similarly, a tradition of hospitality to strangers also evolved in this period of the Patriarchs; a tradition which was to be crystallized and consolidated through the exodus experience of the Israelites and their establishment of themselves in the promised land of Canaan under Joshua’s leadership.

The Israelite sense of religious and national identity was to be shaken severely by their experiences of division into two kingdoms following on the reign of King Solomon and the subsequent events which led to the invasions of the Assyrian and Babylonian kings and the exile and captivity in Babylon. Once again the Israelites were transformed into a wandering, refugee people, dispossessed of their land, their cities, synagogues, their temple desecrated. Consequently, it is not surprising that the period of invasion and exile should be portrayed in the Hebrew Scriptures as one of intense mourning and yearning for repossession of the promised land and renewal of the Israelite covenant with

\textsuperscript{199} This, according to Edward L. Greenstein, \textit{HarperCollins}, 79, refers to Israelite residence under the Pharaoh thought to be Ramses II and his successor.
Yahweh. Such mourning and yearning are well depicted in Lamentations and in psalms like Psalms 42, 85 and 137. “[L]ike in the wilderness, the Exile bec[ame] for Israel a time of faith and hope. It [was] a time for yearning, for newness.” In the lead-up to the exile the prophet Jeremiah clearly saw parallels between the exile and the exodus which are reflected in his predictions of the future return of the exiles from Babylon and the restoration of Israel and Judah. Again, in his poem Jeremiah gives clear expression to the opportunity for renewal presented by both the exile and the Hebrew people’s return to their homeland.

In the immediate aftermath of the restoration of the Israelite people to their homeland (from 539 to c. 430 BCE) biblical writers like the high priest Ezra and the Jewish official Nehemiah encouraged a quest for national and religious purity and a more exclusive perception of the Israelites as Yahweh’s chosen people. This is reflected in their strictures against intermarriage between

---

200 The five poems of Lamentations mourn the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of its people by King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians in 586 BCE. Werner E. Lemke, HarperCollins, 1207-10, describes Lamentations as “first and foremost an eloquent expression of grief that helped survivors [of the deportations and periods of exile] to come to terms with the historical calamity they had gone through.”

201 Ps 137 is a particularly moving example of the psychological trauma suffered by the Israelite people during this time, notwithstanding the point made by Patrick D. Miller that the psalm was probably written after the period of exile with the psalmist reflecting on the events, ibid., 927.

202 Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 27.

203 Jer 16:14-15 and 23:7-8. Jeremiah was active from the commencement of the reign of King Josiah in 627 BCE up to and beyond the exile of 587 BCE, according to Leo G. Perdue, HarperCollins, 1110-1111.

204 Ibid., see particularly 31:17-18.

205 According to David J. A. Clines, HarperCollins, 699-701, these two books “are our most important source of evidence for the history of the early postexilic period, from 539 to ca. 430 BCE”. As Etienne Charpentier, How to Read the Old Testament (London: SCM Press, 1981), 75, points out, the entire postexilic period is referred to as “the age of the Second Temple”, namely the period of Judaism, and extends from the rebuilding of the Temple in 515 BCE to c. 70 CE.
Israelites and women of other national and racial groups and provides a marked contrast to the situation portrayed in the Book of Ruth. However, hints of opposition, in the presence of non-Jewish persons even in noble families in subsequent generations and in Nehemiah’s less rigorous response to a similar situation, suggest that Ezra’s decision (as high priest commissioned to enquire into marriages between Jews and non-Jews which sat from December 458 until the spring of 459 BCE) was regarded as extreme even within the post-exilic community itself.

How far the tradition of hospitality to resident foreigners was affected by such strictures and a concern for Israelite religious and national distinctiveness is hard to assess. While throughout Hebrew Scripture there is a strong emphasis on the right ordering of relationships, there would appear to have been a more rigorous and exclusionist emphasis on obedience to the law of Moses in the post-exilic period. So Clines notes that the Book of Ezra “insists on obedience to its demands for separation from non-Jews and Nehemiah likewise creates a distinctive Jewish identity when he encloses Jerusalem with a wall and purges the community from all things foreign.” Nevertheless, such a tradition does not have a monopoly. For instance, in what is considered to be the third “book” of Isaiah, also believed to be written in the early post-exilic period, resident foreigners are included among all those “who join themselves to the Lord ...
and be his servants, all those who keep the Sabbath ... and hold fast to [God’s] covenant” with his people and the rebuilt Temple is viewed as “a house of prayer for all peoples.” \(^{210}\) In similar vein Malachi 1:11 extends a vision of the worship of Yahweh to gentile nations. \(^{211}\)

---

**Part Two – The Stranger in Christian Scripture**

Christianity inherited the Jewish tradition of hospitality to strangers and took it in new directions. Thus, the mixed strands in Jewish memory and practice concerning the stranger, migration and hospitality can be traced through the period of Judaism to the time of Jesus and the ‘new’ Israel. Christian Scripture clearly demonstrates how crucial this tradition is to an understanding of the life and mission of Jesus; indeed, to the very identity of Jesus himself as the incarnated Son of God. That it should become then, as with Judaism, an integral part of Christian identity and discipleship is well exemplified not only in the life and teaching of Jesus but also in the formation and expansion of the early Christian Church from the Jewish into the Gentile world. As such, the messages of the Christian Scriptures with regard to the stranger and Christian hospitality are relevant to any analysis of pastoral care towards and experiences of church by migrants and refugees, whether inside or outside of the West Australian Catholic community. “Hospitality is a lens through which we can

---

\(^{210}\) Is 56:6-7. Roberts notes that observance of the Sabbath became a major concern in the exilic and postexilic period as is evinced also in Isa 58.13; Neh 13.15-22; Jer 17:21-17 and Ez 20:12-38, *ibid.*, 1093.

\(^{211}\) Towner, *ibid.*, 1429, speaks of this text as incorporating “a universal vision of the worship of Israel’s Lord”.

read and understand much of the gospel and a practice by which we can welcome Jesus himself”; it can also teach us much about the nature of the Kingdom.  

Jesus as the ‘Archetypal Stranger’

Jesus himself is depicted in the Gospels as the ‘archetypal stranger’. This depiction can be viewed in three ways. The first is to see Jesus as a benchmark of behaviour; the second is to examine Jesus’ identity as the Son of God; the third is to view Jesus as the prototype of the wanderer, the refugee and the outcast.

Jesus as a benchmark of behaviour

The first - the ethical dimension - is to see Jesus as the benchmark of behaviour with regard to how Christians should treat the ‘other’. This is spelt out clearly towards the end of Matthew where Jesus, speaking of how people will be judged at the second coming, states “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”  

One persistent theme in all the Gospels is of those who received Jesus and his message and showed him hospitality and those who did not. In Mt 25:31-44 Jesus is represented as the archetypal stranger understood as ‘the neighbour’. The presence or absence of hospitality towards him is a moral  

---

212 Pohl, Making Room, 8.  
213 Mt 25:31-44. This text, as New Jerome, 669, indicates, is addressed to Christian disciples and identifies discipleship with the care of those in need, whoever they might be.  
214 See the parable of the wicked tenants related in Mark 12:1-12 which can be contrasted fruitfully with the hospitality shown to Jesus by followers like Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, recounted in Lk 10:38-42.
point of reference.²¹⁵ In relation to this great parable Benedict XVI comments that “love becomes the criterion for the definite decision about a human life’s worth or lack of it.”²¹⁶ The parable of the “Good Samaritan” is yet another excellent example.

**Jesus’ identity as the Son of God**

The second dimension to Jesus as the archetypal stranger is one which is intimately related to who He is, i.e. His identity as the Son of God. Here, Jesus is viewed at a deeper, ontological level. This level is related to Jesus as the stranger who is the revelation of the transcendent, divine being who, out of love, enters our world but remains always the archetypal ‘Other’. Constantly, according to the Gospels, there was misunderstanding of who Jesus really was; even his disciples did not really know or understand him.²¹⁷ This is reinforced by the rejection of Jesus as the divine, prophetic, confronting ‘Other’ who, as Spohn writes, “shatters the established order.”²¹⁸ John writes:

> He was in the world, ... yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.²¹⁹

²¹⁵ As William C. Spohn, *What Are They Saying About Scripture and Ethics?* (New York and Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1995), 101, stresses, Jesus’ “life both announces and exemplifies the Reign of God [while] the elusive Spirit instils in the disciples ‘the mind of Christ’ (1 Cor 2:16), the dispositions and values of Jesus.” Similarly, Dennis C. Dulling, *HarperCollins*, 1905, notes that while in Jesus’ parables ‘the king’ usually represents God, here the ‘king’ referred to in the previous verse is the Son of Man.

²¹⁶ *Deus Caritas Est*, 25th January, 2006, #15. www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_e...

²¹⁷ This is very much a theme in John. See Jn 3:1-10, 8:14 and 21:12 for examples.

²¹⁸ Spohn, *What Are They Saying About Scripture and Ethics?*, 101.

²¹⁹ Jn 1:10-12.
Richard points out that, according to the Christian Scriptures, Christ was incarnated into a hostile world as a stranger.\(^\text{220}\) Thus both the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke have the baby Jesus being born in a stable in Bethlehem since there was no other place for him and his parents.\(^\text{221}\) At the conclusion of his earthly life Jesus died as a “stranger”, an outcast, having lived so much of his life as a teacher and healer among “strangers” i.e. the marginalized outcasts of his contemporary society.\(^\text{222}\)

### Jesus as a wanderer, refugee and outcast

The theme of the Israelites of the Hebrew Scriptures as wanderers, refugees, outcasts and exiles in search of sanctuary is also carried over into the Christian Scriptures. Matthew opens his gospel by presenting a genealogy of Jesus in which, apart from Mary, His mother, only four women are mentioned\(^\text{223}\) - Tamar, Judah’s daughter-in-law who was the mother of his sons Perez and Zerah\(^\text{224}\); Rahab of Jericho, probably a prostitute\(^\text{225}\); Ruth, the Mohabite who married Boaz\(^\text{226}\); and Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, who married King David.\(^\text{227}\) Significantly all four appear to have been Gentile strangers who


\(^{221}\) Idem.

\(^{222}\) Ibid., 34.

\(^{223}\) Mt 1:1-17.

\(^{224}\) Gn 38.


\(^{226}\) Ruth 2-4.

\(^{227}\) 2 Sam 11-12.
became part of Israelite history and/or had irregular sexual unions but who, according to Matthew, became important in God’s plan for His Son.\textsuperscript{228}

In his following infancy narrative Matthew goes on to depict the Holy Family being forced to become refugees in Egypt, as their ancestors had done, thus picking up on the Hebrew sojourns in Egypt.\textsuperscript{229} Matthew links the reason he gives for the Holy Family fleeing the City of David, i.e. King Herod Antipas’ order to exterminate all new-born male children under the age of two in Judea\textsuperscript{230}, to the Egyptian Pharaoh’s genocidal order first to kill, then to drown all new-born Hebrew male babies just before Moses was born\textsuperscript{231}, thus reinforcing to his readers that Jesus was to be seen centrally within the Mosaic framework of Jewish religion, history and culture. In this incident harsh political edict and theophany work together to ensure that Joseph flees his native land until the death of King Herod Antipas allows for the safe return of the Holy Family. Similarly, the Holy Family only return to their homeland and settle in Nazareth when Joseph is advised in a dream that it is safe to do so.

\textsuperscript{228} See comment by Duling, \textit{HarperCollins}, 1859. I am indebted to Silvano Tomasi’s article, “Pastoral Action and the New Immigrants”, \textit{Origins}, 21, 36 (1992), 583 for alerting me to this point.

\textsuperscript{229} Mt 2:13-23. \textit{New Jerome}, 636, confirms this, adding: “Matthew here applies the exodus typology to an individual, Jesus, who represents the beginning of the resoration of all Israel”.

\textsuperscript{230} ACSJC, “I Am a Stranger: Will You Welcome Me?”, 48, uses the phrase, “the killing fields of Herod” in relation to this incident. \textit{New Jerome}, 636, while arguing that the story may not be historical, refers to it as “a classical example of genocidal abuse of power” and notes the way Matthew links it to Jer 31:15 where Rachel weeps for the exile of her two sons, Benjamin and Joseph.

\textsuperscript{231} Ex 1:15-22.
Jesus’ own messianic mission, like that of so many of the Jewish prophets before him, for example Elijah and Elisha, involved him and his disciples in leading “a risky, unsettled, itinerant way of life”\textsuperscript{232} within Israel; a life-style which is illustrated in both Matthew and Luke when they have Jesus reply to the would-be disciple who wished to follow him that, while “foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, ... the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head”.\textsuperscript{233} From the very first Jesus committed himself to a public ministry of outreach to the outcast, the stranger and the marginalized in Jewish society; a ministry which, as Anthony Gittins indicates\textsuperscript{234}, is a kenotic or self-emptying, rather than a self-(ful)filling, ministry. That his disciples were expected to follow his example is demonstrated in Matthew’s and Luke’s accounts of the missions of the twelve and of the seventy\textsuperscript{235} and, again, at the conclusion of John’s Gospel where the resurrected Jesus three times tests the quality of Peter’s love for him, commissions him and warns him of the kind of death he can expect if he is “to glorify God” through his carrying out of his mission.\textsuperscript{236}

**Jesus and Hospitality to the Stranger**

**Jesus as the ‘supreme host’**

\textsuperscript{232} *New Jerome*, 648.
\textsuperscript{233} Mt 8:20 and Lk 9:59-62.
\textsuperscript{235} Mt 10:1, 5-14 and Lk 9:1-6 give accounts of Jesus’ instructions to the twelve disciples while Lk 10:1-12 expands on the mission of the twelve with his account of Jesus’ sending out of the seventy.
\textsuperscript{236} Jn 21:15-19.
Yet, in spite of his itinerant, unsettled lifestyle as a teacher and healer, Jesus is portrayed in the Gospels as “the supreme host, welcoming strangers to the Kingdom of God”. Richard identifies two words for stranger in the Septuagint Bible – *paroikoi* and *xenos*. To these Pettena adds another – *allotrios*.

The first, *paroikoi*, denotes people who are strangers wherever they are. In similar vein Pettena argues that:

> the most accurate meaning of *paroikoi* would refer precisely to the experience of living far from one’s home and homeland; it refers to the emotional experience of being out one’s own known and comfortable territory where one does not know how to move, where one does not know anybody.

He also adds that, in its singular form, *paroikos*, is used in the Christian Scripture to refer to a sojourner, the stranger who dwells beside the Jews.

The second word, *xenos*, also means foreigner or stranger but more in the sense of a guest to whom hospitality (*philoxenia* in Greek) is shown. According to Pettena, this second definition is the most common word for “stranger” in the

---

237 Richard, *Living the Hospitality of God*, 31. This is particularly the case in the Gospel of Luke with Jesus frequently being depicted as the host welcoming the outcasts of Jewish society to eat with him; a hospitality for which he was condemned by those who opposed him, see Lk 15:1-2.


240 According to Richard, *Living the Hospitality of God*, 22, this Greek word replaces the earlier Hebrew word *ger* to designate aliens resident in a foreign land.

241 Pettena, *Migration in the Bible*, 11. He adds that it can be exchanged with the Greek word for pilgrims, *parapidmoi*; something which occurs in 1 Pet 2: 11-4; 11 when Peter addresses the Christians explicitly calling them both *paroikoi* and *parapidmoi*.

Christian Scripture\textsuperscript{243} and is the key word in the second of Jesus’ essential commands to his followers, i.e. “to love your neighbour as yourself.” Three of the Gospels recount the story of the lawyer who approaches Jesus and asks him “Who is my neighbour?”\textsuperscript{244} In Jesus’ reply it is evident, as Fr Mark Raper points out, that one’s “neighbour” is anyone who is in need as well as one’s guests and one’s brothers and sisters in Christ.\textsuperscript{245} As Richard stresses, “the fundamental vision of the Christian faith, that of the Kingdom of God [as presented in Jesus’ teachings and example], has to do with hospitality to the stranger.”\textsuperscript{246} Finally, the word, \textit{allotrios}, is an equally common word for “stranger” in the Christian Scriptures, writes Pettena, but used more in reference to the origin of the stranger.\textsuperscript{247}

Using all three Greek words the Gospels present many examples of Jesus showing or speaking about hospitality to those estranged from or marginalized in the Jewish society of his time. One of the most telling of these is the parable of the Good Samaritan in which the despised stranger, (the \textit{paroikos}, the Samaritan sojourner), is the one who shows hospitality to his fellow Jewish traveller. In this parable, which follows directly on from Jesus’ reply to the lawyer’s question, Jesus shifts the focus from ‘Who is my neighbour’ to ‘Who

\textsuperscript{243} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 13. This is the word used in Matthew 25:35.
\textsuperscript{244} Mt 22:34-40, Mk 12:28-34 and Lk 10:25-28.
\textsuperscript{245} Mark Raper SJ, “Refugees: Travel under duress”, \textit{The Way}, 39, 1 (1999), 37.
\textsuperscript{246} Richard, \textit{Living the Hospitality of God}, 30.
is the neighbour'. The parable of the Good Samaritan is not so much about who belongs to God’s people; rather it is about the behaviour of those who are already part of God’s people, irrespective of their origin or race. The concept of neighbour becomes “a quality or a vocation that I take upon myself and actively live out”. Another possible interpretation may be that Jesus proceeds at a more subjective level to examine not only the behaviour but the interior sources of that behaviour i.e. the attitudes which should be characteristic of an hospitable heart. In the parable it could be argued that the Samaritan becomes the personification of the welcoming, responsive heart which is hospitable like God’s. Such emphasis on interiorisation, i.e. that what one does flows from what one is, is similarly emphasized in the parable of the good and bad trees and their fruits.

---


249 See New Jerome, 702. “Jesus’ question turns the lawyer’s question on its head: Don’t ask about who belongs to God’s people and thus is the object of my neighborly attention, but rather ask about the conduct incumbent upon a member of God’s chosen people. ... Because he did follow the law, the outcast Samaritan shows that he is a neighbor, a member of God’s people, one who inherits eternal life.” This comment is reinforced by that of Bernard Brandon Scott, Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 202, cited in O’Neill and Spohn, 84 ff., when he points out that in Jesus’ reading of the law “the world with its sure arrangement of insiders and outsiders” is subverted by God’s reign.


251 See Lk 6:43-45. In HarperCollins, 1969, David L. Tiede adds “The image of the tree, like that of the house foundation (6:48-49) suggests character that cannot be disguised in hypocrisy. ... A follower may call Jesus Lord yet not possess the commitment necessary for discipleship”.

In the light of the foregoing discussion it is significant that Luke immediately follows the parable of the Good Samaritan with the story of Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus welcoming the wandering teacher from Galilee, Jesus, into their home. Each sister is depicted showing hospitality to Jesus in her own particular way. While Martha’s way is the more common - paying attention to the material needs of the guest - Mary’s sitting at the feet of Jesus stresses the importance of listening to what the guest (the stranger) may have to teach the people of the house or the community. With regard to the equal importance of the two types of hospitality, Malina comments how attention to the material needs of the guest, for example, the ritual of foot washing, marked the movement from stranger to guest. In this respect, the manner in which Luke relates the story of the woman who washed Jesus’ feet with her tears, dried them with her hair and anointed them provides another telling example of how in Christian Scripture the roles of the alien or the outcast and the host can be and often are reversed. Another Lukan example of the same theme occurs with the story of Zaccheus. In both cases the marginalized who manifest hospitality to Jesus are drawn into a much wider hospitality, the healing hospitality of God. In particular, it is salutary for our treatment of refugees to appreciate that when people like Zaccheus are defined, not by their neediness

252 Lk 10:38-42. New Jerome, 702, refers to Jesus as the guest who “becomes the dominant figure or host [who] answers questions about community life”.
254 See Lk 7:36-50.
255 Ibid., 19:1-10.
256 This point is made by Byrne, Hospitality of God, 5. On 25 he cites the example of Elizabeth’s extension of hospitality to the pregnant Mary as again demonstrating the same axiom.
or marginalization, but by their possible contributions, they can and are transformed.257

In the parable about the Last Judgment, recounted in Matthew258, Jesus illustrates the eschatological dimension of people’s hospitality, especially to the stranger, the poor, the sick, the prisoner, in a way which builds on but carries further into eternal life the ethics of hospitality to the alien, the widow, and the orphan presented in the Torah. As Richard explains: “Hospitality to the stranger is intrinsically connected both in the Jewish and Christian scriptures to issues of possessions, of riches, of poverty”259; an explanation which is witnessed to by Luke’s account of Jesus reading from Isaiah 61:1-2 with its reference to “the year of the Lord’s favour”260 when he commenced his ministry in Nazareth.

An inextricable link between hospitality to both the stranger and the marginalized exists, then, in the Christian Scriptures; a link which is shown to be based on the Torah. Even more importantly, in both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures hospitality to the stranger is “connected to the presence of God.”261 This is confirmed and embodied in Jesus who, as the Word made flesh, is God’s personal presence in the world. Jesus is the definitive sacrament of

257 Pohl, Making Room, 121.
258 Mt 25:31-46.
259 Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 36.
261 Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 33.
God’s hospitality in our midst. This is depicted as unique to Jesus both by the way in which Luke concludes his account of Jesus’ reading in the synagogue (“Today the scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing”)\textsuperscript{262} and by Jesus’ statement in his discourse on discipleship in Matthew: “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the One who sent me.”\textsuperscript{263} Its continuity with Hebrew memory is captured in the Letter to the Hebrews where the writer says: “Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for in doing so, some have entertained the angels unawares.”\textsuperscript{264}

The host as servant

Within the Christian Scriptures hospitality is closely linked to the concept of the host as the servant\textsuperscript{265}, as the one who breaks bread and, through table hospitality, transforms relationships. This is made evident in Luke when the disciples dispute about which one of them was to be regarded as the most important, the greatest, and Jesus answers: “For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am

\textsuperscript{262} Lk 4:21.
\textsuperscript{263} Mt 10:40. Duling, HarperCollins, 1875, remarks that here “welcome” clearly means hospitality. Matthew’s interpretation is reinforced by Jn 6:35-37.
\textsuperscript{264} Heb. 13:2. As Harold W. Attridge, HarperCollins, 2267, indicates, this text harks back to the Hebrew Scriptures with its reference to figures in early Judaism who did actually entertain angels unawares, most notably Abraham at the Oak of Mamre.
\textsuperscript{265} See Richard’s comments on this concept of servanthood in relation to hospitality in \textit{Living the Hospitality of God}, 39-40. As he argues, the Kingdom of God is a verb not a noun. It is the activity of God in which Christian disciples are called to service of others.
among you as one who serves.” Such correlation of service and commitment by the host to the “other” (the guest) with powerlessness is demonstrated in the Letters of Paul. It is summed up succinctly in the Second Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians where Paul writes: “For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.”

Within the Gospels there are abundant examples of Jesus sharing meals with strangers and outcasts. One of the most revealing is that of Jesus’ breaking of bread at the supper table at Emmaus in an episode in which the roles of host and guest are reversed with Jesus, the stranger, the unknown traveling companion of the road, becoming the host. The Emmaus story, like the feeding of the five thousand and the account of the Last supper, prefigure God’s hospitality and the Kingdom. Throughout the Gospels the abundance and extravagance of God’s hospitality are stressed by Jesus and nowhere more so than in the parable of the Prodigal Son, perhaps more appropriately styled

---

266 Lk 22:24-27. Similar messages are given in Mk 10:17-31, Lk 18:18-30 and 12:37. As indicated in the previous footnote, this point is well developed in Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 39-41.

267 For example, in his Letter to Philemon Paul sends the slave Onesimus back to Philemon and entreats Philemon to overlook his previous separation from his master and, instead, to treat him as a “beloved brother” rather than a slave. As Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 35, states, “this reception implies a transformed relationship, not only in relation to God but also in the socioeconomic world.”

268 2 Cor 8:9. The same theme is developed in Php 2:5-8 where Paul quotes from a pre-Pauline Christ hymn, Ronald F. Hock, HarperCollins, 2205.

269 Lk 24:13-35. Commenting on this passage, Thomas Merton writes pertinently “No man [sic] knows that the stranger he meets ... is not already an invisible member of Christ and perhaps one who has some providential or prophetic message to utter”, The Collected Poems of Thomas Merton (New York: New Direction Books, 1977), 383, cited in Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 34.
“the prodigal father.” Later, in Christian Scriptures ‘table hospitality’ becomes the setting for struggling with cultural boundaries in the early church … [also for] the surfacing of tensions between rich and poor in shared meals.”

Such stories of hospitality in the Gospels anticipate our celebration of the Eucharist which “most fundamentally connects hospitality with God because it anticipates and reveals the ‘heavenly table of the Lord’.” Hospitality is elevated into a sacrament with Jesus’ preparation for and celebration as host with his disciples of the Passover meal just before his arrest, trial and crucifixion, an archetypal sacrament which foreshadows the Eucharistic meal. Jesus also demonstrates in the story of the raising Lazarus from the dead another dimension of hospitality – an eschatological dimension which has its parallel in Christ’s going to the dead on Holy Saturday.

**Hospitality to the stranger and the developing identity of early Christianity**

---

270 See Lk 15:1-32.
273 Mt 26:17-29, Mk 14:12-22, and Lk 22:7-23. While John’s gospel does not have an account of the Passover meal itself, he does mention the last meal of the disciples with Jesus and emphasizes the sacramental nature of Jesus, as host, washing the disciples feet, see Jn 13:1-20. A foreshadowing of the sacramental nature of the hospitality of the Passover meal can be seen with the accounts in Mt 14:13-21 and 15:32-39, Mk 6:30-44 and 8:1-10, Lk 9:10-17 and Jn 6:1-14 of the feeding of the multitude in Galilee.
274 I am indebted to Dr Glen Morrison for this insight which I gleaned from his still to be published article, “Christian Community: Towards a Spirituality of Hospitality”, 5, that he shared with me and gave me permission to cite.
Consequently, hospitality to the stranger and the marginalized became a crucial element of the developing identity of early Christianity, as it had been in biblical expression of Hebrew memory. “Hospitality was a fundamental condition of the mission and expansion of the early church. The practice of hospitality is presented in [the Christian Scriptures] as the common virtue of the church.”

The Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and Paul’s Letters view the early Christian communities as families of faith which should, in their passage through this world, have a special care for the marginalized - the widow, the orphan, the disadvantaged and the stranger. In this they follow the example of Jesus given so aptly in Mark where Jesus replies to the message: “Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you”, by asking “Who are my mother and my brothers?” Then, “looking at those who are around him, he says ‘Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother, sister and mother’.” Once again, as with the parable of the Good Samaritan and the story of the woman at the well in Sychar, Jesus takes an inclusive view of God’s “family”, indicating that a person’s standing does not depend on origin or social or religious function or role but on a personal response to one’s fellow human beings.

---

275 Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 35.
276 Scriptural witness is given to this in Acts 6:1-6 with the appointment of seven men to oversee equality of distribution of food to both Hebrew and Hellenist widows. As New Jerome, 739-740 points out, this incident reflects the existence of several Greek-language synagogues in 1st century Jerusalem to provide for the spiritual needs of Greek-speaking immigrants. It also argues that, while Luke does not use the word “deacon” to refer to the seven men appointed, the expression used in v. 2, diakonein trapezais, “presumably connotes the whole community effort to give sustenance to the needy.”
277 Mark 3:31-35. New Jerome, 605, states that “in a society in which family relationships were extraordinarily important, the idea of a spiritual family had the effect of relativizing other relationships and making Jesus’ followers judge them in the light of the criterion of God’s will.”
278 See Jn 4: 19-23.
The Mission of the early Christians – perceptions, implications and nature

Similarly, the mission of the early Christians is perceived in the Christian Scriptures as one of going out to all peoples of the then known world and bringing them into a brother/sisterhood in Christ with “the church in the Diaspora [being] a home, oikos, for the paroikoi, the stranger”; a place in which “those on the margins of society, the former outcasts, become the elect and privileged people of God.”

That this going out into the world to spread the Good News frequently meant for the early Christians, as it had for Jesus’ disciples, a decision to let go of possessions, to become homeless, to become a wanderer, perhaps an exile, is manifested clearly in the lives of men like Paul, Barnabas and Mark as recounted in the Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of Paul. Such early Christian missionaries themselves became dependent on the hospitality of those to whom they were preaching and their mission spread from the basis of the household, helping to foster family-like ties among believers.

279 Abundant testimony of this is given in the Christian Scriptures; for example, Mt 28:19-20, Acts 1:8 and Eph 2: 11-19.
280 Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 35. As Richard adds, such perceptions are well illustrated in the First Letter of Peter.
281 Ibid., p. 36.
282 As Mike Purcell, “Christ, the Stranger”, 63, points out, Matthew and Luke especially portray discipleship as severe, with little respite or comfort.
converted women outside of the territorial boundaries of Israel were important as the providers of hospitality.\footnote{For example, the story of Lydia in Acts 16:14-15. As the example of Lydia indicates, often such women were wealthy and influential.}

Frequently, as in the Hebrew Scriptures and the Gospels, such missionary wanderings are depicted as being in response to divine instructions through dreams and visions. Thus the Acts of Apostles relates Paul receiving five visions at different stages of his journeys.\footnote{\textit{New Jerome}, 753. The references in Acts are 16:6-8; 18:9-10; 22:17-21; 23:11; 27:23-24.} Early Christians were also forced to become refugees in response to persecution. Such was illustrated very early on in the life of the infant Church in Jerusalem, especially after the martyrdom of Stephen, when the Christian Hellenists were forced to flee to the country districts of Judea and Samaria.\footnote{Acts 8:1. Paradoxically, as \textit{New Jerome}, 743, indicates, such forced migration from Jerusalem of the early Christians led them “along the first pathways of Gentile mission”.} Similarly, much of the Gospel of John cannot be fully understood unless one is aware of the persecution of the Johannine community by the Jews in the aftermath of the Roman destruction of the Temple in 70 CE and the subsequent expulsions of Jewish Christians from synagogues as especially the Pharisees developed a more exclusive and rigid Judaism, for example, at Jamnia.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 1188, notes that Jamnia became famous for its rabbinic school after the fall of Jerusalem.} As with the story of Lot, such accounts and examples of persecution of early Christians, demonstrate the obverse side of hospitality – the stranger becomes a threat and the host is made vulnerable; also that hostility of the host can come from ‘inside’, ie. from within his or her own religious, ethnic or social group.
Hospitality to the stranger versus the stranger as enemy and threat

Brox highlights that within the early church a tension existed between hospitality to the stranger and the stranger as enemy, i.e. between inclusion and exclusion. Inclusion is an important theme in the description of Pentecost where the “wind” of the Holy Spirit enables all present to speak to one another in their native tongues and appreciate the diverse cultural gifts that the gathering represents. In contrast, in the Letters of John, the Johannine Christian community is seen to be struggling with what is viewed as heresy with its own ranks and the need to decide who should be excluded in order to preserve the faith and integrity of the community.

As they extended the Good News to the gentile world and moved beyond the confines of Judaism into the wider reaches of the Graeco-Roman world, Jewish Christian evangelists continued to confront issues of cultural diversity and the imperative, if their evangelization was to be effective, to transform “their understandings of the person of Jesus in the light of the new context of Greek

---

288 Brox, “The stranger in early Christianity”, 49 and 52. Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 36, also comments on the fact that at the beginning of the spread of Christianity many Christians saw themselves as alien and second-class citizens in a hostile world.
philosophical thought in which [the Jewish-based Christianity] found itself.”

John Paul II points out, in his encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio*, that the Athenian Areopagus, where Paul proclaimed the Gospel in their own language to the Athenian people, represented a vital cultural centre of the Graeco-Roman world into which the new Christianity was spreading. Given his distress at the number of idols worshipped in Athens, Paul’s speech in front of the Aeropagus, stressing the uniqueness of God, can be seen as representative of the reciprocal, but often uneasy, dialogue which needed to be carried on between non-Jewish cultures and the Judaic evangelists of the Christian faith.

Such problems of Christian inculturation into the non-Jewish world could and did affect the practice of hospitality to the Gentile stranger. This is well demonstrated by the controversies over whether or not Gentile Christians should be circumcised. Similarly, as Peter’s dream in Caesarea indicates, there was conflict over whether or not Jewish food purity regulations should be mandatory for Gentile Christians. Such examples from the Christian Scriptures show the difficulties as well as the mutual growth involved in a more inclusive, cross-cultural, universal understanding of Christian identity as the Apostles and the Jewish followers of ‘the Way’ of Jesus realized the imperative to adapt early Christianity to non-Jewish cultures.

---

294 Acts 10:9-29; see also Acts 15:10-21, 1 Cor 8:1-10 and Gal 2:11-14.
Implications for a developing Christian identity

Such struggles of the early Christian evangelists and their impact on the practice of Christian hospitality in the early church threatened the embryonic Christian identity particularly of Gentile Christians. Thus the First Letter of Peter exhorts them, “as resident aliens and visiting strangers, to keep apart from the fleshly passions which wage war against you” while warning Jewish Christian missionaries to “conduct yourselves honourably among the Gentiles, so that though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your honourable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge.” It is not surprising then that early Christians, both Jewish and Gentile, came to see themselves as “exiles in this world as in a foreign land”; as “psychological pilgrims, migrants and strangers” in the world. Brox argues that the early Christians “wanted to be as well as felt strange”; indeed they estranged themselves from the world around them by seeing themselves as aliens and guests on the earth as they awaited the second coming of their Lord Jesus Christ. They added an eschatological, a transhistorical and transcendent dimension to the Hebrew Scriptures’ concept of the promised land by seeing themselves as resident aliens in the world, awaiting their transition to their true home, the

295 1 Pet 2:11-12.
297 From “I Am a Stranger: Will You Welcome Me?”, 48. As the author of Heb 11:13-14 says in reference to the Patriarchs: “All these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth; for people who speak this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.”
298 My emphasis.
heavenly Kingdom of God. As Christ was not of this world, so they too saw themselves as living and carrying out their mission in the world but not being part of it. As Pettena points out, a text like Ephesians 2:19, which stresses that the early Gentile Christians were “no longer strangers and aliens” but “citizens with the saints and also members of God’s new household”, not only replaces “spatial categories with temporal categories” but also, by recognizing that the Kingdom has been initiated already but not yet accomplished, compels these new citizens to the permanent condition of pilgrims and foreigners during their whole earthly life as their definitive entry into the Kingdom will be only after death. In this context Pohl remarks that our contemporary situation is surprisingly similar to the early Christian situation in that we too find ourselves in a fragmented and multicultural society which is characterized by disturbing levels of loneliness, alienation and estrangement.

Nevertheless, as Brox sums up his article, “there was still room for the stranger, for all people, in the ultimate dénouement of history, because of Christianity’s conviction of the divine will of salvation and universality.” Richard reinforces Brox’s summation by remarking: “being a stranger in a

---

300 See particularly Jn 17:14-19. Such attitudes continued on into post-biblical Christianity as is exemplified by Brox’s quotation of a statement from Pope Leo 1: “In the knowledge of being a stranger and alien in this earthly suffering, the faithful should wander through this earthly pilgrimage ... bravely passing through. The Apostle Peter is a God-pleasing example to us of such abandonment”, “The stranger in early Christianity”, 48, original source not cited.
301 Adapted from Pettena, Migration in the Bible, 10-11.
302 Pohl, Making Room, 33.
hostile environment [became] for Christianity a divine vocation; one in which the Christian Scriptures encourage Christians to above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.

It is in this context that the Apostle Paul speaks of a new age which had been initiated with the resurrection of Jesus, “the new Adam”; one which will see the dawning of a new creation and a new vision of Christian identity in which “the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us” will be abolished and all will be fellow citizens in the household of God.

Conclusion

To conclude then both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures provide rich sources of insight into the perceptions and treatment of the alien, the sojourner and the stranger in early Judaic and Christian communities and the ways in which hospitality to the stranger, the marginalized and the needy were viewed as integral to Hebrew and Christian relationships to God.

The immigrant journey itself has many striking parallels with [both] the Exodus story and the Christian story. Crying out for liberation from oppressive conditions of poverty, immigrants cross bodies of waters, traverse large stretches of desert, face the relentless pursuit of authorities, and journey in hope toward a promised land. The journey of immigrants is also the way of the Cross, yet their spirituality

---

304 Richard, Living the Hospitality of God, 37.
305 1 Pet 4:8-10.
compels them in hope of a better life through the power of a compassionate God.³⁰⁷

Key themes in the Hebrew Scriptures are those of the obligations of the Israelite people to strangers together with the manner in which these obligations should be carried out, particularly to those strangers resident among the Hebrew people, and the way in which such expression was underpinned both by God’s covenant with the Hebrew people and the Hebrew people’s own experience of being migrants, aliens and oppressed human beings. Central to the Hebrew Scriptural treatment of Israelite relationships with strangers was the exodus experience; an experience which influenced the manner in which later Jewish people regarded their period of Babylonian exile and the ways in which they responded to the stranger in their midst when they were restored to their homeland. Overall, as the Hebrew Scriptures demonstrate, hospitality to the stranger and the marginalized became an integral element in Israelite religious and national identity.

The Christian Scriptures continue the tradition of hospitality to the stranger and the marginalized, sending it in new directions and demonstrating how it is crucial to an understanding of the life and mission of Jesus, indeed to the very identity of Jesus himself as the incarnate Son of God. That it should become, as with Judaism, an integral part of Christian identity and discipleship is well exemplified not only in the life, teaching and death/resurrection of Jesus but also in the formation and expansion of the early Christian Church from the

Jewish into the Gentile world. Thus perceptions and treatment of the stranger in early Christian communities and the ways in which hospitality to the stranger, the marginalized and the needy are carried out are crucial to an understanding of the Christian relationship to God. Unfortunately, as Pohl contends throughout her book, as our contemporary societies have become more stratified and bureaucratized, as we have become more reliant on institutions and agencies for the care of the stranger, as our households have become more private and separate from the public space, and as hospitality has become more commercialised or a vehicle for extending power and influence, we have lost the earlier traditions of hospitality and need to recover them. Even in our churches hospitality has decreased in its moral, spiritual and physical significance.\(^{308}\)

Overall, as will be demonstrated in the two following chapters, understandings of the Hebrew and the Christian Scriptural perceptions and treatment of the alien, the sojourner and the stranger are vital to a full and rich comprehension of Church social justice documentation in relation to the migrant and refugee and on the migrant and refugee themselves. Equally, it is important to any analysis of the work of migrant and refugee pastoral care bodies within the Archdiocese of Perth.

\(^{308}\) Pohl, *Making Room*, various pages but see particularly 33-5.
CHAPTER THREE

SOCIAL JUSTICE FOUNDATIONS FOR A STUDY OF
PASTORAL CARE TO MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Introduction

The Church’s social justice teaching offers “a framework for moral and social judgments that lead to the common good.” Therefore, like the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, with their treatments of “the stranger”, migration and hospitality, it not only provides an essential foundation for Church policy on migrants and refugees but is crucial to any empirical examination of the Perth Archdiocesan outreach to such people. Such Church social justice teaching, consciously or unconsciously, generally influences the ethos of local archdiocesan agencies which extend pastoral care to migrants and refugees.

Thus, in this chapter a careful scrutiny has been made of relevant papal encyclicals, apostolic exhortations and speeches as well as conciliar and other official Church documents, bishops’ pastoral letters and statements disseminated at international, national and regional levels and other less authoritative statements – addresses of popes to the United Nations or the diplomatic corps - which treat issues germane both to this chapter and to the thesis as a whole. These issues include the dignity of the human person and

---

310 Relevant documents have been consulted either as individually released documents or as part of collections.
its corollaries as well as human rights, especially the right to religious freedom. The final issue which is explored is that of inculturation of the faith which, since the Second Vatican Council, has been considered central to the social teaching of the Church; teaching which insists that the dignity of the human person includes the right to the integrity of one’s own culture and language. Such a right is vital for immigrants within another society with a different mainstream language and culture.

In essence Catholic social justice teaching is the means by which the Catholic Church endeavours to help its faithful to see how the Gospel pertains to the world in which they live and how their faith relates to the world. In developing this teaching the Church roots its position in Scripture, both Hebrew and Christian, as well as in the experience of the Christian community over time. It is teaching which has evolved organically, particularly since the late nineteenth century and Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 1891. *Rerum Novarum* is seen to signal “a new beginning and a singular development of the Church’s teaching in the area of social matters.” Richard O’Brien argues that it was at this point that Catholic social doctrine began to take formal, more systematic shape. He adds that in this development the pontificate of John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council were seminal with their conscious attempts to “read the signs of the times” in a

---

311 The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Vatican City: Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 2004), #87, (thereafter referred to as Compendium). Similarly, in *Deus Caritas Est*, Benedict XVI writes that during the course of the nineteenth century many Catholics came to realise that “the just structuring of society needed to be approached in a new way”, #27, [www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi). This is not to deny the rich doctrinal heritage related to societal and cultural matters which existed before this time.

global, universal manner. This period set the tone for future popes and Vatican officials to the point where Benedict XVI writes

[i]n today’s complex situation, not least because of the growth of a globalized economy, the Church’s social doctrine has become a set of fundamental guidelines offering approaches that are valid even beyond the confines of the Church: in the face of ongoing development these guidelines need to be addressed in the context of dialogue with all those seriously concerned for humanity and for the world in which we live.

Catholic social justice doctrine is generally held to include the following key principles: the life and dignity of the human person, the rights and responsibilities of the human person, the common good and the role of governments, solidarity, subsidiarity, the option for the poor and the vulnerable, the dignity of work and the rights of workers, promotion of peace and stewardship of God’s creation. In this chapter I will concentrate on those principles which most affect the situations of migrants and refugees and which should underlie pastoral care towards them. In this regard it is pertinent to remember that the documents from Rerum Novarum onward are ‘situational’, “i.e. the morality of the principles lies in the concrete situation in which the good of human persons is involved.”

Therefore, the Church’s social justice principles discussed in this chapter need to be brought to bear on the particular bodies and agencies of the Church, universal, national and local, which are seeking to provide justice for migrants and refugees or to right injustices.

---

313 Erga migrantes caritas Christi, #14, http://zenit.org/english/visualizza.phtml?sid=53621, reminds its readers that “[w]e can therefore consider the present-day phenomenon of migration a significant ‘sign of the times’, a challenge to be discovered and utilized in our work to renew humanity and proclaim the gospel of peace”.
314 Deus Caritas Est, #27.
315 There are some variations on and additions to these basic principles, according to which author one reads, but it is agreed that the above are basic principles.
316 MacLaren, Towards a More Just World, 15.
The Dignity of the Human Person, Social Justice and Equity

The Church’s fundamental social justice concept of the dignity of the human person lies behind much of what Church documentation treating the theme of migrants and refugees and their enculturation\textsuperscript{317} into the society of the country of reception has to say. Fitzpatrick emphasizes the relevant point that arises out this; namely, a perception of social justice and equity as essential components of Christianity.\textsuperscript{318} Thus any position taken by the Church internationally and nationally on migrants and refugees must be rooted in the principle of men and women, irrespective of their origins, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, perceived social class, cultural heritage or human accomplishment, made in the image of God, intrinsically equal in the sight of God, and with certain basic and inviolable human rights which must be respected.

The concept of “human dignity”

As “the central core” of all Church documentation utilized for this thesis\textsuperscript{319} the concept of human dignity has at its base is a belief that human beings were created by God in His image; a belief rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures. Citing Genesis\textsuperscript{320} Pacem in Terris states: “God also created man in his own ‘image and likeness’, endowed him with

\textsuperscript{317} The term “enculturation”, in the context of this chapter and the thesis as a whole, refers to the process by which immigrants take on the culture into which they migrate.
\textsuperscript{318} Fitzpatrick, One Church Many Cultures: Challenges of Diversity, 8-9.
\textsuperscript{319} One of the earliest statements of the concept of human dignity occurs in Rerum Novarum, especially #5-#6; the concept is prominent again in documents from John XXIII, Vatican II and Paul VI, for example, in Populorum Progressio, #14-#16, Gaudium et Spes, #12=#22.5, Pacem in Terris, #3-#5, and Octogesima Adveniens, particularly #21-#22; it occurs very early in John Paul II’s writing, for instance, in Redemptor Hominis, Part II, especially #8; later it recurs in Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, #26.1-3, to name a few of the most prominent documents. The concept is most exhaustively explored in Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God, the resulting document from the Plenary Sessions of the International Theological Commission, 2000-2002. Its essential relevance to issues relating to migrants and refugees is stressed by Church and People on the Move from the PCPCMIP, 13-14 especially.
\textsuperscript{320} Gn 1:26-27
intelligence and freedom and made him lord of creation.”

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states

what this signifies is that the human individual, [male and female], “is capable of self-knowledge, of self possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. Further, he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead.”

In relation to human likeness to God, the *Catechism* goes on to say that this “shows that the essence and existence of man are constitutively related to God in the most profound manner.”

Thus, “[t]he dignity of the human person resides in the person’s intimate relationship with God” and “reflects the transcendental dimension of human existence.”

This divine imaging of human beings, inherent in the Genesis accounts of the creation of men and women, is given full realization through the Jesus Christ of the Christian Scriptures. John Paul II’s early encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*, reminds its readers:

... in Christ and through Christ man has acquired full awareness of his dignity, of the heights to which he is raised, of the surpassing worth of his own humanity, and of the meaning of his existence.

“In the mystery of the redemption man becomes newly ‘expressed’ and, in a way, is newly created.”

*Redemptoris Missio* reinforces this point when it states

[t]he redemption event brings salvation to all, ‘for each one is included in the mystery of the redemption and with each one Christ has united himself forever through this mystery’.

---

322 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #357, cited in *Compendium*, #108.
324 O’Brien, 152.
However, the Christian Scriptures stress that human beings need to become the image of God and this “requires an active participation on man’s part in his transformation according to the pattern of the image of the Son who manifests his identity by the historical movement from his incarnation to his glory.”\textsuperscript{328}

The concept of human dignity has also been adopted outside of the Church, albeit in a more humanistic vein, and underpins much of human thinking from the highest to the lowest secular levels of decision-making. Thus the first article of the \textit{Universal Declaration of Human Rights}, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, states

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.\textsuperscript{329}

\textbf{The concept of “integral development”}

Essential to this God and Christ-inspired dignity of each person is the concept of the “integral development” of each human being. This concept arises from the belief that “every human being is a person, that is, his nature is endowed with intelligence and free will”\textsuperscript{330} and is raised in a number of papal documents. So, for example, in \textit{Populorum

\textsuperscript{328} The International Theological Commission, \textit{Communion and Stewardship}, #12. In this paragraph the Christian Scriptural references which are given are 2 Cor 4:4, Col 1:15, Heb 1:3, Rom 8:23, and Col 3:10. My highlighting. \textit{http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_con_cfaith.}


\textsuperscript{330} \textit{Pacem in Terris}, # 9.
Paul VI writes “[i]n order to be authentic, ‘development’ must be complete: integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every man and of the whole man.”

That the concept of integral development is based on the humanity of Jesus Christ is clearly indicated in *Ecclesia in Oceania*: “Through her educational programmes, the Church seeks the integral formation of the human person, looking to Christ himself as the fullness of humanity.” Such a view presupposes the unity of the human person. The *Compendium* speaks of the two different characteristics of humanity.

[Man] is a material being, linked to this world by his body, and he is a spiritual being, open to transcendence and to the discovery of ‘more penetrating truths’, thanks to this intellect, by which ‘he shares in the light of the divine mind’.

Thus, as *Veritatis Splendor* points out,

[t]he person, including the body, is completely entrusted to himself, and it is in the unity of body and soul that the person is the subject of his own moral acts.

Integral development, therefore, “must be measured and oriented according to the reality and vocation of man seen in his totality, namely, according to his interior dimension”; a dimension which “is in the specific nature of man who has been created by God in His image and likeness.” Each person is responsible to God to develop themselves as integrally and completely as possible. Earlier Leo XIII had written “[i]n the design of God every man is called upon to develop and fulfil himself, for every life is a

---

333 *Compendium*, #129.
334 *Veritatis Splendor*, #48, cited in *ibid.*, #127.
335 *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, #29, Walsh & Davies, *Proclaiming Justice and Peace*. Implicit recognition of this philosophy is given in the *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation*, 22 March 1986, #63, when it asserts, “The Church desires the good of man in all his dimensions, first of all as a member of the city of God and then as a member of the earthly city”, excerpted in Scherer & Bevans, *New Directions of Mission and Evangelization I*, 124.
336 *Populorum Progressio*, #15 and #16.
vocation.” To achieve this and to fulfil their potential human beings must be free and able to choose for themselves.

For its part, authentic freedom is an exceptional sign of the divine image within man. ... Hence man’s dignity demands that he act according to a knowing and free choice … [which] is personally motivated and prompted from within. It does not result from blind internal impulse or from mere external pressure.338

The principles of “solidarity” and the option for the poor

Such integral development of each human being occurs within both a temporal and a social context. Thus, “there can be no progress toward the complete development of man without the simultaneous development of all humanity in the spirit of solidarity.”339 However, Populorum Progressio warns, people are “aided, or sometimes impeded, by those who educate [them] and those with whom [they] live”.340 This is particularly applicable to the situations of refugees who are among the most vulnerable in global and national societies. Hence the principle of the option for the poor, which argues that the poor and vulnerable must have a full participatory place in all communities, and the pursuit of justice are complementary. This is stressed by Benedict XVI when he argues that charity is not enough; that social justice is needed to change the status quo.

Instead of contributing through individual works of charity to maintain the status quo, we need to build a just social order in which all receive their share of the world’s goods and no longer have to depend on charity.341

Both principles – those of the option for the poor and solidarity - arise from the corollaries of human dignity; corollaries summed up by Leo XIII.

337 Rerum Novarum, #64, O’Brien & Shannon, Catholic Social Thought, 175 ff.
338 Gaudium et Spes, #17, Walsh and Davies, Proclaiming Justice and Peace, no page numbers cited.
339 Populorum Progressio, #43.
340 Ibid., #16.
341 Deus Caritas Est, #26.
[A]ll men are children of the common Father, that is, of God; … all have the same end, which is God himself …; all are redeemed by Jesus Christ, and raised to the dignity of children of God, and are thus united in brotherly ties both with each other and with Jesus Christ, …; the blessings of nature and the gifts of grace belong in common to the whole human race, and … to all, except to those who are unworthy, is promised the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven." ^342

In this statement Leo XIII stresses two other vital elements of human dignity, i.e., its relational quality and the principle of equality inherent in it. Mary Wright argues that as “[our Triune] God’s nature is communal and social”, so is ours. ^343 Because “[t]he fundamental unity of the human race stems from the fact that it has been made in ‘God’s image and likeness’ “ ^344, the concept of human dignity is also a concept of universal sister- and brother-hood in which all are inherently equal before God. It involves a new definition of neighbour, reminiscent of the message of the parable of the Good Samaritan ^345, in which

[O]ne’s neighbour is … not only a human being with his or her own rights and a fundamental equality with everyone else, but becomes the living image of God the Father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and placed under the permanent action of the Holy Spirit. ^346

Such an insight also relates to the Hebrew scriptural concept of the Jubilee Year which “was meant to restore equality among all the children of Israel. Only through respect for the human dignity of each and every person can a just society become a reality.” ^347

Hence, the social order and its development must invariably work to the benefit of the human person, since the order of things is to be subordinate to the order of persons, and not the other way around. … [Therefore it is necessary to] consider every neighbour

---

^342 Rerum Novarum, #21.  
^344 The Bishops’ Conference of North America, Heritage and Hope, Scherer & Bevans, New Directions of Mission and Evangelization, 164.  
^345 See Ch. 2, 65-66.  
^346 Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, #40.  
^347 John Paul II, Tertio Milenio Adveniente, #13, (Homebush, NSW: Society of St Paul, 1994). The italics are from the document.
without exception as another self, taking into account first of all his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity.\textsuperscript{348}

Earlier Paul VI had emphasized this principle of equality in relation to solidarity when he wrote

\[
\text{[e]ach man is a member of society. He is part of the whole of mankind. It is not just certain individuals, but all men who are called to \ldots fullness of development.}\textsuperscript{349}
\]

The principle of the “common good”

Out of such considerations grows a further principle related to that of human dignity, that of the idea of the “common good”. The Compendium states that, “[a]ccording to its primary and broadly accepted sense, the common good indicates ‘the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily’.”\textsuperscript{350} In other words, the principle of the common good places the principle of integral development in a communal as well as in an individual context. As such, it “is not an end in itself: it has value only in reference to attaining the ultimate ends of the person and the universal common good of the whole creation.”\textsuperscript{351}

The common good “does not consist in the simple sum of the particular goods of each subject of a social entity.” Rather it belongs to everyone and it “remains ‘common’, because it is indivisible and because only together is it possible to attain it, increase it and safeguard its effectiveness, with regard also to the future.”\textsuperscript{352} The common good, to be

\textsuperscript{348} Gaudium et Spes, #26 and #27.
\textsuperscript{349} Populorum Progressio, #17.
\textsuperscript{350} Compendium, #164. In this definition the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace cites Gaudium et Spes, #26.
\textsuperscript{351} Ibid., #170. The paragraph refers to God as “the ultimate end of his creatures” and indicates that the principle of the common good has a transcendent as well as a temporal dimension.
\textsuperscript{352} Idem.
truly effective, needs to be based on “a healthy social pluralism.”\textsuperscript{353} Thus it needs to ensure that “[e]very social group [takes] account of the needs and legitimate aspirations of other groups, and even of the general welfare of the entire human family.”\textsuperscript{354}

John Paul II states in \textit{Sollicitudo Rei Socialis} that

\begin{quote}
[all have an equal right to be seated at the common table, instead of lying outside the door like Lazarus. Thus, echoing the principle of the option for the poor, the principle of the common good argues that the poor and vulnerable must have a full participatory place in all the world’s communities. True development must be based on love of God and neighbour.\textsuperscript{355}
\end{quote}

In \textit{Tertio Millennio Adveniente} he adds that such a view is both Christian and Hebraic.

\begin{quote}
The jubilee year was meant to [offer] new possibilities to families which had lost their property and even their personal freedom. On the other hand, the jubilee year was a reminder to the rich that a time would come when their Israelite slaves would once again become their equals and would be able to reclaim their rights. … Justice, according to the law of Israel, consisted above all in the protection of the weak, … . Therefore, the riches of Creation were to be considered as a common good of the whole of humanity. Those who possessed these goods as personal property were really stewards, ministers charged with working in the name of God.\textsuperscript{356}
\end{quote}

All members of society are responsible for the common good. However, the State has particular responsibility for guaranteeing “the coherence, unity and organization of the civil society of which it is an expression, in order that the common good may be attained with the contribution of every citizen.” Hence, “the common good is the reason that political authority exists”.\textsuperscript{357}

The common good

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{353} Ibid., #151.
\item\textsuperscript{354} \textit{Gaudium et Spes}, #26.
\item\textsuperscript{355} \textit{Sollicitudo Rei Socialis}, #33.
\item\textsuperscript{356} \textit{Tertio Millennio Adveniente}, #3.
\item\textsuperscript{357} \textit{Compendium}, #168.
\end{footnotes}
must be present and operative in men invested with public authority. They must take account of all those social conditions which favour the full development of human personality.\footnote{Mater et Magistra, #65, Walsh & Davies, Proclaiming Justice and Peace. See also Quadragesimo Anno, #49 and #78, also in Walsh & Davies.}

This also applies at the international as well as at national levels with international law resting “upon the principle of equal respect for States, for each people’s right to self-determination and for their free cooperation in view of the higher common good of humanity.”\footnote{John Paul II, Letter on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, #8, L’Osservatore Romano, English edition, (1989), 2, cited in the Compendium, #157.}

Such a view continues to the present day. So Benedict XVI writes: “The just ordering of society and the State is a central responsibility of politics.”\footnote{Deus Caritas Est, #28.} However, in Quadragesimo Anno Pius XI stresses the qualifying principle of subsidiarity which affirms the right of individuals and social groups to make their own decisions and “accomplish what they can by their own initiative and industry” and he warns the State that it is:

also an injustice and at the same time a great evil and disturbance of the right order to assign to a greater and higher associations what lesser and subordinate organizations can do.\footnote{Quadragesimo Anno, #79.}

To help governments, societies and individuals achieve the common good in its fullness the Church distinguishes four types of justice which should be respected. The first three are the most classical forms of justice; namely, commutative justice which regulates agreements and exchanges between individuals and private groups, distributive justice which requires that the economic benefits and burdens of society be distributed fairly and
that the rights of the poor have a special priority, and legal justice which ensures compliance with the laws of the State. However, the *Compendium* stresses that the fourth form - social justice – has been given even greater importance by the Church because it “represents a real development in general justice, the justice that regulates social relationships according to the criterion of observance of the law”. It continues to say that social justice is related to the social question which today is worldwide in scope, [and] concerns the social political and economic aspects and, above all, the structural dimensions of problems and their respective solutions.”

If all four types of justice are observed and practised the common good will be achieved.

**Human rights and duties**

On 10th December, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed its *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in which it declared thirty basic rights and freedoms to which all humans should subscribe as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations. The Church has also spoken out strongly on the issue of human rights and linked them to the concept of human dignity. This is particularly the case with documents from the Second Vatican Council on. Thus, in his “Address to the International Catholic Commission for Migration” of 12 November 2001 John Paul II argues forcibly that from the concept of the dignity of the human person

there flows a sense of inalienable rights which do not depend on any human power to concede or deny; they are rights which have their source in God.”

---

362 *Compendium*, #201.
364 United Nations’ *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. This has been supplemented by the UN’s *International Bill of Human Rights*.
365 Cited in the ACBC’s statement of 26 March, 2002 on refugees and asylum-seekers.
Similarly in *Pacem in Terris* John XXIII refers to human rights not only as inalienable but also as universal and inviolable. The three adjectives – inalienable, universal and inviolable – are significant because they clearly indicate the source of human rights - God. Thus human rights are universal because they are present in all human beings in whatever time, place or situation; they are inviolable because they are rooted in human dignity; they are inalienable because no-one can legitimately deprive another person of these rights without doing violence to that person’s human nature.\(^{366}\)

Because human beings are generally social beings and live in community human rights are indissolubly linked to human obligations or responsibilities to one another. Indeed the two – rights and responsibilities - exist in mutual complementarity. “In human society to one man’s right there corresponds a duty in all other persons: the duty, namely, of acknowledging and respecting the right in question”.\(^{367}\) To this statement *Pacem in Terris* adds that there is an essential contradiction involved when rights are affirmed without acknowledgement of their corresponding responsibilities. The encyclical warns that “[t]hose … who claim their own rights, yet altogether forget or neglect to carry out their respective duties, are people who build with one hand and destroy with the other.”\(^{368}\)

As early as 1891 Leo XIII enunciated various economic rights of each person.\(^{369}\) As the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace points out, the movement within the Church towards the identification and proclamation of human rights was also very much

---

\(^{366}\) These insights come from the *Compendium*, #152.  
\(^{367}\) *Pacem in Terris*, #264.  
\(^{368}\) *Idem*.  
\(^{369}\) *Rerum Novarum*, #5, #16 and #29. Forty years later *Quadragesimo Anno* continued this discussion of economic rights in relation to the human dignity of each person.
influenced in the immediate aftermath of World War II by the displacement of thousands of people in Europe as well as by the United Nations General Assembly’s promulgation of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.  

With John XXIII’s publication of *Pacem in Terris* in 1963 came a much more comprehensive statement by the Magisterium of human rights and responsibilities. What stands out about this encyclical’s treatment of human rights and responsibilities is its grouping and explicit listing of them, together with its linking of them to the concept of human dignity.  

It lists individual and group rights that include the right to life and a worthy standard of living, rights pertaining to moral and cultural values, the right to worship God according to one’s conscience, the right to choose freely one’s state of life, economic rights, the right of meeting and association, the right to emigrate and immigrate and, finally, political rights.

This categorization of human rights is followed by a corollary listing and grouping of duties which are reciprocal to the rights of each human being and which also find their source in the God-given dignity of people. John XXIII argues forcefully that not only is it the duty of each person to claim their rights “as marks of [their] dignity” but that “[o]ne of the fundamental duties of civil authorities … is to coordinate social relations in such a way that these rights may be enjoyed in the measure of their universality.”

---

370 *Compendium*, #152.  
371 This point is made by O’Brien & Shannon, *Catholic Social Thought*, 129, and by the *Compendium*, #156. I believe it is the reason lying behind Cornish’s assertion, in *The Call to Hospitality*, 11, that *Pacem in Terris* contains “a manifesto of human rights unparalleled in the documents of the social doctrine” of the Church.  
fashion that the exercise of one man’s rights does not threaten others in the exercise of their own rights nor hinder them in the fulfilment of their duties.”

Two years later the Second Vatican Council reinforced the human rights and duties statements of *Pacem in Terris* in *Gaudium et Spes*, asserting that the common good of each and every person within society “involves rights and duties with respect to the whole human race.” In the document’s enunciation of these specific rights and duties the Council expanded upon the listing given in *Pacem in Terris*.

There must be made available to all men everything necessary for leading a life truly human, such as food, clothing, and shelter; the right to choose a state of life freely and to found a family; the right to education, to employment, to a good reputation, to respect, to appropriate information, to activity in accord with the upright norm of one’s own conscience, to protection of privacy, and to rightful freedom in matters religious too.  …  Hence, the social order and its development must unceasingly work to the benefit of the human person.

This powerful statement of the Church in Council strongly focuses on the rights of each individual human person while, at the same time, stressing the interdependence of human beings and the responsibility that Christians have to ensure that the necessary means for a dignified life for each human being are provided, irrespective of their situation in life:

In our times a special obligation binds us to make ourselves the neighbour of absolutely every person and of actively helping him when he comes across our path, whether he be an old person abandoned by all, a foreign labourer unjustly looked down upon, a refugee, a child born of an unlawful union and wrongly suffering for a sin he did not commit, or a hungry person who disturbs our conscience by recalling the voice of the Lord: ‘As long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me’ (Mt 25:40).

As the 1978 letter to episcopal conferences from the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People makes clear, not only should the Church “make

---

373 Ibid., #44 and #62.
374 *Gaudium et Spes*, #26.
375 Ibid., #27.
[herself] a prophetic voice heard wherever these rights are trampled on, and … work constantly and farsightedly to raise man up” but her concern for the rights of individuals should also extend to communities, groups and minorities.\textsuperscript{376}

With such statements as the above, the Church recognizes that human rights include not just individual persons’ rights but the rights of people collectively living in all communities and nations. John Paul II’s letter on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War adds reinforcement with its words that international law “rests upon the principle of equal respect for States, for each people’s right to self-determination and for their free cooperation in view of the higher common good of humanity.”\textsuperscript{377} Each nation has

a fundamental right to existence, [to] its own language and culture, through which a people expresses and promotes … its fundamental ‘sovereignty’, [to] shape its life according to its own traditions, excluding, of course, every abuse of basic human rights and in particular the oppression of minorities, [to] build its future by providing an appropriate education for the younger generation.\textsuperscript{378}

On the other hand, \textit{Redemptor Hominis} stresses the Church’s function as the defender of human rights and human welfare: “… the [C]hurch cannot remain insensible to whatever serves man’s true welfare, any more than she can remain indifferent to what threatens it.”\textsuperscript{379} In \textit{Sollicitudo Rei Socialis} John Paul II reinforces the concept of “the mutual

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{376} \textit{Church and People on the Move}, #17 and #18.
\bibitem{378} Idem.
\bibitem{379} \textit{Redemptor Hominis}, #13. In \textit{Sollicitudo Rei Socialis}, #33, John Paul II again takes up the same theme, arguing that those “who actively share in the process [of true development need] a lively awareness of the value of the rights of all and each person.”
\end{thebibliography}
connectedness of human beings” which gives Christians responsibilities towards others, not just Christians – “of all toward all.”³⁸⁰

From the commencement of their pontificates, John Paul II and Benedict XVI, like their predecessor³⁸¹, have upheld the importance of the work of the United Nations in defining and upholding human rights. In two different addresses to the General Assembly of the United Nations John Paul II eulogised the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights, describing it as “a true milestone on the path of humanity’s moral progress … [and] one of the highest expressions of the human conscience of our time.”³⁸² He also assured the United Nations of the Holy See’s desire, “consistent with its own identity, … to be a faithful collaborator with the United Nations in all those initiatives which would further this noble and difficult task.”³⁸³ Above all, he linked respect for the human rights of each person not only with social justice but also with peace. Thus, he wrote in preparation for the new millennium

a commitment of justice and peace in a world like ours, marked by so many conflicts and intolerable social and economic inequalities, is a necessary condition for the preparation and celebration of the Jubilee.³⁸⁴

³⁸⁰ Ibid., #32 and #33. The italics used are from the document. A reading of the U.N.’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights together with its International Bill of Human Rights, demonstrates the close connection between them and the Church’s enumeration of human rights as expressed in Pacem in Terris and Gaudium et Spes.
³⁸¹ See quotations from Paul VI in his “Message to the UN on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights”, 1963, #65, cited in Church and People on the Move, #17 and #18.
³⁸² Addresses to the 34th and 50th General Assemblies of the United Nations, 2nd October, 1979 and 11 October, 1995, 1147-1148 and 8 respectively, cited in the Compendium, #152 and footnote 304.
³⁸⁴ Tertio Milenio Adveniente, #51. In this statement John Paul II reiterates his message in Redemptor Hominis that “peace comes down to respect for man’s inviolable rights … while war springs from the violation of these rights and brings with it still graver violations of them”, #17. The use of the term “war” by the Pope here I interpret as not just referring to war in the literal sense but also to any form of violence which violates human rights.
Such a statement echoes the 1991 statement of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples which stresses the “need to stand up for human rights, proclaim the demands of justice and denounce injustice not only when [the Church’s] own members are victimized, but independently of the religious allegiance of the victims.”

In his address to the United Nations in April, 2008 Benedict XVI again emphasizes the relevance of the founding principles on which the United Nations is based to the contemporary world; principles which continue to “express the just aspirations of the human spirit and constitute the ideals which should underpin international relations.” He also argues that “[t]he promotion of human rights remains the most effective strategy for eliminating inequalities between countries and social groups, and for increasing security” but warns that

the common good that human rights help to accomplish cannot … be attained merely by applying correct procedures, nor even less by achieving a balance between competing rights. The merit of the Universal Declaration is that it has enabled different cultures, juridical expressions and institutional models to converge around a fundamental nucleus of values, and hence of rights. Today, though, efforts need to be redoubled in the face of pressure to reinterpret the foundations of the Declaration and to compromise its inner unity so as to facilitate a move away from the protection of human dignity towards the satisfaction of simple interests, often particular interests.

In this regard he reinforces the commitment of the Church to “offer her proper contribution to building international relations in a way that allows every person and every people to feel they can make a difference.”

---


The right to religious freedom

The present day work of Church agencies dealing with migrants and refugees, not only in Perth but throughout Australia, involves activities with and counselling of migrants and refugees who represent not only diverse nationalities but a growing percentage who are adherents of non-Christian religions, especially Islam. Therefore, a most relevant human right in relation to contemporary pastoral activity with migrants and refugees is the right to religious freedom and what this signifies for outreach to migrants and refugees of both Christian and non-Christian affiliations. In this regard it is pertinent that Benedict XVI’s Address to the United Nations accentuates that “[i]t is inconceivable … that believers should have to suppress part of themselves – their faith – in order to be active citizens.”

For the Church the right to religious freedom lies at the base of and strengthens all other human rights. As early as 1975 Paul VI wrote: “[a]mong these fundamental human rights, religious liberty occupies a place of primary importance.” In similar vein, John Paul II, acknowledging the multi-religious as well as the multicultural nature of the Oceania region, including Australia, asserted that “basic to all human rights is the freedom of religion.” The United Nations also has espoused religious freedom as a most important human right. In Article 18 of its Universal Declaration of Human Rights the UN provides a specific definition of religious freedom by establishing that

[e]veryone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in

---

387 See Ch. 5, 154-5.
389 Evangelii Nuntiandi, #39.
390 Ecclesia in Oceania, #22.
community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in
teaching, practice, worship and observance.391

As well as the broad right to religious freedom as expressed above, the 1948
International Bill of Human Rights singles out two other important issues for personnel
seeking to assist migrants and refugees, whether they be religious or secular personnel.
These are the right to personal religious belief, (a belief which may differ from any
“established” or State religion of the country in which the migrant or refugee is located or
from the religious affiliation of the personnel aiding migrants and refugees), and the right
to free private and public expression of religious belief.392 Both of these issues are
particularly pertinent to this thesis’ empirical examination of Archdiocesan agencies
currently extending pastoral care to migrants and refugees as well as to a more general
consideration of issues of migrant and refugee inculturation in the country of their
reception, whether those migrants and refugees be of the Catholic faith or not.

Vatican II’s Dignitatis Humanae provides the Church’s pertinent statement on religious
freedom. It begins by establishing the individual’s right to religious freedom.

This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of
individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to
be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs … whether privately or
publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits.393

391 International Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 18.
392 Art. 18 of the Bill states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this
right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with
others, and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and
observance.”
http://www.unlchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm
393 Dignitatis Humanae, #2, Walter M. Abbott SJ (Gen. Ed.), The Documents of Vatican II (London:
Such freedom of conscience in religious matters has two foundations. The first foundation resides in the freedom and dignity of the human person.\textsuperscript{394} Thus, \textit{Redemptor Hominis} states categorically, “the curtailment of the religious freedom of individuals and communities … is above all an attack on man’s very dignity.”\textsuperscript{395} The second foundation is the will and example of Jesus Christ: “This truth appears at its height in Christ Jesus, in whom God perfectly manifested Himself and His ways with men.”\textsuperscript{396} Out of this second foundation, in particular, comes the stricture that “no one therefore is to be forced to embrace the Christian faith against his own will.”\textsuperscript{397} Jesus’ “intention was to rouse faith in His hearers and to confirm them in faith, not to exert coercion upon them.”\textsuperscript{398}

\textit{Dignitatis Humanae} speaks about the right of freedom of religion not only in relation to the individual but also in relation to persons when “they act in community”:

Provided the just demands of public order are observed, religious bodies rightfully claim freedom in order that they may govern themselves according to their own norms, honour the Supreme Being in public worship, assist their members in the practice of the religious life, strengthen them by instruction, and promote institutions in which they may join together for the purpose of ordering their own lives in accordance with their religious principles.\textsuperscript{399}

Here the document is mainly referring to religious communities which, it argues, are not to be hindered in the pursuit of their activities by either legislation or administrative action of governments. However, what it has to say is pertinent to pastoral interaction between peoples and organizations of different faiths. Thus it states

… in spreading religious faith and in introducing religious practices everyone ought at all times to refrain from any manner of action which might seem to carry a hint of coercion or a kind of persuasion that would be dishonourable or unworthy, especially

\textsuperscript{394} Ibid., #2 and # 9.
\textsuperscript{395} Redemptor Hominis, #17.
\textsuperscript{396} Ibid., #11.
\textsuperscript{397} Ibid., #10.
\textsuperscript{398} Ibid., #11.
\textsuperscript{399} Ibid.., #4.
when dealing with poor or uneducated people. Such a manner of action would have to be considered an abuse of one’s right and a violation of the right of others.\footnote{Idem.}

It goes on:

Where the principle of religious freedom is not only proclaimed in words or simply incorporated in law but also given sincere and practical application, there the [Catholic] Church succeeds in achieving a stable situation of right as well as of fact and the independence which is necessary for the fulfillment of her divine mission. This independence is precisely what the authorities of the Church claim in society. At the same time, the Christian faithful, in common with all other men, possess the civil right not to be hindered in leading their lives in accordance with their consciences. Therefore, a harmony exists between the freedom of the Church and the religious freedom which is to be recognized as the right of all men and communities and sanctioned by constitutional law.\footnote{Ibid.}, #13.

Overall, the human search for truth must be free and voluntary. This is reinforced by \textit{Dignitatis Humanae} when it states that

of its very nature, the exercise of religion consists before all else in these internal, voluntary, and free acts whereby man sets the course of his life directly toward God. No merely human power can either command or prohibit acts of this kind.\footnote{Ibid.}, #3.

Thus it is appropriate that a social environment be created in which people can practice their religious beliefs freely and in accordance with “their whole manner of life.”\footnote{Ibid.}, #10.

\textit{Dignitatis Humanae} concludes by recognizing a fact which is very relevant in the relations between different religions today and the tasks of religious agencies and individuals dealing with migrants and refugees of other religious persuasions.

Men of different cultures and religions are being brought together in closer relationships. There is a growing consciousness of the personal responsibility that every man has. All this is evident. Consequently, in order that relationships of peace and harmony be established and maintained within the whole of mankind, it is necessary that religious freedom be everywhere provided with an effective constitutional guarantee and that respect be shown for the high duty and right of man freely to lead his religious life in society.\footnote{Dignitatis Humanae, 15.}
Social Doctrine and Inculturation of the Faith

Lewins notes that “as early as 1215 the Fourth Lateran Council declared that ‘people of diverse languages, [although] bound by one Faith, have varied rites and customs’”. This was given recognition in the Second Vatican Council with the resulting *Gaudium et Spes* making explicit reference to the plurality of cultures in relation to the universal Church.\(^{405}\) That, as a result of migration, Australia has come to represent not only a diversity of religions but also a multiplicity of cultures was something recognized and acknowledged by John Paul when he commented in 2001 that

> [t]he traditional peoples of Oceania make up a mosaic of many different cultures: Aboriginal, Melanesian, Polynesian and Micronesian. Since the time of colonization, Western culture has also shaped the region. In recent years Asian cultures too have been part of the cultural scene, particularly in Australia. Each cultural group, different in size and strength, has its own traditions and its own experience of integration in a new land. They range from societies with strong traditional and communal features, to those which are mainly Western and modern in stamp.\(^{406}\)

If he had written this document some years later John Paul II might have mentioned other cultural influences in Australia, including the most recent coming from Eastern Europe (especially Yugoslavia), East Timor, the predominantly Islamic nations of the Middle East, and the nations of the continent of Africa as well as Burma and Sri Lanka.

Such multiculturalism has vital social justice implications for the Church, both universally and nationally, and particularly for Church agencies seeking to demonstrate pastoral concern and care for migrants and refugees. It also has important relevance for the Church’s witness of its faith and evangelization to migrants and refugees as is

---


\(^{406}\) *Ecclesia in Oceania*, #7.
recognized by *Erga migrantes caritas Christi* which emphasizes the need for inter-religious and intercultural dialogue.\(^{407}\) Similarly, John Paul II stressed that

> [f]rom the beginning of my pontificate I considered the dialogue of the Church with the cultures of our time was a vital area, whose stake is the fate of the world in this the end of the twentieth century.\(^{408}\)

John Coleman points out that “[f]aith, justice, concern for culture and inter-religious dialogue are inextricably joined [and] mutually imply and inform each other.”\(^{409}\) In particular, such a recognition in the face of the multiculturalism and multi-religiosity represented by those who have come to Australia as migrants and refugees since World War II and especially in more recent decades raises the social justice question whether evangelization is a legitimate part of pastoral care, particularly to immigrants of non-Christian faiths, and, if so, how.

### The Church’s recognition of the centrality of culture to human activity

Fr Michael Gallagher SJ argues that “[t]he Second Vatican Council initiated a whole new wavelength for Roman Catholic understanding of culture.”\(^{410}\) *Gaudium et Spes* speaks of culture as defining a person’s understanding of their humanity and their relationship to the world around them:

> The word ‘culture’ in its general sense indicates all those factors by which man defines and unfolds his manifold spiritual and bodily qualities. It means his effort to bring the world itself under his control by his knowledge and his labor [sic.]. It includes the fact that by improving customs and institutions he renders social life more human both within the family and the civic community. Finally, it is a feature of culture that

---

\(^{407}\) *Erga migrantes caritas Christi*, #35 and #36.


\(^{409}\) Coleman, “Evangelizing the Culture. Is It Possible?”.

Throughout the course of time man expresses, communicates, and conserves in his works great spiritual experiences and desires, so that these may be of advantage to the progress of many, even of the whole human family. Hence, it follows that human culture necessarily has a historical and social aspect and that the word ‘culture’ often takes on a sociological and ethnological sense. It is in this sense that we speak of a plurality of cultures.\footnote{Gaudium et Spes, #53. A similar statement is made in the pastoral statement of the Third General Congress of Latin American Bishops in 1979, #386 and #387.}

That culture is basic to human existence is also signaled by John Paul II when he writes: “all human activity [including the religious and spiritual] takes place within a culture and interacts with culture.”\footnote{Centesimus Annus, #50.} To sum up, “[t]he primary constituent of culture is the human person, considered in all aspects of his being.”\footnote{Faith and Inculturation, #5. In its #4 this document cites the opening words of #53 of Gaudium et Spes. Ibid., #6, 155.}

As the foregoing definitions of culture indicate, culture is not static nor does an individual interact with culture in isolation. Rather, it is the human person, in community with other fellow human beings in specific historical environments, who is shaped and, in turn, shapes their culture and the values/disvalues which interpenetrate it.

The human person is a community being which blossoms in giving and in receiving. It is thus in solidarity with others and across living social relationships that the person progresses.\footnote{Ibid., #6, 155.}

In the process each generation creatively shapes and re-shapes their cultural legacy.\footnote{This point is made in the report of the Third General Congress of Latin American Bishops, #392.}

Moreover, as human persons interact with one another, so do cultures. Hence the 1987 International Theological Commission on Faith and Inculturation states that

[t]he phenomena of the reciprocal penetration of cultures … illustrates this fundamental openness of particular cultures to the values common to all, and through this their openness to one another.\footnote{Faith and Inculturation, #7.}
Recognition also needs to be given to the fact that cultures can clash and be the source of deeply rooted biases, as has been evident in the European colonization of other parts of the world. It can also often be manifested in relation to the dominant culture of the society into which migrants and refugees enter.

**Inculturation of the faith and evangelization**

That “religion is an integral constituent of culture, in which it takes root and blossoms” was recognized by the early Christian missionaries when they followed the resurrected Jesus’ commission to his apostles – “Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.” Gallagher makes the point that “the very fact that Christians have four gospels and not one is a powerful symbol of how preaching the good news was shaped from the beginning by the needs of different audiences or cultures.”

Very quickly the early Church was faced with the need to inculturate or, as Bevans prefers, to “contextualize” the faith. Pentecost itself marks “the birth of the missionary Church, symbolized by an extraordinary reaching into the languages of diverse cultures.” Even the writing of the Christian Scriptures in Greek, not in Aramaic (Jesus’ own language) or Hebrew, “is an indication of a dramatic and painful decision by

\[417\] Ibid., #8. Italics reproduced as indicated in the document.

\[418\] Mk 16:15. In Mat 28:19-20 almost exactly the same commission is extended to the apostles while in Lk 24:47 the essence of the message is proclaimed in the words: “repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his [the Messiah’s] name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem”. In Jn 20:21 the command is abbreviated to: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you”, while in Acts 1:8 the expansion of Christianity under Paul as well as the eleven original apostles to the known world is foreshadowed in the words “you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”.


\[420\] The term “inculturation” is being defined in this chapter and throughout the thesis as a process by which the Christian faith both incarnates in and transforms a culture.

\[421\] Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, see particularly his preface and Ch. 1.

\[422\] Gallagher, *Clashing Symbols*, 125.
early Christians – to reach out beyond Jewish circles to the huge culture of the Gentiles.**

Another pertinent example of such inculturation or contextualization comes with Paul’s speech to the Athenian Aeropagus; Athens being one of the key centres of Graeco/Roman culture into which Christianity was penetrating.

This Pauline example was not lost on John Paul II.

In the Third Millennium, Christianity will have to respond ever more effectively to this need for inculturation. Christianity, while remaining completely true to itself, with unwavering fidelity to the proclamation of the Gospel and of the Church, will also reflect in the different faces of the cultures and peoples in which it is received and takes root**.

Similarly, The Catechism states that “missionary endeavour … must involve a process of inculturation if the Gospel is to take flesh in each people’s culture.”

Nevertheless, in Catechesi Tradendae John Paul II recognizes that, while the Gospel itself was historically incultrated, “it does not spring spontaneously from any cultural soil; [rather] it has always been transmitted by means of an apostolic dialogue which inevitably becomes part of a certain dialogue of cultures” and its “catechesis ‘takes flesh’ in the various cultures and mileux” in which the Gospel has taken root and exerted

---

423 Ibid., p. 116.
424 Acts 17: 22-31. However, Gallagher, ibid., 139, makes the point that “the generosity of [Paul’s] speech differs greatly from his own initial reactions to Athens” with “[t]he account of his stay in the city [beginning] with an unusually strong expression of negativity” – see Acts 17:16.
425 Novo Millennio Ineunte, #40. That his conviction was shared by his predecessors and other members of the Church hierarchy is witnessed to by earlier encyclicals like Paul VI’s Gaudium et Spes, Part II especially, and Evangelii Nuntiandi, #62, as well as episcopal documents such as the pastoral statement of the Third General Congress of Latin American Bishops whose part II is headed “The Evangelization of Culture”. Similarly, the International Theological Commission, which held its first meeting in 1969 and which meets annually to discuss various cultural issues as they impinge upon theological doctrine and Church teaching, is a continuing testament to John Paul II’s conviction.
transformative and regenerative effects.\textsuperscript{427} He reinforces this argument in \textit{Slavorum Apostoli} in which he emphasizes the importance of understanding the “interior world” of those who are to be evangelized\textsuperscript{428} and stresses the culturally inclusive nature of Christianity as well as the pluralistic nature of Catholicism and its dynamic qualities.

The Gospel does not lead to impoverishment or extinction of those things which every individual, people and nation and every culture throughout history recognize and bring into being as goodness, truth and beauty. On the contrary, it arrives to assimilate and to develop all these values; to live them with magnanimity and joy and to perfect them by the mysterious and ennobling light of revelation.\textsuperscript{429}

Similarly Paul VI echoes the call in \textit{Gaudium et Spes} for both respect for a people’s particular cultural (and religious) heritage and for the provision of freedom to allow that heritage to develop, arguing that the Church should “draw nourishment from the genuine values of venerable Asian religions and cultures.”\textsuperscript{430}

Even though Paul VI and John Paul II are speaking essentially about the inculturation of the faith into different cultures, such views are particularly pertinent in relation to particularly the different expressions of religious faith which have come into Australia through the migration of Catholic and other Christians, Orthodox and non-Christians. They are also relevant to the two-pronged “inculturation” dilemma with which immigrant Catholics, both migrants and refugees, are faced - the extent to which they may continue to practise the faith in their own cultural style and the degree to which they need to modify their beliefs and practices to conform to the dominant culture and practice of the Catholic Church in the country to which they have come.

\textsuperscript{427} \textit{Catechesi Tradendae}, #53., Scherer & Bevans, \textit{New Directions in Mission and Evangelization I}, 97. In their \textit{Final Report} the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops held under John Paul II in December, 1985, #4, also raises the concept of inculturation of the faith as transformative of cultural values, \textit{ibid.}, 120.

\textsuperscript{428} \textit{Slavorum Apostoli}, #18, \textit{ibid.}, 116-117.

\textsuperscript{429} Idem.

\textsuperscript{430} \textit{Letter of Paul VI to the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences}, #6.
Gaudium et Spes warns that the Church should not be seen as being dominated by any particular culture even though she might enter into communion with it.\(^{431}\) Similarly, the International Theological Commission calls for careful discernment, especially in relation to popular piety which it defines as “on the one hand, the union of Christian faith and piety with profound culture, and on the other, with previous forms of religion of populations”\(^{432}\), and reminds its readers that “the transcendence of the Gospel in relation to all human cultures in which the Christian faith has the vocation to enroot itself and come to fruition” should not be forgotten. It adds the Church “must develop a capacity to analyse cultures and to gauge their moral and spiritual indicators.”\(^{433}\) Nevertheless, as John Paul II concludes in Slavorum Apostoli,

[all] individuals, all nations, cultures and civilizations have their own part to play in God’s mysterious plan and in the universal history of salvation.\(^{434}\)

The foregoing discussion raises the “double aspect” of “an authentic inculturation of the Gospel; one in which cultures “enrich the way the Gospel is preached, understood and lived” and, at the same time, one in which “the Gospel challenges cultures and requires that some values and forms change.”\(^{435}\) What John Paul II emphasizes in Ecclesia in Oceania is that “genuine inculturation of the Christian faith” must always be done both “with the guidance of the universal Church” and with the expression of the local churches of “the faith and life of the Church in legitimate forms appropriate to indigenous [and immigrant] cultures represented within the region’s nations.” Above all, he stresses the

\(^{431}\) Gaudium et Spes, #58.  
\(^{432}\) Faith and Inculturation, #32.  
\(^{433}\) Ibid., #26.  
\(^{434}\) Slavorum Apostoli, #19.  
\(^{435}\) Idem.
importance of *communio* in any evangelization or accommodation of immigrant cultures in the churches of the region.\(^{436}\)

**Religious pluralism and inculturation**

One of the issues which Church documentation on inculturation fails to confront directly is the relationship of inculturation to the Church’s outreach to non-Christian migrants and refugees. Given the increasingly non-Christian nature of many contemporary migrants and refugees seeking asylum in Australia together with the presence of non-Catholics or non-practising Catholics among the agency personnel, this is an issue which is vitally relevant to the Catholic Church and its agencies and members who seek to assist them. Here the issue of inculturation is not only one which relates either to evangelization or to endeavours to help Christian migrants/refugees from different cultures to practise their faith in a new cultural situation, but to migrants and refugees who wish not only to inculturate their very different outlooks and customs into a new culture and society but also to retain and practise their non-Christian religion.

In *Ecclesia in Oceania* there is some implicit recognition of this challenge for the Church. Thus John Paul refers to “believers and non-believers.” Like two relevant US episcopal documents – *To the Ends of the Earth* and *Heritage and Hope*\(^{437}\) – *Ecclesia in Oceania* realizes that Gospel values reach out beyond Christian believers. In particular *Heritage and Hope* stresses that the Gospel is a “Gospel of love and redemption [which] transcends national boundaries, cultural differences and divisions among peoples” and

\(^{436}\) *Ecclesia in Oceania*, #16 and #17.

adds that “[i]t cannot be considered foreign anywhere on earth.” However, the issue of “inculturation” and the Church’s outreach to non-Christian migrants/refugees is one which needs much more careful and nuanced enunciation. If, as John Paul II states in his introduction to Novo Millennio Ineunte, “this rooting of the Church in time and space mirrors the movement of the Incarnation itself.” then how are agencies and bodies extending pastoral care to non-Christian migrants and refugees to witness to their faith while, at the same time, possessing sufficient humility to respect the cultural and religious integrity and freedom of their clients as well as their essential human dignity?

Such a dilemma raises not only issues of social justice and equity but is reminiscent of the predicament, which faced the early Christian Church when it began to preach the Christian message in the wider world, of the extent to which Gentiles should follow Judaic practices of circumcision and dietary restrictions. In this regard perhaps Pentecost has a message for the Church in relation to “the beginning of a new unification under the Spirit” in which, as Karl Rahner has argued, “faith has a history of its own, because the absolute self-revelation of God … necessarily includes the unlimited possibility of acceptance in a variety of ways.” The horizons of “inculturation” need to be widened so that “the Church brings a gift and receives a gift in the process of inculturation.”

---

438 Heritage and Hope, ibid., 164.
439 Novo Millennio Ineunte, #3. Italics are from the document itself.
442 Gallagher, Clashing Symbols, 125.
Conclusion

Overall, then, magisterial and other Church documents together with papal messages to the United Nations and other bodies provide a rich treasury for an investigation into issues of human dignity and human rights which are germane to a consideration of Church’s migrant and refugee policies and practices, whether at the levels of universal, national or regional Church. As the documents indicate, at the basis of their conclusions is the key concept of human dignity. Out of this concept arise principles, rights and responsibilities – individual and communal – which allow for the integral development of each human being in interdependent relationship and equality with others to be achieved. In particular, given the diversity of ethnicities, cultures and religious affiliations of migrants/refugees within the Archdiocese of Perth, the right to religious and cultural freedom of the individual within community is crucial to the reception of migrants and refugees by pastoral care services. This is very important in relation to the right of migrants and refugees to express freely their religious beliefs.

In the following chapter I examine more specifically the application of these Catholic social justice foundations to the rights of and responsibilities toward migrants and refugees as expressed in the documentation of Church conciliar bodies such as the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant Peoples. Then in Chapter Five documentation from the Church in Australia, especially that emanating from the Australian Bishops’ Conference and its Office for Migrants and Refugees\(^{443}\), will be explored.

\(^{443}\) Thereafter referred to as ACMRO.
CHAPTER FOUR

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH TOWARD MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Introduction

As well as providing guidance on general social justice issues which is relevant to migrant/refugee pastoral care, the Church also considers specifically the rights of migrants and refugees and the responsibilities toward them by members of the receiving society, especially the Church community. Special attention is given to the nature of pastoral and spiritual care which is considered appropriate. Obviously an awareness of these issues is important, both for any archdiocesan agency extending pastoral care to migrants and refugees, and also for a critical study of such care. Consequently, this chapter will explore the Church’s teachings on migrants and refugees, their rights, and the responsibilities of the Church and the wider community toward them, and issues of spiritual and pastoral care to migrants and refugees.

Documentary material utilized for this chapter includes documents from the Magisterium and, most pertinently, from the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and
Itinerant Peoples\textsuperscript{444}, which shed light on the question of the rights of and the Church’s responsibilities toward migrants and refugees.

**Historical survey of documentation**

As the previous chapter has stressed, the Church’s concept of human dignity and the rights and obligations which flow from it have particular relevance for migrants and refugees. In this regard the Church carries on the call to hospitality and care for the stranger, the marginalized and the persecuted which is so evident in both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, as well as in the writings of the early Church Fathers.\textsuperscript{445} From the early 19\textsuperscript{th} century onwards the pastoral care of migrants had been entrusted increasingly to missionary congregations. However, from 1912 the Church began to establish specific bodies and promulgate particular decrees in relation to migrant care.\textsuperscript{446}

The dramatic increase in scope and needs of the migration phenomenon as a result of the Second World War indicated to the Church the need for an even more coordinated approach to the issues of migration. This realization was reflected not only in particular documentation regarding the Church’s outreach to migrants, refugees, and travelers but also in the establishment of pontifical commissions related to the movement, both voluntary and forced, of peoples in the world, especially since the end of World War II. Thus, in 1951 an International Catholic Migration Commission under the authority of the

\footnote{\begin{enumerate}
\item Originally referred to as Pontifical Commission, this is now styled Pontifical Council.
\item Church documentation dealing with the care of migrants and refugees frequently makes scriptural reference to such biblical incidents as Joseph’s brothers taking their people to Egypt because of severe famine, the captivity and exile of the Hebrew people, the Holy Family’s search for refuge in Egypt because of King Herod’s threat to the infant Jesus and the rabbinical-inspired persecution of the infant Christian Church in Jerusalem which caused many of the new Christians to flee to other parts of Judea and Samaria and even further afield.
\item Details from *Erga migrantes*, 7, #197. These included the first Office for Migrant Problems (1912) and the decrees *Ethnografica studia* (1914) and *Magni semper* (1918).
\end{enumerate}}
Sacred Congregation for Bishops was established and in August of the following year Pius XII published the Apostolic Constitution, *Exsul Familia*, a crucial document for the care of migrants and refugees by the Church.\(^{447}\)

In the light of the decrees of the Second Vatican Council and the Council’s awareness of the need for more appropriate methods and institutions for the pastoral care of migrants and other itinerant peoples the Sacred Congregation for Bishops in 1968 followed up *Exsul Familia* with the publication of the *Instruction on the pastoral care of people who migrate*.\(^{448}\) Then in 1969 Paul VI issued the *Motu Proprio Pastoralis Migratorum Cura* which introduced the corresponding instruction, *De Pastorali Migratorum Cura* (“Nemo est”) of the Congregation of Bishops.\(^{449}\) Reinforcement of these documents was given the following year with the Pope’s establishment of a body designed to combine various Vatican agencies dealing with population movement – the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Tourism\(^{450}\) - which in 1989 became the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. It is composed of the President, helped by the Secretary, assisted by the Under-Secretary, and includes 25 members who are Cardinals and Bishops, as well as about fifteen councillors.\(^{451}\)

The new Council was entrusted with the important tasks of coordination, animation and pastoral encouragement, especially in relation to the individual Bishops’ Conferences.\(^{452}\)

---


\(^{448}\) From the Sacred Congregation for Bishops (Vatican City: ACTS Publications, 1969).

\(^{449}\) Published in *L’Osservatore Romano*, 1970, 5.

\(^{450}\) This occurred on 7 April, 1970, see Catholic Documentation (1970), 114-117.


\(^{452}\) Hamao, “The Instruction *Erga migrantes caritas Christi*”, #8.
As a consequence the Council has published a number of important documents, commencing with *The Church and People on the Move* in May, 1978. A subsequent document, *Refugees*, was issued in 1993 in conjunction with the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* to mark the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the Office of the UNHCR and provides a systematic presentation of the Church’s teachings on people on the move. In particular it indicates the Church’s awareness that migration issues are linked to those of ecumenical relations.

A more recent conciliar statement released in 2004, *Erga migrantes caritas Christi*, continues the ecumenical awareness raised by *Refugees* and argues the need to develop a more ecumenical vision of the phenomenon of migration which acknowledges that many migrants are not in full communion with the Catholic Church. It also urges the need for interreligious dialogue, given that an increasing number of migrants belong to other religions, particularly the religion of Islam. As Cardinal Hamao indicates, this latest document is unique in that it not only “leads towards making migration an occasion of dialogue and mission in the context of new evangelization” but it allows the Church “to breathe with its two lungs” in that it facilitates the application of the norms contained in the Code of Canon Law for the Latin Church and also in the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches to respond more adequately to the pastoral needs of the emigrant faithful of the Eastern Churches too, who are now ever more numerous.

---

453 See *Erga migrantes*, 1 – presentation.
The Council has also hosted world congresses for the pastoral care of migrants and refugees, its last being that held in Rome between 17th and 22nd November, 2003. Advocacy has been an important concern of the Council as exemplified by such documents as Hamao’s address to the Church in Malaysia on “The Church and Undocumented Migrants and Refugees, including those who are not Christians”456, the “Launch of the International Coalition on the Detention of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants” by Cardinal Martino, immediate past President of the Council457, and the “Intervention” by Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, Secretary of the Council, at the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking.458 Such advocacy is also demonstrated by such documents as the “Calendar of Activities (Organization or Participation) of the Pontifical Council in 2008”459 as well as the summary of a seminar organized by the Pontifical Council in Rome in September 2007 on the “Role of Migrant Women in the

455 The papers from this Congress have been published in People on the Move, 93, (2003), 5-317. Such congresses appear to have been held every five years since 1979 and “have a particular character, … namely an intimate connection with the pastoral concerns of the Universal Church and of the Holy Father in particular”, “Presentation” by Hamao, 5. It has proved impossible to access papers from earlier conferences. However, that such congresses have been widely representative of many clerical, religious and lay people engaged in the pastoral care of migrants and refugees is indicated by Hamao’s “Address to His Holiness Pope John Paul II”, People on the Move, 93, (2003), 11-12. As far as I can ascertain, the next such Congress will be held in 2009, its theme being “In solidarity with the people of the sea as witnesses of hope, through proclamation of the Word, liturgy and diakonia”, People on the Move, 106 (Suppl.-I), April 2008.


457 This speech was given at the Sala Marconi of Vatican Radio on the occasion of the celebration of the UN World Day of Refugees, organized by the Jesuit Refugee Service on 15th June, 2006.


Related to this conciliar advocacy is that by the Holy See itself, for example, in its intervention at the Ministerial Conference of 140 Signatory States of the Convention of 1951 on the “status” of refugees in December, 2001, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/secretariat_state/documents/rc_seg-st_doc_200112.html.

Promotion of Multicultural Identities and a paper from the Plenary Session for May 2008 which had as its theme “The Migrant and Itinerant Family”.

As well as these pontifical council documents treating principle and practice with regard to migrants and refugees, John Paul II, regularly displayed his concern for migrants and refugees, particularly in his World Migration Day messages, and this concern is being continued under Benedict XVI with the first four World Migration Day messages of his pontificate. Such activity at the level of the Vatican has been reflected in the documentation and actions of the Church at national and local church levels. So, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops has expressed its ongoing concern with regard to migrants and refugees in various statements, for example, Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity of 2001 or with the Catholic Bishops of Mexico, Strangers No Longer of 2003.

Each of the documents cited in the preceding paragraphs has been conditioned by the time in which it was produced. So, for example, the earliest, Exsul Familia, was produced in a context in which countries like Australia, the United States and Canada were receiving many refugees from areas of a war-torn Europe in the process of recovery from World War II. In contrast, the second major document from the PCPCMIP,
Refugees, was written in the last decade of the twentieth century at a time when the numbers of refugees, forced out of their countries of origin by persecution within those countries as well as war and the impact of discriminatory global economic and social policies, had reached unprecedented levels and earned the twentieth century the epitaph “the century of refugees” \(^{465}\).

[It] was published to refocus attention on the inhuman conditions in which so many refugees were being forced to live, and also to stimulate international solidarity regarding the causes of these sufferings.\(^ {466}\)

Similarly, the last major document of the Council, *Erga migrantes caritas Christi*, manifests the increasing awareness of the impact of globalization in the early 21\(^{st}\) century on migration, both external and internal or “domestic”.\(^ {467}\) Hamao writes in reference to that document that “[m]igration is one of the vastest phenomena of our times. The most recent available data count 175 million persons living in a country that is different from the land of their birth.”\(^ {468}\) Most crucially *Erga migrantes* recognizes the greater cultural and religious pluralism which is now a feature of most societies and declares that

> migration today … imposes new commitments of evangelization and solidarity on Christians and calls them to examine more profoundly those values shared by other religious or lay groups and indispensable to ensure a harmonious life together.\(^ {469}\)

In like vein John Paul II’s Message for the 91\(^{st}\) World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2005, stresses the need for societies to be more open to cultural and religious dialogue and, in the process, to “seek the proper balance between respect for their own identity and


\(^{467}\) *Erga migrantes*, 5, #10.

\(^{468}\) Hamao, “The Instruction *Erga migrantes*”. In his 1996 message for World Migration Day, entitled “Undocumented Migrants”, John Paul II notes the same point, particularly in relation to so-called “illegal migrants”, #1, while Benedict XVI entitles his second message for World Migration Day in 2006 “Migrations: a sign of the times”.

\(^{469}\) *Ibid*, # 9.
recognition of that of others.” Citing *Erga migrantes*, he continues that this “is a lengthy process that aims to shape societies and cultures, making them more and more a reflection of the multi-faceted gifts of God to human beings.”

**Questions of definition**

One of the pressing issues for magisterial and conciliar documents is to define the subjects of their concern; in particular the preoccupation has been to answer the question: who are migrants, refugees and itinerant peoples? John Paul II in his 87th World Day of Migration Message for 2001 argues that

> [t]he term “migrant” is intended first of all to refer to refugees and exiles in search of freedom and security outside the confines of their own country. However, it also refers to young people who study abroad and all those who leave their own country to look for better conditions of life elsewhere.

Hamao, speaking at an Australian conference in November, 2005, emphasizes that migrants of any type are distinguished by the permanent or long-term nature of their departure from their country of origin whereas itinerant people leave for only very short periods of time with the intention of returning to their homeland.

From the first an essential distinction was made by the Church between “forced” and “natural” migrants. Thus, Joseph Cardinal Ferretto in *Exsul Familia* describes the former

---

471 In Chapter One I have given general definitions. It is interesting to compare these with definitions from Church documents.  
473 Hamao, “Pastoral Care of People on the Move: Challenges for the Church Today”, keynote address at the Australian Conference for Pastoral Agents of Migrants and Itinerant People, held in Sydney, 17-18 November, 2005, 1. In his definition of migrants Hamao also includes labour and professional migrants, diplomats, refugees and asylum seekers, diplomats as well as foreign students. On the other hand, among itinerant people he includes classified seafarers, flight personnel and airport workers, nomads, circus and carnival people, people on the road, tourists and tour operators, and pilgrims. The earlier PCPCMIP document, *People on the Move*, makes a similar distinction but classifies them all as “people on the move”, 8, #2.
as those who are expelled, deported, exiled or constrained in any way to flee their native lands, whereas he defines the latter as those who freely choose and arrange their migration. Later Church and People on the Move provides a similar basic distinction between migration, (movement “as a result of the freewill of those concerned”), and refugees, (those who move “as a result of compulsion of any kind”). However, Ferretto, in his commentary, raises what is now seen as a very pertinent issue by the Church when he notes that even the so-called “natural” migrants do often experience an element of compulsion in their migration. As Hamao signals in 2005, forced and voluntary mobility are two poles in a continuum and there is a whole range of combinations in these.

By 1993, with the mounting global concern over the number of refugees seeking asylum, Refugees is concerned specifically with the question of who is a refugee and it criticizes the definition of the United Nations International Convention adopted in 28 July 1951. Like various magisterial documents, this document suggests that de facto refugees and internally displaced persons should also be recognized as refugees and accorded international protection. In particular Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity argues that the category of economic migrants needs to be included in the definition of a refugee. Thus, this category encompasses those “who flee economic conditions that threaten their
lives and physical safety” as distinct from “those who emigrate simply to improve their position”. As the document indicts, it also includes those people who are displaced within their own countries. Moreover, Hamao points out that “it is not always easy to distinguish between a refugee, an asylum seeker and a labor [sic.] migrant … regular and irregular migration are often two aspects of the same phenomenon.” In its turn Erga migrantesi, in its recognition of the cultural and religious pluralism of today’s migrants and refugees, urges the need for differing outreaches to those migrants who are members of the Catholic Church, those who are “not in full communion with the Catholic Church” i.e. Orthodox and other Christians, and those who are of other religious faiths.

Implicit in the above definitions of the terms “migrant and refugee” is the issue of what is meant by the term “migration” as this can indicate the circumstances in which various people migrate. This is something which has also changed over time. Thus Benedict XVI in his first message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees in 2006, in reference to the Second Vatican Council, speaks of migration as “a sign of the times” in which Various factors play a part. They include both national and international migration, forced and voluntary migration, legal and illegal migration, subject also to the scourge of trafficking in human beings. Nor can the category of foreign students … be forgotten.

Benedict XVI also refers to the “feminization” of migration in recent times. This “feminization” of migration includes “women who, (like their male counterparts), cross

---

480 Refugees, 8, #4 and #5.
482 Erga migrantes, #7 and all of Part II – “Migrants and the Pastoral Care of Welcome”.
the border of their homeland alone in search of work in another country”. It relates to not only impoverishment in many developing societies but also to another migration factor Benedict XVI mentions earlier in his message – migration as “an important factor of the labour market worldwide, a consequence among other things of the enormous drive of globalization” which has caused migration to take on structural characteristics.

Hamao emphasizes a very important point with regard to female migration, i.e. that “a migrant woman’s rights have to be safeguarded twice.” Benedict also notes the link between trafficking as a form of migration and the vulnerability of women in this respect, especially where “opportunities [of women] to improve their standard of living or even to survive are limited.” In his 94th World Day of Migrants and Refugees Message Benedict also refers to the issue of human trafficking for children and adolescents, especially in relation to refugee camps.

The Specific Rights of Migrants and Refugees and the Responsibilities of the Church and the Host Society Toward Them.

Inalienable rights of the migrant and refugee

---

484 Idem.
485 Idem.
487 Message for the 92nd World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2006 entitled “the Migrant Family”, no paragraph numeration.
488 Message for the 94th World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2008), entitled “Young migrants”, no paragraph numeration. In an earlier message for the 89th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2003, entitled “For a commitment to overcome all racism, xenophobia and exaggerated nationalism”, #1, John Paul II refers to human trafficking as being one of the circumstances giving rise to “the most vulnerable of foreigners”, among whom he included “undocumented migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and the victims – mostly women and children – of the terrible crime of human trafficking”.

In the tradition of documents like *Pacem in Terris* and *Gaudium et Spes* which attempt to define the rights and obligations of human beings to one another, Church documentation dealing specifically with migrants, refugees and other people on the move has been preoccupied with their particular rights. As with human rights in general, the universal Church bases its statements on the rights of such people on the concept of human dignity. Thus *Refugees* states:

The Church offers her love and assistance to all refugees without distinction as to religion or race, respecting in each of them the inalienable dignity of the human person created in the image of God. … [The Church is] called on to incarnate the demands of the Gospel, reaching out without distinction towards these people in their moment of need and solitude. [The plight of the refugees is] a constant attack on essential human rights [and therefore] becomes a pressing appeal.489

In his World Migration Day Message for 2001 John Paul II broadly outlines what he argues are “the inalienable rights” that migratory people, irrespective of their legal status, can expect.

Specifically, these are the right to have one’s own country, to live freely in one’s own country, to live together with one’s family, to have access to the goods necessary for a dignified life, to preserve and develop one’s ethnic, cultural and linguistic heritage, to publicly profess one’s religion, to be recognized and treated in all circumstances according to one’s dignity as a human being.

These rights are concretely employed in the concept of the universal common good, which includes the whole family of peoples, beyond every nationalistic egoism. The right to emigrate must be considered in this context. The Church recognizes this right in every human person, in its dual aspect of the possibility to leave one’s country and the possibility to enter another country to look for better conditions of life.490

A similar list of the basic rights of refugees is given in *Refugees*; a list which includes adequate food, clothing and housing, protection from violence, access to education and medical assistance, the reunification of families, the possibility of assuming responsibility for their own lives and cultivating their own culture and traditions, access to work and,

489 *Refugees*, 20-35.
through this, an opportunity to fulfill their duty to contribute to the common good and, finally, free expression of their faith. 491

**Rights of emigration, non-migration and non-refoulement**

At the end of his list of migrant rights John Paul II acknowledges the “right in every human person” to emigrate.492 John XXIII had gone a step further and asserted that the right to emigrate should also assure the right to immigrate into another country, arguing that it was the duty of State officials to accept such immigrants.493 However, John Paul II recognizes the need for regulation of the right to emigrate “because practicing it indiscriminately may do harm and be detrimental to the common good of the community that receives the migrant”.494 Similarly, Hamao emphasizes the need to find “an equilibrium between the states’ right to protect its borders and the right to immigrate.” While both rights are recognized by the Church and seen as being equal, Hamao argues that the rights of states to control their borders “should not come in conflict with the right of people on the move to be treated always with the respect due to every human person.”495

491 Refugees, #12.
492 The PCPCMIP also reinforces the right of migrants to emigrate in its document, *Erga migrantes*, 9, #29. Earlier in his 2002 speech to the Malaysian Church, “The Church and Undocumented Migrants and Refugees, including those who are not Christians”, Hamao had also spoken about the equal importance of the right of the migrant/refugee to migrate.
493 *Pacem in Terris*, 25, #106.
495 Hamao, “Pastoral Care of People on the Move”, 2. Hamao reminded his hearers of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 3, which, “in full accord with Gospel teachings, states: ‘Everyone as the right to life’.”
In his 2004 Message for the 90th World Day of Migrants and Refugees John Paul II also acknowledges the right of the person not to emigrate. In like vein, Hamao, citing John Paul II’s message, points out that

[the fact that not all citizens of a country, but only some, feel compelled or are even forced to move is a glaring indication of injustice and social inequality that has to be remedied [and] implied that not everybody has the same access to the ‘goods of the earth’, which are destined for all.

Such remedies lie not only in the hands of world and national governmental bodies but also with the Church, which, Hamao states, needs “to review its preferential option for the poor in this regard and its fight against poverty specifically in the countries where people on the move originate.”

In his 1996 World Migration Day message John Paul II takes up the vexed issue of asylum seekers who arrive in a country without appropriate documentation. He responds to the tendency of individual nation states to tighten immigration laws and reinforce border control systems and forcibly emphasizes that the “irregular legal status cannot allow the migrant to lose his dignity” although, he argues, it is “essential to combat vigorously the criminal activities which exploit illegal immigrants.”

Ironically, however, Hamao, in speaking to an Australian audience, stressed that “severe immigration laws and restrictive immigration policies … have not discouraged international migration. Regarding its irregular form, they have actually helped to increase it and the considerable risk it involves.”

496 Message for the 90th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2004 entitled “Migration with a view to peace”, #3 & #4.
497 Hamao, “Pastoral Care of People on the Move”, 2.
498 Message for World Migration Day, 1996, # 2
499 Hamao, “Pastoral Care of People on the Move”, 4.
John Paul II also speaks about the right of migrants and refugees to non-refoulement. He stresses that “adequate protection should be guaranteed to those who, although they have fled from their countries for reasons unforeseen by international conventions, could indeed be seriously risking their life were they obliged to return to their homeland.”

Such a message has been reinforced by interventions from the Holy See to the UNHCR; for instance, at the executive committee meeting of the Office of the UNHCR on 2 October 2001. In this intervention the delegation from the Holy See had stipulated that “we must all work to safeguard, consolidate and, where necessary, deepen the regime of asylum and protection and to strengthen its application in the changing situation of our world.”

Martino as the new President of the PCPCMIP also has spoken out forcibly against the detention of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, emphasizing that especially in the cases of “children, people with mental or physical disabilities, torture or trauma victims, and women in the last stages of pregnancy or nursing babies” the procedure is “morally unacceptable.” He adds that “[l]ong periods of detention … leave scars on individuals who may have already suffered hardship and abuse prior to arriving in countries where they are detained” as well as having “a traumatising effect upon those who are detaining the asylum seekers and migrants.”

The right to live peacefully and without discrimination

---

501 Cited in Cornish, A Call to Hospitality, 25.
John Paul II links the right to live in peace and dignity in one’s own country with the right not to emigrate and sees these two rights as being practical manifestations of building conditions of world peace. In his 2000 Message he not only called for “the advancement of everyone’s right to live peacefully in his own country” but also that in every State immigration laws be based on the recognition of fundamental human rights. Nevertheless he recognized the reality of voluntary or forced migration and noted out that, because “[l]iving side by side is becoming an everyday reality for many people”, such migration has increased the “opportunities for exchange among people of different cultures, religions, races and nationalities.”

However, in an interesting inversion of the usual concern for the human rights of the migrant and refugee in the host country, *Erga migrantes* displays a concern for a possible threat to the human rights of the host nation from different cultural and religious mores. In particular it stresses the need for Muslim migrants to be encouraged to develop a growing awareness that fundamental liberties, the inviolable rights of the person, the equal dignity of man and woman, the democratic principle of government and the healthy lay character of the State are principles that cannot be surrendered.

This is a theme which is put more generally by John Paul II in his 2003 Message entitled “For a commitment to overcome all racism xenophobia and exaggerated nationalism.” In it he invites immigrants to recognize the duty to honour the countries which receive them and to respect the laws, culture and traditions of the people who have welcomed them [in order that social harmony will prevail].

---

506 *Erga migrantes*, 17, # 65.
507 *Message for the 89th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2003*, #4. Similarly, in his 1994 World Day of Migrants and Refugees Message, #13, John Paul II had categorically stated that the cultural practices
Nevertheless, in the same message John Paul II categorically opposes all manifestations of racism, xenophobia and exaggerated nationalism toward migrants and refugees\(^{508}\) and in his 2005 message he explores the importance of intercultural integration, taking up the rights of migrants and refugees to maintain their own cultural and linguistic identities while, at the same time, seeking “the proper balance between respect for their own identity and recognition of that of others.” Thus for both the receiving society and the immigrants

it is necessary to recognize the legitimate plurality of cultures present in a country, in harmony with the preservation of law and order, on which depend social peace and the freedom of citizens. [Thus] it is essential to exclude on the one hand assimilationist models that tend to transform those who are different into their own copy, and on the other, models of marginalization of immigrants, with attitudes that can even arrive at the choice of *apartheid*. The way to take is the path of genuine integration with an open outlook that refuses to consider solely the differences between immigrants and the local people. … We [Christians] should encourage instead a mutual fecundation of cultures.\(^{509}\)

*Erga migrantesi* goes further, signalling that migration can be read as “a sign of the living presence of God in history and in the community of mankind, for it offers a providential opportunity for the fulfillment of God’s plan for a universal communion”.\(^{510}\)

### The right to religious freedom

With the increasing pluralism of cultures and religions being represented by immigrants to especially Western, predominantly Christian, nations, the challenge faced by Christians to extend a welcome to people of a diversity of cultures and religions, raises

\(^{508}\) Ibid., #5.


\(^{510}\) *Erga migrantes*, #9.
the issues of the right of religious freedom and inter-religious dialogue. In 1997 John Paul II reinforced the general prescription of *Dignitatis Humanae* by stressing the freedom of worship of every human being and welcoming the legislation of various governments who “have already granted certain more substantial religious groups the status of a recognized religion.”

Inter-religious dialogue is something which is stressed in his 2001 papal Message where he cites from his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* that “the Church sees no conflict between proclaiming Christ and engaging in inter-religious dialogue. Instead she feels the need to link the two in the context of her mission *ad gentes*.” This was followed in 2002 by John Paul II’s dedication of his 88th World Day of Migration to the theme of “migration and inter-religious dialogue.” In this message he calls for dialogue between Christians and non-Christians to bring about the emergence of “true ‘laboratories’ of respectful living together”, arguing that the phenomenon of migration could foster the development of an inter-religious dialogue which could “exalt the gift of faith”. The following year the Pope speaks of the “unique opportunities to deepen the gift of unity with other Christian Churches and ecclesial communities” provided by the diverse religious and cultural pluralism of migrant and refugee communities, opportunities which are explored at length in *Erga migrantes*.

**Economic rights and obligations**

---

515 *Erga migrantes*, see especially Part II, “Migrants and the Pastoral Care of Welcome”.
As John Paul II and Benedict XVI had done in their World Migration Day Messages for 2000 and 2006 respectively, *Erga migrantes* also draws out the link between migration and economic globalization. It argues that migration raises a fundamental ethical question – “the search for a new international economic order for a more equitable distribution of the goods of the earth.” This question is accompanied by the Church’s preoccupation, universally and nationally, with the exploitation and vulnerability of many migrant workers in host countries. Thus, as *Erga migrantes* continues

foreign workers are not to be considered merchandise or merely manpower, [nor should they] be treated just like any other factor of production. Every migrant enjoys inalienable fundamental rights which must be respected in all cases. Furthermore the migrants’ contribution to the economy of the host country comes together with the possibility for them to use their intelligence and abilities in their work.  

Consequently, the document denounces the deprivation of migrants “of their most elementary human rights, including that of forming labour unions, when they do not become outright victims of the sad phenomenon of human trafficking”\(^\text{517}\) or becoming the “scapegoats” for local unemployment or criminal activities, a feature noted by Hamao in his commentary on the document.  

Of particular concern to *Erga migrantes* is the plight of female migrant workers who, as it correctly notes, “are often contracted as unskilled labourers (or domestics) and

\(^{516}\) *Ibid.*, #5.  
\(^{517}\) *Idem.*  
\(^{518}\) Hamao, “The Instruction *Erga migrantes*”, #2. Brenda Hubber, “The Right to Have Access to the Means of a Livelihood, by Migration When Necessary”, James Franklin (ed.), *Life to the Full: Rights and Social Justice in Australia* (Ballan, Vic.: Connor Court Publishing, 2007), 76-8, argues that the migrant’s right to migrate to gain access to a means of a livelihood is not spelt out specifically in Church documentation, especially *Rerum Novarum*. Similarly, while it is listed as a general right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, such a right is not considered an absolute right like “the right to life, liberty and security of person” (Art. 3) but only invoked in the event a person is denied access to a livelihood in their home country.
employed illegally”. Hence it urges the ratification of the international legal instruments that ensure the rights of migrants and refugees and deplores the fact that migrant workers “are often victims of illegal recruitment and short-term contracts providing poor working and living conditions.” In particular the document joins Pope John Paul II in its stress on the importance of the ratification by nations of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and the Members of their Families which came into force on 1st July, 2003.

**Rights of migrant and refugee families**

Concern for the rights of migrant families is also an important feature of Church documentation. Hamao stresses that the right to emigrate includes the right to emigrate as family as well as the right to remain with one’s family. Such opinions are particularly evident in Benedict XVI’s message for the 93rd World Day of Migrants and Refugees in which he underlines “the commitment of the Church not only in favor [sic.] of the individual migrant but also of his family, which is a place and resource of the culture of life and a factor for the integration of values.” He notes, however, the many difficulties which the migrant’s family meets – distance, unsuccessful reunification, the ways in which new relationships and new affections can cause forgetfulness of the past and obligations to family members back in the country of origin as well as the detrimental effects on the second generation of the “defense mechanisms” of the first generation immigrants.

---

519 *Erga migrantes*, #5.  
520 *Ibid.*, #6  
521 Hamao, “Pastoral Care of People on the Move”, 4.
Benedict XVI calls for the active and healing pastoral presence of the Christian community toward migrant and refugee families and stresses that “[e]verything must be done to guarantee the rights and dignity of the families and to assure them housing facilities according to their needs.” Particularly challenging to both immigrants and the host society is his concept of a new family in the form of “an integrated community that would be a ‘common household’ for all”; a reminder of the Christ’s emphasis on the brother- and sisterhood of all peoples. In like vein, Hamao urges that the Church should be a family for those migrants and refugees without their own families.

Included in Benedict XVI’s discussion of the migrant family and its rights is the issue of foreign students, who albeit temporary migrants, “are far from home” and without family support. This is a theme which is taken up again in his penultimate message, together with the rights and problems of young migrants, particularly those who fall into the category of forced migrants, refugees and victims of human trafficking. While the Pope acknowledges “that much is being done for them”, he calls for “even greater commitment … to help them by creating suitable hospitality and formative structures”, especially in their family and school contexts.

The importance of compassionate awareness

Throughout all the emphasis of the universal Church on the rights of the migrants and refugees and reciprocal obligations on the part of the host societies is a compassionate

---

522 Hamao, “Pastoral Care of People on the Move”, 5.
522 Message for the 94th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2008.
recognition of the suffering of the migrant and particularly of the refugee, both individually and collectively. So John Paul II speaks of the “trauma of the refugee fleeing their country” and writes feelingly that

[the Church hears the suffering cry of all who are uprooted from their own land, of families forcefully separated, of those who, in the rapid changes of our day, are unable to find a stable home anywhere. She senses the anguish of those without rights, without any security, at the mercy of every kind of exploitation, and she supports them in their unhappiness.]

Similarly, in its introduction to the Fifth World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees, the PCPCMIP writes

The Church wishes to share [the] plight [of the migrants and refugees] and be there where they are, not to be a mere by-stander and passive observer, but to be with them in their search for a dignified human life, worthy of children of God, as Christ wishes for the world today.

Such identification with the suffering of the poor in the person of the migrant and particularly the refugee means first and foremost respecting their human dignity and rights and welcoming them into their new homelands. It also, as Cardinal Theodore McCarrick argues, means advocacy, not just with governments and governmental agencies, but also with non-government organizations. Mark Raper SJ, former international director of the Jesuit Refugee Service, argues that this confronts us with two challenges; one of welcome and the other of learning the mechanisms of the refugee situation. Thus, he emphasizes that welcome involves analysis and understanding of the refugee phenomenon as well as action. Such a view is reinforced by *Cor Unum* and

---

526 *Message for the 85th World Migration Day, 1999*, and quoted in Murphy, “Are We Welcoming the Stranger?”.  
527 *The Fifth World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees* (Rome, 17-22 November, 2003), Introduction to Proceedings.  
529 Cited in Murphy, “Are We Welcoming the Stranger?”.  

the PCPCMIP which states that “[t]he problem of refugees must be confronted at its roots, that is, at the level of the very causes of exile”. 530

Issues of Spiritual and Pastoral Care Toward Migrants and Refugees

A common concern for the spiritual and pastoral welfare of ‘people on the move’

All the Church documents under discussion in this chapter share a strong common concern for the spiritual and pastoral care of ‘people on the move’, individually and collectively, irrespective of whether they be migrants, refugees or itinerants. However, there appears to be a conflation of spiritual and pastoral care and, in the early stages, spiritual, in the sense of sacramental, care seems to take priority. This is clearly exemplified in Exsul Familia 531, which, as “an ordinance of the Church deriving from the highest source [and] carrying juridical binding force”, 532, sets both the tone as well as important precedents for the spiritual and pastoral care of migrants and refugees within their countries of adoption. 533

Migration, as “a special pastoral problem for the Church”, 534, has presented a challenge which is continually changing

With the explosion of the migration phenomenon, both voluntary and forced, and the changes in the characteristics of human mobility at the beginning of the new millennium,

530 Refugees, 11.
531 The second section of Exsul Familia is headed “Norms for the Spiritual Care of Migrants”.
532 Ibid., pp. 15-16. Its editor, Tessarolo, quotes from Dr Theodor Grentrup, who introduced the German version of Exsul Familia, 56. Such a view is reinforced by Erga migrantes which argues that Exsul Familia “is the first official document of the Holy See to delineate the pastoral care of migrants globally and systematically, from both the historical and canonical points of view”, 7, #20.
533 Ibid., pp. 61-79
the Pontifical Council perceived the need for new pastoral strategies, programmes, and maybe even methods, to carry out its mission efficaciously in the world of migrants and refugees. 535

Even as early as 1969 Paul VI’s *Pastoralis migratorum* had covered in its contents a wide range of criteria for the spiritual and pastoral care of migrants. Nine years later the PCPCMIP aimed in *Church and People on the Move* “to produce a document which will be of especial use to Bishops concerned to find ways of increasing pastoral activity [to people on the move], or to lay the basis for it where the extent of the phenomenon is still being grappled with.” 536 While not being exclusive, it cited the encyclical *Christus dominus* with regard to the “special concern” which needs to be shown for “those members of the faithful who, on account of their way of life, are not adequately catered for by the ordinary pastoral ministry of the parochial clergy, or are entirely deprived of it.” 537

Given the Council’s concern by 1993 for the advocacy by the Church with regard to treatment of refugees by international agencies and national governments, *Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity* emphasizes the “love of the Church for refugees” and her “assistance to all [of them] without distinction as to religion or race” while calling on the local churches “to incarnate the demands of the Gospel” by offering refugees hospitality, solidarity and assistance. 538 Similarly, John Paul II and Benedict XVI’s World Migration

---

535 PCPCMIP, *The Fifth World Congress*, Introduction. This emphasis is followed up in Hamao’s “Presentation” at the commencement of the Congress, in which he urges that “the daily mission … of pastoral care … is something that needs continual development in its practice and theology as well as publicity”.
536 *Church and People on the Move*, 7 (Foreword).
537 *Christus Dominus*, #18, cited in *ibid.*, 8, #3.
538 *Refugees*, see especially Chapters 2-4.
Day messages provide a forceful example for the national and regional churches of advocacy for and hospitality toward migrants and refugees in the community.

In 2004 Erga migrantes devotes all of its Part II to the theme of “Migrants and the Pastoral Care of Welcome”. Given its wider view of migrants to include those of the Eastern Rite, those from other Christian faiths and those from other religions, particularly that of Islam, as well as Roman Catholic migrants/refugees, its Part II initially examines the issues of inculturation and cultural and religious pluralism. It argues that the “fluidity of cultures makes ‘inculturation’ even more indispensable” together with “serious dialogue with cultures” and stresses the importance of listening and discernment in the Church’s role of evangelization toward migrants and refugees.  

Subsequently, the Fifth World Congress very much saw the need for new pastoral strategies, programmes, even methods, and had as its overall theme “Starting Afresh from Christ: towards a renewed pastoral care of migrants and refugees”. Nevertheless, Hamao, in his “Presentation” to the Congress, reminded his audience that, as Pope John Paul II had emphasized in Novo Millennio Ineunte:

[i]t is not … a matter of inventing a ‘new programme’ [because] the programme already exists; it is the plan found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition [of the Church] … It has its centre in Christ himself.

---

539 Erga migrantes, #34-36, 10-11. A similar point was made in John Paul II’s “Address” to the Fifth World Congress …, the text of which can be found in People on the Move, 93, (2003), 9-10, #2.

540 The text of the “Presentation” is to be found in People on the Move, 93 (2003), 17-20.
Questions of how and where spiritual and pastoral care to migrants and refugees can be administered

Hamao also reminded his audience that what needs to change “are the pastoral initiatives which must be ‘adapted to the circumstances of each community.’”541 Thus Exsul Familia, produced in the period of global reconstruction after World War II, is concerned almost exclusively with the sacramental care of Catholic migrants and displaced persons. Consequently it stresses the need for “priests of their own nationality or at least who speak their language” to most effectively carry on “the sacred ministry … among strangers and pilgrims.” It also raises the issue of separate parishes which had been established for the various linguistic and national groups under the authority of the Special Office for the Spiritual Care of Migrants of the Consistorial Congregation, established by Pius X.542 Pastoralis Migratorum also stresses the importance of special chaplains or missionaries, of the same nationalities, to minister to Catholic immigrants in their own languages.543

By mid-1978 Church and People on the Move displays a transition in its recommendations for the spiritual care of migrants, one which is more dynamic and broadly focused, especially in its recognition of the potential role of migrants in local churches as a whole, not just in specific nationality-based parishes and groups. While still emphasizing the importance of special parishes and chaplains for immigrants, it

541 Idem. The italics are from the original.
542 Exsul Familia, 27-8 and 34-5.
543 Pastoralis migratorum, Chs 2 and 3 provide norms for the Sacred Congregation for Bishops and for the National Conferences of Bishops, while Ch. 6 treats the roles of men and women religious and Ch. 7 deals with lay participation. Ch. 5 specifically outlines norms for the chaplains or missionaries for immigrants and delegates for chaplains or missionaries.
underlines the integration of migrants and refugees into the regular parish, arguing that “dioceses and parishes are not just defined in geographical terms; they are called upon to stretch as far as their members go or live.”

It also calls for “special pastoral initiatives” which are appropriate to the mentality, languages, ethnicity and particular situation of immigrants so that the local parishes can provide appropriate welcome, hospitality, understanding and esteem of the newcomers.

This same document later calls for the appointment of a National Director who would carry out the directives issued by the Episcopal Commission and coordinate diocesan efforts, promote consciousness in the local churches of the spiritual care of migrants and oversee what pastoral care is being provided for the immigrants. It argues for collaboration and solidarity between “the departure Church and the arrival Church” and places special emphasis on the particular needs of exiles and refugees.

With the Council’s publication of its second major document comes a broadening of the definition of spiritual care to migrants and refugees. Hence *Refugees* recognizes the need for the Church to offer spiritual care to those refugees who, because of the nature of their arrival in the country of hoped-for refuge, have been placed in camps and detention centres. It particularly emphasizes women and children as groups most at risk and in need of special spiritual as well as moral support. It cites *Lumen Gentium* which speaks

---

544 *Church and People on the Move*, see especially Part II, 33-4, #6, in which it is argued that the special chaplains should be viewed “as a human bridge between two cultures and two mentalities” whose “activity allows there to be an interlocking of pastoral links, the aim of which is to let the immigrant understand the circumstances of his new church, adapt himself to them and feel himself part of it along with others.”

545 *Ibid.* , for example, 16-17, #22-#25.


of the universal Church as “a sign and instrument of communion with God and of unity among all men”\textsuperscript{548}:

[The Church should offer] a disinterested love to all refugees, [call] public attention to their situation, and [contribute] with its ethical and religious vision to restore and uphold the dignity of every human person [using] its experience of humanity acquired in the course of history.\textsuperscript{549}

Towards its conclusion \textit{Refugees} underlines the importance of ecumenical and interreligious cooperation, so that “the experience of exile can become a particular time of grace, just as it was for the people who, when exiled in the desert, came to know the name of God and experience God’s liberating power.”\textsuperscript{550}

However, despite its broadening of the recipients of and the nature of pastoral and spiritual care to be provided by the Church, \textit{Refugees}, still stresses the responsibilities of the local parish, pointing out that:

the first place for the Church’s attention to refugees remains the parish community, which has the task of sensitising its members to the plight of refugees, exhorting them to welcome as Jesus taught: ‘I was a stranger and you welcomed me’. … The Christian community must overcome fear and suspicion toward refugees, and be able to see in them the Saviour’s face.\textsuperscript{551}

Later material emanating from the Vatican also stresses the role of the parishes in “welcoming the stranger, in integrating baptised persons from different cultures and in dialoguing with believers of other religions.”

The parish is a place where all the members of the community come together and interact. It makes visible and sociologically identifiable God’s plan to call all people to the covenant established in Christ, without any exception or exclusion.

The parish, which etymologically means a house where the guest feels at ease, welcomes all and discriminates against none, for no one there is an outsider. It combines the stability and security people feel in their own home with the movement or transience of those who are passing through. Wherever there is a living sense of parish, differences

\textsuperscript{548} \textit{Lumen Gentium}, #1, cited in \textit{Refugees}, 25, #36.
\textsuperscript{549} \textit{Refugees}, 25, #36.
\textsuperscript{550} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{551} Ibid., #27, 21.
between locals and strangers fade or disappear in the overriding awareness that all belong to God, the one Father.\textsuperscript{552}

Such a parochial role, John Paul II contends, should be seen as a mission and “a duty inherent in [the parish’s] task as an institution.”\textsuperscript{553}

The subsequent document, \textit{Erga migrantes} combines spiritual and pastoral care. It lays strong emphasis on ecumenical cooperation as well as serious dialogue with the cultures represented by the contemporary flow of migrants and refugees. It also reflects upon the Church’s role in welcoming migrants and refugees of different nationalities and religious persuasions. Thus, in Part II it distinguishes between what pastoral and spiritual care is essential for Catholic migrants as distinct from Eastern Rite Catholic migrants, migrants of other Christian Churches and ecclesial communities and migrants of other religions. This section concludes with an emphasis on what it describes as a “true interreligious dialogue” of reciprocity in which those Catholics and pastoral workers in contact with today’s diversity of migrants and refugees are sufficiently prepared so that anything which might hamper dialogue and erect barriers, provoke violence or misunderstanding may be prevented and the dialogue may be “above all … an occasion to rediscover convictions shared in each community” as well as building peace and harmony.\textsuperscript{554}

At the same time the document stresses that the whole work of the Church with migrants and refugees must be carried on “in such a way that neither fraternal dialogue nor the exchange and sharing of ‘human’ values can diminish the Church’s commitment to

\textsuperscript{552} World Migration Day message, 1999, #6, quoted in Cornish, \textit{The Call to Hospitality}, 22-23.
\textsuperscript{553} \textit{Idem.}
\textsuperscript{554} \textit{Erga migrantes}, 17, #69.
Similarly, McCarrick, in his paper to the Fifth World Congress, stresses the spiritual task of either catechetical instruction if the migrants/refugees are Catholic or reminding especially all refugees of their individual human dignity and their place in the plan of God to help them to overcome the despair to which they have been subject during their refugee experiences.556

It is evident from a careful study of the magisterial and conciliar documents that a clearer distinction comes to be made between pastoral and spiritual. Thus Hally argues *Pastoralis Migrantium* displays a better understanding even by 1969 of pastoral characteristics and challenges associated with migration. Care is extended beyond the spiritual dimension to include issues of justice, equity and charity in the recognition of human and Christian dignity and the rights of migrant peoples.557 *Refugees* takes this definition of pastoral care further when it speaks about the various forms such loving assistance might take.558 The tasks enumerated include advocacy as well as pastoral care, “personal contact; defence of the rights of individual and groups; the denunciation of the injustices that are at the root of this evil; action for the adoption of laws that will guarantee their effective protection; education against xenophobia; the creation of groups of volunteers and of emergency funds.”559

555 *Ibid.*, 18, #70.
556 McCarrick, “Pastoral Challenges in the World of Migrants and Refugees”, *People on the Move*, 93 (2003), 39-46
559 *Idem.*
In its final document the Fifth World Congress places much emphasis on pastoral care and in its recommendations argues that the various pastoral structures of the Church “must be updated and mobilized” and that

[p]astoral care should be guided by a spirituality of communion and service, which promotes a presence of compassion, patient acceptance and listening also to those who have sometimes been severely hurt.

Spiritual care is linked with pastoral and also includes psychological support, especially for family groups who should be encouraged to “make full use of offices for counselling [sic.]”. Particular mention is made of the children of migrants, unaccompanied children, migrant women, irregular migrants and asylum seekers in detention” which, the “Final Document” argues, need special concern from the Church. In particular it singles out migrant youth, especially in the second and third generation, who “strive with issues of identity and belonging, and require specific attention to be helped to participate in the local Christian community”. Finally, it recommends the celebration in all dioceses of the Day of the Migrant and Refugee and the availability in the local Church of the Pope’s message.

Advice regarding those who minister to migrants and refugees

Attention in the documentation of the universal Church is also paid to those who carry out pastoral and spiritual care to migrants and refugees. As early as 1969 Pastoralis Migratorum had recognized the role of the laity as well as the priests and religious.

---

560 In his paper, McCarrick, had singled out the children and the handicapped as two migrant/refugee groups deserving of special support. See “Pastoral Challenges in the World of Migrants and Refugees”, People on the Move, 93 (2003), 39-46.

561 “Final Document”, points 8, 12, 19, 20 and 21 under the heading “Pastoral Care”.
The PCPCMIP has acknowledged the need for lay volunteers as well as full-time lay people to work among refugees for specific pastoral care.

Above all, it has laid much emphasis on the quality and preparation of anyone who works with migrants and refugees, or, indeed, anyone on the move. Thus, in his address at the inauguration of the Catholic National Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migration and Tourism in Sri Lanka in March, 2003, the then Archbishop Hamao places considerable stress on the formation of those who extend pastoral care to migrants and refugees and other people on the move, whether they be “seminarians, priests, religious [or] lay faithful” -“[a]ttitudes, responses and initiatives need to be based on well-informed reflections and plans of the local Churches”. 562

Such a recommendation is reinforced in section “Study, education and formation” of the “Final Document” of the Fifth World Congress. This statement argues that “[t]he Church must find ways to give wide circulation to her Social Teaching, and specifically the teaching about migrants and refugees” while providing “persons involved in the assistance and care of migrants and refugees … with adequate formation”, especially in the context “of the growing complexity of population movements”. Specifically, it points to the need for encouragement and support for such academic institutions as the Scalabrini International Migration Institute in Rome and the various programmes and courses at different universities all over the world while encouraging Catholic

---

universities “to create study centres on issues of human mobility” and Catholic schools to offer special programmes.  

**“Subjects” not “objects”**

One emergent feature which stands out in the Church’s view of spiritual and pastoral care to migrants and refugees in more recent times is its recognition that such care is not a one-way street. As Jean Vanier emphasizes, hospitality is far from one-sided. Even though they have very particular needs, are wounded and lack self-confidence, there is a prophetic element in marginalized people. Therefore the process of welcoming migrants and refugees brings with it a specific grace. As *Erga migrantes caritas Christi* states:

> [t]he ‘foreigner’ is God’s messenger who surprises us and interrupts the regularity and logic of daily life, bringing near those who are far away. In ‘foreigners’ the Church sees Christ who ‘pitches His tent among us’ and who ‘knocks at our door’. … Migrants, too, can be the hidden providential buildings of [a] universal fraternity together with many other brothers and sisters. They offer the Church the opportunity to realize more concretely its identity as communion and its missionary vocation.

Hamao makes the insightful observation in his “Presentation to the Fifth World Congress” that

> migrants, foreign students, refugees and displaced people who share the full communion of faith with us or are Christians or believers of other religions … are not simply “objects” of pastoral care but, in the wide sense of this term, “subjects”

In the “Final Document” of that Congress special stress is laid on migrants and refugees as active participants in their own integration. So, for example, the he recommends that “[t]he local Church should ensure that [Catholic] migrants and refugees are constitutive

---

563 “Final Document”, points 2, 3, 4 and 5 of section “Study, education and formation”.
565 *Erga migrantes*, 25, #101.
566 “Presentation”, *People on the Move*, 93 (2003), 5-7.
and active participants in the life of the local Christian community, and be allowed representation in the parish and diocesan councils”. 567 This view of people on the move as “subjects” not objects is given concrete expression in Erga migrantes when that document states that pastoral structures (and pastoral care-givers) must “always bear in mind that migrants [and refugees] themselves must be the first protagonists of pastoral care” and calls for the flexibility of pastoral care.568

**Conclusion**

Overall, the documents of the universal Church provide a rich source of insight into the rights of migrants and refugees and the obligations of the Church community and the wider society toward them. With regard to their discourses on the nature of spiritual and pastoral care that should be provided to migrants and refugees and how and where this should be administered the documents are somewhat equivocal but, nevertheless, provide vigorous challenges for national and local churches. As far as research into the question of the universal Church’s teachings with regard to migrants and refugees, they provide an essential foundation for any investigation of the approach to the migration and refugee issues at the national and local levels and the empirical practice carried out in archdioceses and dioceses such as that of the Archdiocese of Perth. Above all, they manifest the attempts of the universal Church to interpret the Good News of the Scriptures for migrants, refugees and other people on the move.

567 “Final Document”, point 15 under “Pastoral Care”.
568 Erga migrantes, #91–#94.
CHAPTER FIVE

MIGRANTS, REFUGEES AND THE AUSTRALIAN CHURCH

Introduction

Complementary to the views and policies of the universal Church with regard to migrant and refugees are those of the national Church. Therefore it is appropriate in this chapter to examine the contemporary responses of the Church in Australia, predominantly at the episcopal level, to issues raised by the increasing number and changing composition of migrants and refugees entering Australia. Initially this task involves exploring the changing ethnic and cultural composition of the Catholic Church in Australia since World
War II. Such an exploration provides a necessary context for the subsequent critical examination of more recent documentation proceeding from the ACBC and its secretariats, namely the ACSJC, ACMRO and the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Commission for Pastoral Life. Such an examination is set in a comparative framework, contrasting present national ecclesial attitudes and policies with those of the past. Reference is also made to national conferences, facilitated by ACMRO so far this century, which have influenced episcopal documents. Thus, Papers from the One in Christ Jesus Conference, held in Sydney in November, 2005, and the National Conference for Migrant Chaplains also held in Sydney in October, 2007, have been utilized because they demonstrate outcomes of episcopal initiatives through the ACMRO. Although it is not an episcopal body, use has also been made of a report compiled by the Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education which, in its investigation of Australia’s treatment of forty rejected asylum seekers, reinforces the position of the bishops on this issue. Such an examination, in turn, will set the scene for an investigation in the following two chapters of empirical praxis in the Archdiocese of Perth via the agencies which provide pastoral care to migrants and refugees.

The Changing Ethnic and Cultural Composition of the Catholic Church in Australia

---

569 For this exploration extensive use was made of the ABS 2006 Census data. This data was also considered in relation to that from 2001.
570 Thereafter referred to as the ACBCPL.
571 Thereafter referred to as the ERCJCE.
572 The ERCJCE in cooperation with the School of Education of the Australian Catholic University, Deported to Danger – a Study of Australia’s Treatment of 40 Rejected Asylum Seekers, (Sydney: Edmund Rice Centre, September, 2004).
From its origins the Catholic Church in Australia was a migrant church. Up to the middle of the 20th century it was heavily influenced by a high proportion of Irish and Irish-born and descended clergy and laity. It also extended its evangelization to the indigenous peoples of the country to the extent that today the Broome diocese of Western Australia is almost predominantly Aboriginal.

Of the older Christian churches in Australia the Catholic Church was the most affected in its sociological and cultural profile by post-World War II migration. So, after 1946 the number of Catholics in the Australian population increased by 119% whereas the overall population only rose by 68%. More significantly, post-war Catholic migrants represented different Catholic cultures which began to challenge but never overcame the “Irish ascendancy” over the 20th century Church. Initially they were made up of mainly Italian and Polish migrants who possessed a strong and coherent sense of cultural and religious identity, together with a smaller number of Lebanese and Maltese. While most post-war immigrants have belonged to the Latin Rite or Western Catholic Church, a related development has been the smaller growth of Eastern Rite Catholic churches.

---


574 Overall, 17,305 Aboriginal Catholics were counted for Western Australia in the 2001 Census, see table 5 in Dixon, The Catholic Community in Australia, 65. This was the third highest figure among the eight Australian states and territories.


576 Idem.

577 Ibid., 166.

578 Dixon, The Catholic Community in Australia, 49, notes that at the time of writing his book there were nine Eastern Catholic churches which had clergy resident in Australia; the three largest being the Maronite, Melkite and Ukrainian. More numerous than the Eastern rite Catholics have been the adherents of the Orthodox Churches which also emerged as a result of post-war migration. See Gary D. Bouma, “The Emergence of Religious Plurality in Australia: A Multicultural Society”, Sociology of Religion, 56, 3, (1995), 285-300.
Since that time European Catholic immigrants have been supplemented by many Catholic migrants from diverse parts of the world including the countries of East Asia and South-East Asia together with Latin-American, Middle Eastern and African nations. In each wave of immigration to Australia up to the present Catholics have been significantly represented. Philip Hughes notes that from c. 1947 up to 1991 the proportion of Catholics born in Australia decreased from 82% to 75% whereas the proportion born in Asia and other places outside of Europe rose from 1.4% to 9.3%. It is significant that overseas-born Australians represent almost a quarter of the total population and that Australia’s ‘country of birth’ profile has changed; a change reinforced by data from the 2001 Census regarding ancestry and language spoken. Consequently, Halley’s phrase, “poly-ethnic diversity” to describe the mid-1980s Catholic Church in Australia is very applicable to the contemporary Church as well as the wider society.

Recent figures from the 2006 Census show that Australia’s religious profile is not only predominantly Christian but that Catholicism is still one of the two most common of

---

580 ABS 1301.0 – Year Book Australia, 2008, “Country of Birth”. 25.8% of the total Australian population of 19,855,288.
581 Dixon, The Catholic Community in Australia, 70-72 and Table 7.
582 Ibid., 72-74 and Table 8.
584 12.7 million people recorded ‘Christian’ or provided a Christian denomination when asked ‘What is your religion?’ in the 2006 Census. However, it should be noted that the Census question was optional and 2.4 million did not state their religion or inadequately described it, while 3.7 million reported ‘No religion’. ABS, 3416.0 – Perspectives on Migrants, 2007, “Birthplace and Religion”, www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/3416.0Main%20Features22007?ope. With regard to the 3.7 million who recorded ‘No religion’ account should be taken of Bouma’s point in “The Emergence of Religious Plurality in Australia”, 287, that this does not necessarily indicate a lack of religious affiliation.
the Christian denominations in Australia with the Catholic Church growing by 6.8% to 5.126,884. Worth noting is the fact cited by Dixon that around Australia Mass is celebrated in over thirty-five languages every Sunday and around one in fifteen attenders celebrates Mass in a language other than English. During May 2001 Mass was celebrated in Arabic, Burmese, Cambodian, Cantonese, Chaldean, Croatian, Dutch, French, German, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Khmer, Korean, Lithuanian, Maltese, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Samoan, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Tongan, Ukrainian and Vietnamese as well as several Australian Aboriginal languages.

Dixon also points out that “[t]he ethnic diversity of Mass attenders was reflected in the fact that 335 of respondents were born overseas, including 26% who were born in non-English speaking countries.” Thus, Hally’s phrase, “poly-ethnic diversity” could be extended to include “poly-linguistic diversity” within the Australian Catholic Church.

In addition the birthplaces of Australia’s priests reflect, to some extent, the poly-ethnic and linguistic diversity of Australia’s Catholics in general. Such poly-ethnic/linguistic diversity of the priesthood can only increase with the endeavours of a number of Australian dioceses to compensate for the shortage of Australian-born priests by attracting priests from other countries to work in Australia, either permanently or temporarily, or else to train overseas seminarians who will then be expected to carry out priestly functions in the dioceses for a time before they return to their own country.

---


586 This information is confirmed by the ACBC Pastoral Projects Office in its “Profile of Catholics in Australia”, Media Release, 5 June, 2008. Dixon, *The Australian Catholic Community*, 93, points out, however, that census data does not indicate that those identifying themselves as Catholic are actively practising their religion, whether that means attending Mass or being involved in Catholic institutions in some way.


588 *Idem.*

Overall, in relation to its statistical profile, “the Catholic Church in Australia … is Pentecostal in the true meaning of the event.”

**The Western Australian Scene**

Given the concentration in this thesis on migrant/refugee pastoral care within the Archdiocese of Perth, it is pertinent to consider the religious profile of Western Australia and Perth in particular. In the 2006 Census Catholicism was found to be the most common Christian affiliation in Western Australia, at 24%, in common with other Australian states and territories. In addition, between 1996 to 2006 Catholicism had experienced the largest increase in numbers in the state. In Perth alone the Catholic population in 2006 represented 24.6% of Perth’s overall population.

Such statistics need to be considered alongside statistics for immigration to Western Australia as it is not unrealistic to assume that the Catholic Church, as elsewhere in Australia, has been significantly affected in its composition and outreach by immigration. Indeed, the 2001 Census showed that Western Australian Catholic immigrants from non-English speaking countries in the decade 1991 to 2001 numbered 14,338 while Catholics born overseas, in English-speaking as well as non-English speaking countries, represented a growth rate of 9.7% and 19.1% respectively. The 2006 Census

---

589 Idem.
590 ABS, 2914.0.55.002 – “Census shows non-Christian religions continue to grow at a faster rate”.
591 Ibid.
593 ACBC Pastoral Projects Office, “National Catholic Census Project – Census characteristics of Catholics by State and Territory, 2001”,
revealed that more than half a million of the State’s population were born overseas\(^{595}\) and almost half had one or both parents born overseas.\(^{596}\) Significantly, Perth appears to be the principal settlement destination in Australia for overseas-born migrants and refugees – in 2006 31\% of Perth’s resident population were born overseas, the highest proportion in Western Australia and second only to Sydney.\(^{597}\) Among these are included high levels of skilled migrants\(^{598}\) and significant levels of humanitarian entrants. Moreover, in the Census 120,939 identified themselves as Catholic with 21.1\% being born in non-English speaking countries.\(^{599}\) In the light of these facts it is worthy of note that a recent newspaper report cited information from the Immigration Department to the effect that

\[
\text{[n]early all the 14,000 refugees Australian will accept in 2008-09 will come from Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Among the intake will be 500 places specifically set aside for refugees from Iraq, with 600 places already earmarked this year specifically for Iraqis who worked with Australian forces.}^{600}
\]

Like the rest of Australia, immigrants to Western Australia represent all the countries and continents of the world, except Antarctica. The 2006 Census recorded approximately 200 birthplaces for Western Australian residents.\(^{601}\) In recent years, 2001-2006, arrivals to Western Australia have included people with birthplaces not only in North-West Europe (32\%) and South-East Asia (17\%) but also Sub-Saharan Africa (17\%).\(^{602}\) Many of the

\[^{594}\text{http://www.ppo.catholic.ort.au/researchcharts/catholicsincensus.shtml.}\]
\[^{595}\text{ABS, 1367.5, “Cultural Diversity in Western Australia”.}\]
\[^{596}\text{531,747 or 27.1\% of the population.}\]
\[^{597}\text{962,892 or 49.2\%.}\]
\[^{598}\text{Ibid. Overall, Western Australia had the highest proportion of overseas-born residents of all states and territories.}\]
\[^{599}\text{Ibid. In the 2006-7 financial year WA ranked third behind NSW and Victoria, receiving 8.351 or 14\% of Australia’s skilled migrants}\]
\[^{600}\text{ACBC Pastoral Projects Office, “Diocesan Social Profile”, 2-3 and 5. 6,998 non-English speaking immigrants arrived in the perth Archdiocese in the 2006 Census year or in the previous three years.}\]
\[^{601}\text{The West Australian, 21st June, 2008.}\]
\[^{602}\text{ABS, 1367.5 – “Cultural Diversity in Western Australia”.}\]
\[^{603}\text{Ibid. Another interesting finding is that the number of Arabic speakers from Middle Eastern nations and sub-Saharan Africa more than doubled between 1996 and 2006. The ACBC Pastoral Projects Office has}\]

latest Burmese and Sudanese refugees are Catholic and young while Catholic populations who migrated in the immediate post-World War II years are beginning to age and decline.  

All this statistical information has significant implications for the poly-ethnicity and future of the Catholic Church in Western Australia. When one includes Aboriginal Catholics, Church membership, in Western Australia as elsewhere in Australia, has become truly multicultural and multilingual; a fact which has important consequences for the inculturation of the Gospel and for the Church’s mission. No longer is the “Irish ascendancy” over the life and work of the Church adequate to cater for its spiritual and pastoral needs.. As the Australian episcopacy realizes, deep discernment needs to be carried out in relation to the impact of immigration on Catholicism in Australia, and Western Australia in particular. Such discernment needs to consider the impact of Catholicism on the settlement and integration of migrants and refugees into both religious and the secular communities in their new country and the relationship between their ethnicity and their spiritual identity formation in a multicultural church and society. Thus the Australian bishops write

[1]ike Australia, the Australian Catholic Church has been graced by migration and diversity. … Immigrants and refugees can … no longer be considered as additions or appendages … . Rather they are an integral part of the Church; they are an integral part of its Australian history. They are part of the Church as God’s mystery of communion and community. They are part of the history of God’s salvific and liberating action.

calculated that among the Catholic population of the Archdiocese of Perth the five birthplaces with the highest proportions of recent arrivals are South Korea, other Middle Eastern and North African countries, North America, Indonesia and the Philippines, “Diocesan Social Profile – Archdiocese of Perth”, 17.

ABS, 1367.5 – “Cultural Diversity in Western Australia”. This fact is reflected in calculations of the age profile of the Catholic population of the Archdiocese of Perth which indicates that of a total 379,292, 113,628 are over the age of 50, ACBC Pastoral Projects Office, “Diocesan Social Profile – Archdiocese of Perth”, 9.

Graced by Migration, 12.
The growth of non-Christian religions

Alongside the multicultural and multi-linguistic plurality of the Catholic Church in Australia is the growth of non-Christian religions in Australia, including Western Australia. So for example, in the 2006 Census Buddhism shared the largest increase in numbers with Catholicism in Western Australia and Hinduism had the fastest growth rate of all religions. Overall, the growth rates for non-Christian religions, including that of Islam, were faster than for Christian religions with most people reporting non-Christian religions living in Perth.\(^{605}\) Thus the Census recorded that 32,138 Buddhists were resident in Perth, 7,795 Hindus and 23,004 Muslims.\(^{606}\) Such statistics relate to the wider Australian religious profile with the followers of religions other than Christianity showing the largest proportional increases since the 2001 Census, largely as a result of immigration.\(^{607}\) Since 1947 the percentages of other religions have increased from 0.5% to 5.6% of the Australian population.\(^{608}\)

This growth of non-Christian religions and related cultural diversity has very important implications for Catholic Church migrant and refugee pastoral outreach, as a sizeable number of the migrant/refugee clients of diocesan pastoral care agencies represent non-Christian religions. As the ACBCPL states, “religious pluralism cannot be wished away, nor will the intermingling of cultures and religions result in some form of global culture

\(^{605}\) ABS, 1367.5, “Cultural Diversity in Western Australia”.

\(^{606}\) Cunningham, “WA Dioceses: Census 2006”.

\(^{607}\) ABS, 1301.0 – Year Book Australia, 2008 – “Cultural Diversity”.

\(^{608}\) Ibid.
and global religion.” How to “be Christ” to these non-Catholic clients without proselytizing is a very real issue. This is the case in spite of Bouma’s observation that, because the Catholic (together with the Anglican) Church is in a dominant position as a religious group within Australia,

it is safe … to be generous, welcoming new bit players on the religious stage they dominate. Multicultural policies are no significant threat to their positions of influence, or their control of their sector of the religious market. The addition of other small groups only increases the rich diversity of Australia’s religious mosaic without posing in itself any negative political or economic issues. Moreover, there is very little banding together of minority religious groups to influence public policy or seek favourable [sic.] legislation. Each is insular to itself, reducing even further any possible threat to entrenched interests.

It involves taking a prophetic stance which brings to fruition the words of Isaiah:

I am coming to gather nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory, and I will set a sign among them.

It also depends on the realization that “no diversity is so broad that it cannot be accommodated once there is good will and openness to the Spirit who unites all.”

Contemporary National Ecclesial Policies and Attitudes Toward Migrants and Refugees

This examination involves critical exploration of two broad areas. The first concerns contemporary Australian episcopal advocacy on behalf of migrants and refugees. In this

---

609 Graced by Migration, 7.
610 Bouma, “The Emergence of Religious Plurality in Australia”, 289. The report compiled by D. Cahill, G. Bouma, H. Dello and M. Leahy for the Federal Government, Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia (Canberra: Department of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Indigenous Affairs and the Australian Multicultural Foundation in association with the World Conference of Religions for Peace, the RMIT and Monash Universities, 2004), agrees with much of what Bouma has to say. However, it is not as sanguine as Bouma’s article about the lack of potential for religious, as well as racial, conflict in Australia, especially in relation to such global events as the September 11th terrorist attacks, see 8 and all of Ch. 5 in this report.
611 Is 66:18.
612 Graced by Migration, 19.
regard I am defining advocacy in its political/legal sense of “pleading the cause of another” or “pleading in support of” another. The second involves a critical survey of Australian episcopal initiatives regarding pastoral care to migrants and refugees. However, before I engage in an examination of either of these areas, I need to indicate changes in attitudes to migrants and refugees and their relationship to the Australian Church.

**Changing attitudes**

By the 1980s changes were occurring in Church attitudes towards migrants and refugees. Hally puts forward four broad reasons for these changes. The first relates to changes in the wider Australian society and government; for example, in 1973 the Australian federal government dropped its previous “White Australia” immigration policy. The second reflects the impact on national churches of the Second Vatican Council “which symbolised the reality of a world church no longer demographically European [and which] was primarily pastoral rather than doctrinal.” A third factor was the increasing importance of the “grass-roots” influences of ‘local’ churches vis a vis official hierarchical influence. A related development was the significant growth of the Orthodox Churches as a result of post-war migration. Finally, Hally notes the influence of the revival of ethnic cultures in reaction to five centuries of European economic and cultural neo-colonialism endured by Third World peoples. Such a revival was manifested in the heightened sense of ethnic identity of migrants and refugees entering Australia

---

613 Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus, 3.
615 Ibid., 29.
616 Idem.
especially from the mid-1970s onwards; immigrants who were increasingly representative of non-European ethnicities and cultures.

Studies like those of Hally, Lewins, Frank Mecham, O’Leary, and J.J. Smolicz provide excellent critical descriptions of national episcopal attitudes and policies toward migrants and refugees from the early post-war years up to the c.1980s. What they demonstrate is that in the pre-1980s period the emphasis was on migrant assimilation into both Australian society and church. Thus, instead of the development of special national parishes or “missions with the care of souls”, as was recommended by *Exsul Familia*, migrants were expected to integrate into the existing territorial parishes. The only exceptions to this were some *de facto* national parishes serviced by priests of particular religious congregations like the Scalabrinians or else the Eastern-rite and Orthodox parishes. Similarly migrant chaplains were not given the same canonical status as parish priests but were expected to cooperate with the parish priest to whom ultimately the care of all souls in a particular territorial area was entrusted. This was to lead to conflict which is still having its ramifications in the Australian Church today.

Like its priests and bishops, the Catholic laity also expected cultural homogeneity and expressed antagonism towards the provision of special foreign language masses for migrants as well as to migrants seen to neglect their perceived financial responsibilities.

---

617 *Idem*. Such a development also related to the cessation of the White Australia Policy.
619 Mecham, *The Church and Migrants*, 87.
towards the territorial parish. In areas where there was a large migrant population such was the limited interaction between Australian and immigrant parishioners that Lewins refers to the existence of “two parishes” within one parish. Migrants themselves, particularly migrant women, experienced feelings of antagonism and isolation and memoirs of individual migrants pertaining to this early period speak of the Church in Australia as “not having come across as a caring and understanding body”. Scalabrinian priest, Fr Adrian Pittarello, describes as situation in which Italian migrants saw themselves as being additions to the Church, rather than being part of it; a Church which was still largely shaped by an Irish mould. In this they were typical of other non-English speaking migrants.

Moreover, bodies and offices established from the late 1940s by the ACBC, like the Federal Catholic Immigration Commission, the Diocesan Migration Commission, the National Director and the diocesan immigration offices established in four Australian capitals – Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth, were concerned more with the technical aspects of migrant integration into Australian society rather than migrant needs and concerns. Similarly, documents such as the three Social Justice statements produced in the 1950s on the theme of migration and the Immigration Sunday statements disseminated from the same period onwards “quite openly gave their assent to the wider

---

620 Lewins, The Myth of the Universal Church, 92.
621 Ibid., 94.
624 Halley, Migrants and the Australian Church, 23, does note, however, that each of the diocesan offices did have different emphases and were responsible to their local bishop.
societal vision of Australia as a monocultural society.”

Overall, Hally would seem to be correct when he speaks of two factors motivating Church migrant policies in the years up to the late 1970s; one being that of Christian charity and the other that of looking after Australia’s national interests.

Related to the broad reasons behind changing attitudes which Hally enumerates, there was a noticeable policy shift by the 1980s and 1990s which reflected the Church’s changed awareness of the growing cultural and religious pluralism in Australia. Such a policy shift was exemplified by the ACBC’s consolidation of the previous Immigration offices into the ACMRO (1995) which was given prime responsibility for forming Catholic Church policy in Australia for the pastoral care of migrants and refugees and for overseeing the work of especially migrant chaplains and, to a lesser extent, that of diocesan migrant centres. Clearly by 1989 there was a realization that “pressure-cooker” assimilation techniques [had] failed to obliterate the desire of [immigrants] to live according to their cultural traditions”; instead, increasingly, there was an awareness

---

626 Hally, *Migrants and the Australian Church*, 29. In this context it is interesting that both Tomasi, “Migration and Catholicism in a Global Context”, 2, and Carmen Lussi, “Human Mobility as a Theological Consideration”, 49, *Migration in a Global World*, speak of charity in relation to the Church’s activities on behalf of migrants and refugees. Lussi refers to it as an “assistential practice and outlook” which she argues, together with a “pauperistic concept of the migrant”, characterized almost two centuries of Church outlook and “left little room for enrichment of or effective integration of the church community as a whole.”
627 See earlier, 157.
628 [www.acmro.catholic.org.au/role.htm](http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au/role.htm). The five-pronged mandate of the Office involves advising and serving the ACBC, acting as an official Church voice on issues relating to migrants and refugees, acting as a channel of communication between diocesan offices and the Conference, providing a mechanism for effective consultation and coordination between Catholic bodies and other groups involved in migrant and refugee action, and making appropriate representation to Government and other bodies on matters relating to migrants and refugees.
that “a culturally plural heritage [was] a positive feature of the Catholic Church” in Australia.  

Contemporary Australian Episcopal Advocacy on Behalf of Migrants and Refugees  

Since the late 1990s one of the crucial tasks for the ACBC and its secretariats – the ACMRO and the ACSJC - has been political and social justice advocacy on behalf of migrants and refugees. The ACBCPL also has, as two of its responsibilities, the roles of fostering “appropriate recognition of, and response to the multicultural nature of the Australian people” and offering “comment on Government policy relating to migrants and refugees.” This section proceeds to critically examine such advocacy and to endeavour to separate it from initiatives for pastoral care toward migrants and refugees even though there is an obvious overlap.

Unlike earlier post-war statements, this episcopal advocacy has as its central focus the material and spiritual well-being of migrants and refugees and is directed not just to the dioceses and parishes but also to the Australian government and wider society. It endeavours to interpret the content of documents emanating from Rome, particularly from the PCPCMIP, in the context of the national Australian situation and, above all, to

---

629 Dino Torresan CS, A Dream, A Journey and Some Shoes: a survey study about migrants and the challenges their presence bring to the local Catholic Church which is in Perth (Perth: Office of Multicultural Pastoral Care and the Catholic Migrant Centre, January, 1989), 4.

630 Abundant evidence of this advocacy is given by the web site of ACMRO. www.acmro.catholic.org.au/policies/Archive.htm. In addition, Journeys’ End, the online journal of the ACMRO which ran from c. 1998 to 2004 with a follow-up newsletter in 2007, contains considerable evidence of the Office’s advocacy work. See www.acmro.catholic.org.au/newsletter.

631 Graced by Migration, 3.
give life to the words of John Paul II in his last message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees:

Christians must above all listen to the cry for help that comes from a multitude of migrants and refugees, but they must then foster, with active commitment, prospects of hope that will herald the dawn of a more open and supportive society. It is up to them in the first place to make out God’s presence in history, even when everything still seems to be enveloped in darkness.

It also serves a vital educational function, both for Australian Catholics and the broader community, making them more aware of the needs and concerns of migrants and refugees in Australian society. Overall, it reminds its readers of the crucial need to restore and preserve the human dignity of migrants and refugees by showing them true Christian hospitality and eradicating injustices against them. Advocacy statements on behalf of migrants and refugees generally place their needs and problems in a Scriptural and universal Church context, making frequent reference to and quoting from both Scripture and Church documents.

Above all, this advocacy at the national episcopal level is a vital counterpart to the specific pastoral care extended to migrants and refugees at individual and family levels by diocesan agencies. Advocacy is something which has become increasingly difficult for these smaller and localized bodies to pursue given the growing extent and complexity of their task of pastoral care and their increasing reliance on Federal and State government tenders and contracts. Such advocacy also supplements the work of the diocesan bodies by providing through ACMRO important information about such matters as government policy with regard to citizenship and labour agreements and, in particular, refugee advice.

---

Consequently, this advocacy is extremely important. Grant rhetorically asks: “[h]ave the Churches and their agencies a place in the ‘real’ world where decisions, often tough, need to be taken?” He then answers: “[v]oluntary organisations, whether church, ethnic or community based, have not only an entitlement but also an obligation to provide input to Governments on aspects of legislation, policies and programs effecting [sic.] refugees.”

In the following examination I raise significant advocacy themes espoused by the Australian Catholic episcopacy and make direct reference to a selection of documents which appear to me to demonstrate the dimensions of episcopal advocacy in relation to these themes. They cover issues relating to the immigration debate, Australia’s role as a global citizen, and episcopal advocacy on behalf of asylum seekers.

“I am a stranger: Will you welcome me?”

One of the advocacy issues which harks back to the late 1980s and early 1990s has been the condemnation of racism and xenophobia in the Australian community. In 1991 the ACSJC’s Issue Paper - *I Am a Stranger: Will You Welcome Me?* responded to the public debate over immigration and multiculturalism which had continued to rage in Australian society from the mid-1980s. In it the bishops demonstrated their alarm at the virulent anti-Asian racism among Australians. Such racism was manifested, they pointed out, in the fact that “[t]raditional sources of immigrants remain dominant in admissions, despite a considerable decline in the number of applicants from those parts.”

They argue against a reduction in Asian immigration by countering populist rationalizations about the

---

633 Grant, “The Church’s Response to the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees”, 5.
634 *I Am a Stranger*, 8-9. They state that “[w]hile over 90 per cent of UK and Irish applications are approved, only half the ‘Asian’ ones are.”
dangers to Australian society of the entry of more migrants and refugees from different cultural and religious backgrounds and ask the relevant question – “Were Jesus of Nazareth to seek hospitality from our country today, would he be welcomed?” In particular this paper stresses that Christian social justice must enlighten the debate, especially in relation to the intake and treatment of refugees. Above all the bishops call for “a conversion of the human heart”; a phrase which recalls their statement of 1989, “Racism and Conversion of the Human Heart”.

“Welcome” is also a central theme in the May 2000 a statement on “The Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees” which was issued directly by the ACBC. While the statement is directed more to the question of appropriate pastoral care for migrants and refugees rather than advocacy on their behalf, it does emphasize the benefits of migration both to Australian society and the Catholic Church as well as the responsibilities of all the Australian Catholic faithful, clerical and lay, to migrants and refugees.

In more expansive vein a lengthy paper, written by the previous head of the ACMRO, Bishop Joseph Grech, and an academic, Desmond Cahill, and issued under the imprimature of the ACBC in 2005, poses the question “The Catholic Church and the Australian Nation – Monolithic or Multicultural?” Such a question not only reflects the increasing cultural diversity of the Australian population; it also emphasizes the role of the Catholic Church itself in creating an authentic multicultural Australia.

635 Ibid., 51.
636 Ibid., see especially 53-57.
As a continuation of the immigration debate in more recent years the question of migrant requirements for citizenship has arisen. The development by the previous federal government under John Howard of a formal citizenship test, which required that future migrants would need to demonstrate a basic level of English language skills, as well as knowledge of the Australian way of life and values before they were accepted as citizens, caused such concern for the ACBC that two media releases were formulated. The first argues that “a formal test would be an impossible burden on many migrants, especially on many humanitarian entrants and elderly people”. Nevertheless it emphasizes that “every effort should be made to make the citizenship ceremony as significant as possible.”

The second again urges the federal government to modify its proposed changes to citizenship requirements “so that language and knowledge requirements are met gradually, rather than being judged by a test”. However, it also recognizes the importance of new citizens appreciating “the significance of the step they are taking”. Significantly, both documents accentuate the question which Michael Walzer raises of who has the right to citizenship, an issue which was to come very much to the fore in the conflict over the on-shore asylum-seeker debate.

Another concern of the bishops relates to the question of the government’s rationale for humanitarian resettlement entrance for refugees. This has arisen in relation to the federal government’s discriminatory decision to cut the intake of African, particularly Sudanese,

639 ACBC, “Citizenship must be taken seriously, but not placed out of reach – Catholic Bishop”, Media Release, 13th December, 2006. The document was worded by Bishop Grech.
refugees because of perceived problems with their ability to settle to life in Australia. This cut in African refugee numbers in 2007-2008 was made also to allow for an increase in humanitarian refugees from Asia and the Middle East, especially Iraq. While indicating that the overall number should be increased, spokesman Bishop Grech recognizes that the federal government cannot accept all refugees in its annual humanitarian programme of thirteen thousand. However, he argues forcibly that

the first and most fundamental principle in determining [Australia’s] refugee intake is that it must be based on need … and there can be no doubt that the situation of refugees from Sudan is among the most dire in the world, after years of civil war, violence and famine. … Because many of these people have languished in refugee camps in Africa for many years they face many hurdles when coming to a new country. These can include lack of education, socialisation issues, fear of authority figures, difficulties finding employment, housing and dealing with bureaucracies. These challenges are common to many people who flee from strife-torn countries to Australia’s protection. Rather than using these issues as a reason to cut back on refugee intake from certain areas, the government should instead increase its efforts to assist people in this situation.  

“Who is my neighbour?”

The Social Justice Sunday Statement for 2007 raises the question of “who is my neighbour?”, relates it to “Australia’s role as a global citizen” and deals with the global issues of justice, development and peace. This statement strongly stresses the way in which globalization has increased Australia’s interdependence with other nations and, in the process, poses Australia’s moral challenges and ethical responsibilities, not just for the migrant and refugee in the nation’s midst, but also for Australia’s neighbours, even

---

643 ACSJC, Who is My Neighbour? Australia’s role as a global citizen (Alexandria, NSW, 2007).
her enemies, outside of the country’s territorial boundaries. It speaks of Australians’ responsibilities as global citizens toward people of developing nations through foreign aid, development assistance and trade justice, even in the country’s military alliances and interventions. In particular it calls on parishes to establish

a direct relationship with other parishes in struggling parts of the world – giving material support as well as developing the bonds of faith and solidarity – [to] provide a real example of our concern for true development that extends well beyond issues of security and stability.

This statement echoes a message from the ACBC in May 2004 in which the bishops linked the internal protection of asylum seekers with international cooperation.

Another more recent global issue affecting Australian society is manifested by the ACSJC’s Pastoral Letter for the Feast of St Joseph the Worker, 2008 which examines the vexed issue of migrant workers in Australia. Pointing to factors such as Australia’s increasing reliance on migration for especially skilled labour and the reported abuses and exploitation of temporary migrant workers, the Letter calls for justice to be exercised toward them as well as a protection of their rights and their dignity as human beings. It cites Benedict XVI’s call to Catholics to be “witnesses of charity” to the migrant worker and argues that

---

644 On 15th September, 1999 the ACBC had put out a statement on East Timor, urging the Australian Government and people to continue with their generous hospitality and military assistance to East Timor. It also pledged the Australian Catholic community to do what it can to assist East Timorese refugees as well as the reconstruction of East Timor.
645 See Journeys’ End, 3 (2004).
646 ACSJC, Migrant Workers in Australia: Our responsibility as a global citizen (Alexandria, NSW), 1 May 2008.
[i]n this spirit of charity, Australia can go much further to develop programs that ensure that the dignity of migrant workers is protected and that benefits flow both to communities in Australia and the workers’ countries of origin.649

**Hospitality, solidarity and assistance toward asylum seekers**

Another major and ongoing advocacy concern of the ACBC, since the arrival in significant numbers from the mid-1970s650 of undocumented refugees, initially from South-East Asia and subsequently from the Middle East and elsewhere651, has been the question of the federal government’s legislation about and treatment of these so-called “asylum seekers” or “boat people”. Their arrival raised concerns on the part of the Australian government and people about Australia’s border security and the integrity of the “family home”.652 With their arrival the question of “who are refugees” and the issue of the denial of basic human rights, in whole or part, to unauthorized refugees took on new meaning for the Australian Catholic Church which, between 1997 and 2009, released approximately eleven statements on the matter.653 The position of the episcopacy is reflected as early as 1999 in a position paper from ACMRO which, while giving in principle support to the Government’s attempts to restrict the numbers of ‘undocumented

---

649 *Migrant Workers in Australia*, 4. It is ironic that the Australian government is one of the many world governments which has yet to sign the UN Migrant Workers Convention that was ratified on July, 2003. Noted in Hubber, “The Right to Have Access to the Means of a Livelihood”, 80. Her comment, 79, that migration is often cast in negative terms is prophetic during the current downturn in the Australian economy.

650 Gibney, *The Ethics and Politics of Asylum*, 178, provides statistics which indicate that the first boatload of Vietnamese refugees arrived on the northern Australian coastline in 1975, two years after the US forces pulled out of Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City), and that by 1978 a total of 51 boats carrying over 2 thousand “boat” people had arrived.

651 Up until c.2000 these “boat” people were predominantly South-East Asian refugees but they were succeeded by unauthorised arrivals from especially Iraq, Afghanistan and China.

652 This metaphor is the key concept examined in an article by R. Burke, “Invitation or Invasion? The ‘family home’ as metaphor in the Australian media’s construction of immigration”, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 23, 1 (2002), 59-72.

653 See [www.acmro.catholic.org.au](http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au). The two most recent media releases concerned the ACBC’s welcome of the new detention policy (14th May, 2008) and one about the TPV (14 May, 2009).
arrivals’, demonstrates its serious concern about the methods used by the Australian government. This statement also offers a guide to pastoral support workers, accentuating the importance of “the Catholic community and others concerned over the treatment of asylum seekers in Australia [to] base their actions on the Gospel imperatives of hospitality, solidarity and assistance toward the homeless.”

The 2002 Issues Paper published by the ACSJC, *The Call to Hospitality: Catholic Teaching on Refugees*, places the Australian Catholic Church’s stand toward such informal refugees in the broader context of Church teaching. Its author points out that “[t]he Church’s teachings challenge much contemporary discussion which seeks to limit the granting of asylum” to asylum seekers on the basis that they are not authentic refugees. It continues that “[s]crupulous respect for the principle of voluntary repatriation is essential and the onus is on government authorities who reject asylum seekers to ensure that such people are guaranteed a free and secure existence elsewhere”.

Such a message is explicit in the statements from the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference on “Refugees and Asylum Seekers”, the “The Plight of the Asylum Seekers” and “Catholic Bishops call for urgent response to the needs of asylum seekers”.

---

658 Released through the ACMRO in association with the ACSJC on 29 November, 2002 and available at [www.acmro.catholic.org.au](http://www.acmro.catholic.org.au).
and refugees” as well as the ACSJC’s Background Paper, “Are We Welcoming the Stranger?” In addition, a host of media releases relating to specific injustices towards unauthorised asylum seekers have been issued by the bishops.

Through the medium of such statements and press releases the Australian bishops urged strongly the need for significant reform to the harsh policies of the former Australian federal government, recognition of the basic human rights of these onshore asylum seekers and the vital necessity for the Catholic Church in Australia at all levels “to take important initiatives to help” them. These initiatives include

intervention at the policy and advocacy levels to provide refugees, asylum-seekers, and those who have been granted Temporary Protection visas, with advice and assistance, with housing, employment, clothing, friendship, support and pastoral care.

To enable Australian Catholics to pursue these initiatives ACMRO, in conjunction with the ACSJC, published a pamphlet which outlines “Ten [Practical] Steps Towards Welcoming Asylum Seekers”, including prayer using the accompanying Prayer Card prepared by the Social Justice Council. Via ACMRO’s online magazine, Journey’s End, readers have been kept well informed of details relating to the asylum seekers and action on behalf of these people by the Office.

---

659 This document emanated from the Bishops’ Plenary meeting of May, 2004 and was published on the ACBC website on 2 June, 2004., www.acbc.catholic.org.au/plenary2004/0519refugees.html.
660 This paper was prepared for the Council by Kerry Murphy, no date cited.
662 Such harsh policies have included mandatory detention and “the Pacific Solution” as well as the discriminatory limitations of TPVs. The bishops’ protests have been reinforced by those of many individual clergy and laity, including Fr Frank Brennan SJ’s book, Tampering with Asylum – A Universal Humanitarian Problem (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2003).
663 ACBC, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, 8.
664 No date cited.
One particular issue relating to asylum seekers which concerned the bishops was that of mandatory detention, especially of children. Consequently, in 2002 ACMRO, along with a number of other Catholic agencies, made a submission to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission enquiry into children in detention. This followed up an Open Letter to the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs in November, 2000, entitled “Children in Immigration Detention”, in which the ACMRO joined with a number of other non-government bodies to protest strongly against the contravention by the Australian government of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Through the ACSJC and the ACMRO the Australian bishops have also spoken out on related issues such as “people smuggling” and called for the penalization of the smugglers, not their victims. Similarly, they have indicated that the trafficking of women and children is a matter of serious concern to the Australian Church. Thus ACMRO accompanied Benedict XVI’s Message for World Migrant and Refugee Day 2006 with a statement, part of which read

Trafficking in human beings from other countries, especially in women and children, is a reality in Australia. The Australian Catholic Bishops wrote to the Prime Minister in May this year and welcomed the significant advances already made by the Australian Government towards the elimination of trafficking in women and children. … We … recommended that the Government establish a national task force to investigate, review and coordinate responses to human trafficking in Australia and requested that the Catholic Church be represented on such a task force.

666 For the full text of this document, see Journey’s End, second edition, 2000.
Like the PCPCMIP, the ACSJC also takes up the matter of economic refugees as well as asylum seekers in its Issue Paper of 1991 and sums up the complexity of the “refuge” problem.\(^{669}\)

The Social Justice Sunday Statement for 2007, in relation to the West Papuan refugees who were refused access to Australia and sent instead to the island of Nauru (a major detention centre under the “Pacific Solution”) in 2006 on the basis of Australia’s need to maintain the “integrity of its borders”, raised the issue of border protection and refugees and called on Australia to abandon the “Pacific solution”. While most of the centres of mandatory detention are now closed, except for that on Christmas Island, with the once again rising numbers of unauthorized refugee arrivals the issue is still a matter of concern to the Australian episcopacy. The Social Justice Sunday Statement for 2007 reinforced to its audience the need to “live our Christian vocation in the world” as well as acting as good global citizens, particularly in the federal government election year, and to be “more truly the disciples that Jesus Christ calls us to be” through serving “all our neighbours generously”.\(^{670}\)

One other specific aspect of Church’s concern for Australia’s treatment of asylum seekers is reflected in its condemnation of endeavours to repatriate asylum seekers whom the government considered to be “illegal” and without sufficient “evidence” to be considered for temporary visas. While not officially endorsed by the Australian bishops, one of the most significant documents to emerge from the Australian Church was the ERCJCE’s

\(^{669}\) ACSJC, “I Am a Stranger. Will You Welcome Me?”, 45-46. The relevant quotation is given in Ch. One, 20.

\(^{670}\) Who Is My Neighbour? Australia’s role as a global citizen, 14-16.
This report explores the question of “what happens to Australia’s rejected asylum seekers.” Its research focuses on four subsidiary questions. The first of these explores whether or not the Australian federal government had sent or attempted to send rejected asylum seekers to unsafe places. The second asks if, by so doing together with sending reports about them to overseas authorities, it had actually increased the dangers to them. Thirdly, the report asks whether in managing removals, the Australian government or its agencies had encouraged asylum seekers to obtain false papers, or become associated with bribery and corruption. Finally, it queries whether the manner of conducting asylum seeker removals had been consistent with Australia’s legal obligations and traditional values. It reaches the conclusion that the Australian government had breached Australia’s non-refoulement obligations under International law in 35 of the cases investigated. Although not requested by the Australian Bishops’ Conference the study echoes their concerns and relates to the statement by John Paul II on the subject.

**Australian Episcopal Initiatives Regarding Pastoral Care to Migrants and Refugees**

A second major component of the work of the Australian episcopacy, which complements their political and social justice advocacy activity on behalf of migrants and refugees, has been their migrant and refugee pastoral care recommendations, especially with regard to the quality of such care carried out by the seven diocesan immigration and multicultural

---

671 The research for was carried out in 2003 and 2004 with the report being released in September, 2004.  
672 *Deported to Danger*, Section IV, 26-51.  
offices in the majority of Australia’s capital cities\textsuperscript{675} and the chaplains based in dioceses who are working with immigrant groups.\textsuperscript{676} Episcopal pastoral care recommendations include statements, circulation of pertinent information to parishes, diocesan offices and migrant chaplains, organization of national conferences and regular meetings between the Director of the ACMRO and the directors of the diocesan offices. As with episcopal advocacy, a major aspect of all episcopal pastoral recommendations is educational. Thus ACMRO is responsible to the ACBC, through the ACBCPL, for the release, not just of advocacy statements, submissions and media releases, but also of conference papers and the annual Refugee and Migrant Sunday statements which often reproduce or refer to the relevant Pope’s message for World Migrant and Refugee Day.

In the discussion which follows the two major statements made by the bishops so far this century on pastoral care to migrants and refugees, and material from the three national conferences which relate to them, are examined in the context of significant themes which they have in common. This material is particularly pertinent in setting guidelines and standards for attitudes and pastoral care toward migrants and refugees for the twenty-first century. The aforementioned Statement on “Pastoral Care of Migrants and

\textsuperscript{675} According to the ACMRO website, apart from the National Office situated in Canberra, the seven diocesan offices are the Brisbane Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care, the Sydney Catholic Immigration Office, the Adelaide Multicultural Services, the Perth Centrecare Migrant and Refugee Services, the Melbourne Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office, the Darwin Office and the Canberra Office of the Coordinator of the Refugee Programme.

\textsuperscript{676} Sydney, Perth and Melbourne Archdioceses all have Episcopal Vicars for Immigration who coordinate the work of the chaplains to migrant, refugee and ethnic communities. I have not been able to access the exact number of such chaplains. However, Dixon, \textit{The Catholic Community in Australia}, 47-48, cites 1999 information from ACMRO which revealed that there were 153 Latin Rite ordained ‘migrant chaplains’, i.e. chaplains who have migrated to Australia to work with specific ethnic groups, based in 14 of the 28 dioceses, as well as a number of other priests and religious who work with other ethnic groups but who do not share their ethnicity. In 2007 \textit{Graced by Migration}, 23, refers to approximately 150 migrant chaplains as well as the priests for the Eastern-rite Catholic churches. The majority of the priests who are ‘migrant chaplains’ belong to religious orders, most notably the Scalabrinian Order.
Refugees\textsuperscript{677} provides a foundational model for such care in this present century. However, whereas this 2000 Statement examines pastoral care to migrants and refugees with a broad brush, the 2007 statement, \textit{Graced by Migration}, explores the issue in much more detail and its final chapter presents fifty-one specific strategies for the implementation of this vision, each of which is classified as high, medium, or low priority.\textsuperscript{678}

In between these two major statements came two national conferences. The first of these, “Building Bridges”, was sponsored by ACMRO and the ACSJC and held in Sydney in July, 2000. The second, a two day conference, preceded by a day gathering specifically for migrant chaplains, was held in Sydney, 16\textsuperscript{th} – 18\textsuperscript{th} November, 2005 and organized by ACMRO. It was very much influenced by the release earlier in 2005 by the PCPCMIP of \textit{Erga migrantes caritas Christi}. Hence, its title was “One in Christ Jesus.” Through its papers and workshops it affirmed the need for “a more vibrant” [as well as coordinated] approach toward the pastoral care of migrant and refugees.\textsuperscript{679} A further national conference, which grew out of the \textit{Graced by Migration} statement and which was also organized by ACMRO, was especially for migrant chaplains and held over two days, 29 – 30 October, 2007. The purpose of it, as expressed by Bishop Grech, was to build on what was initiated in the 2005 conference, “to provide a better understanding of your work as

\textsuperscript{677} The text of the Statement is to be found at \texttt{www.acmro.catholic.org.au/policies/pastoral_care.htm}.

\textsuperscript{678} For a list of these strategies see \textit{Graced by Migration}, Appendix Three – “Timetable for Implementation of Pastoral Strategies”. In preparation for a National Migrant Chaplains’ Conference in November, 2009 ACMRO has requested each diocesan Vicar for Migrant Affairs to facilitate set of recommendations for how these strategies might be implemented. Information provided by Fr Blasco Fonseco, Vicar for Migrant Affairs in the Archdiocese of Perth.

\textsuperscript{679} The \textit{Graced by Migration} statement can very much be viewed as the fruit of this conference.
migrant chaplains and to try to develop the best possible ways how to deal with migrants and refugees in Australia.**680**

**The grace of migrants and refugees to the Church**

*Graced by Migration*, encapsulates a fundamental theme in episcopal pastoral material of the twenty-first century, namely the theological grace which migrants and refugees represent to the life of the contemporary Australian Catholic Church.**681** It reminds its readers that

the immigrant and refugee who sit beside us in church are witnesses to the universal Church, a reminder of the Christian’s duty to break down the dividing walls, to overcome cross-cultural barriers and to defuse the recent and ancient hatreds that divide people.**682**

In its discussion of the Scriptural bases underlying pastoral care to migrants and refugees *Graced by Migration* recollects the ways in which the incarnation and life of Jesus Christ, together with the Passover narrative and the Paschal mystery, has been enmeshed in the migrant/refugee experience.**683** It goes on to develop a theology of a Pentecostal multicultural Church in which migrants and refugees are integral to the life of a Catholic Church which proclaims the Easter Mystery as central to its faith; a Church that is a “reflection of the unity-in-diversity of the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”**684**

---


681 Such a theme echoes *Erga migrantes*, 25, #91-94 and #101, as well as the “Final Document” of the Fifth World Congress of November 2003.

682 *Graced By Migration*, 9.

683 *Ibid.*, 8 In “Dying to Live”, *Migration in a Global World*, 115, Groody, also stresses the importance of the Passover narrative and the Paschal mystery not only as a comfort for Christian migrants and refugees but also for the rest of the Church. Thus “the moral demands of the immigrant invite us not only to remember the Passover narrative but to undergo a narrative Passover, which means learning to live out a different story by seeing Christ in the eyes of the immigrant and seeing the immigrant with the eyes of Christ.”

Earlier, the 2000 Statement had stressed especially the iconic and devotional benefits brought about by migration to the Australian Church. Thus it argued that the Church has been strengthened in many ways by the arrival of migrants. They have increased its membership and have enabled the Church to know itself better. Catholic migrants have brought to Australia symbols, prayers and devotions which add visible substance to the Church’s catholicity. Migrants and refugees enrich the Church’s openness to, and inclusiveness of, all peoples and cultures.\footnote{Statement on the “Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees”, no page numbers given.}

One of the papers presented to the “One in Christ Jesus” Conference also points to migrants and refugees as resource persons, particularly priests and religious from Third World countries, who need to be used more intelligently by territorial parishes.\footnote{Fr Dominic Ceresoli, CS, “Models of Pastoral Care for Immigrants, Refugees and Other People on the Move: The Immigrant as a Resource”, Paper 2 presented to the “One in Christ Jesus Conference.”}

Similarly, another paper at the same conference refers to the immigrants as gifts, not problems, and takes up the Pentecost image arguing that

> [s]ensitivity to the immigrant presence, seeing immigrants as a resource and as the face of Christ in our midst, is part of the call of Pentecost to incorporate peoples from other countries, speaking other languages and bearers of other cultural traditions. … Mainstream Catholics have wanted to assimilate them as quickly as possible rather than integrate them. They have not created the space for the ‘other’ to emerge and the ‘different’ to be seen in all its richness.\footnote{Fr Anthony Paganoni, CS, “Immigrants, the Liturgy & Popular Religion”, Paper 5 presented to the “One in Christ Jesus” Conference.}

This view of migrants and refugees as resources and active contributors to the Australian Church finds an echo in the opening speech to the “One in Christ Jesus” Conference of the then President of the PCPCMIP. He speaks of Catholic migrants making

> [t]heir own contribution to the catholicity of the Church, i.e. that ‘complete openness to the other, a readiness to share and to live in the same ecclesial communion’.\footnote{Hamao, “Pastoral Care of People on the Move”, 5. Unfortunately, he was only speaking about Catholic migrants in relation to their “integration” into the local Church.}
Migrants and refugees as a pastoral challenge for the Church

The 2000 Statement on “Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees” insists that the influx of immigrants to Australia, together with the cultural diversity they represent, presents an important pastoral challenge to as well as a benefit for the Church. In relation to this challenge it points out that the process of migration “is a process of uprooting” which brings a “loss of security”, “economic hardship” and “religious disorientation”. The subsequent statement, *Graced by Migration*, strengthens this perception by noting that “every migration contains risk, it also contains grieving” as well as trauma, especially for refugees. Thus, it argues that

a theology of Christian migration [should incorporate refugee] traumas as reflections of Christ’s own passion, His perspiring with blood and scourging, and these nostalgias and grievings as Mary’s own grieving at the foot of the cross for her lost son.

It adds that the itinerant life of the migrant and refugee, which “may have been succession of living in different homes in a world where people are constantly on the move”, is a reminder of our own Christian journey as pilgrims moving toward the transforming power of the resurrection and “reaching our final home in heaven.”

Consequently, like the universal Church and because of its multi-ethnic, cultural and linguistic composition, the Australian Church must be “a work-in-progress.” To authentically embrace a theology of multiculturalism it needs to transform itself into a Church which is inclusive in its community and its communion of the wide range of peoples and traditions represented by Catholic migrants and refugees. It also must be

---

689 No page or paragraph references given.  
690 *Graced by Migration*, 9.  
691 Idem.  
692 Idem.
missionary in its evangelical dialogue with the different cultures, and multilingual in its worship and prayer.\textsuperscript{693} In this endeavour the 2000 Statement presents seven principles based on the Scriptures and universal Church documentation. These are “equal distribution of the world’s resources and the right to migrate”, “integration” of migrants into the host society, that “migrants are an integral part of the local Church”, that “migrants should have access to all the resources of the local church … enjoyed by other parishioners”, that “migrant clergy are part of the local presbyterate”, that “integration respects the time frame of the migrant” and “retention of language and culture.”\textsuperscript{694}

In similar terms \textit{Graced by Migration} speaks of the need for a Catholic pastoral care which is truly inclusive of all migrants and refugees whatever their ethnic heritage, that assists all newcomers and their families, making them feel truly welcome, and which integrates and inculturates their spiritualities, particular religious traditions, gifts and skills into “the very heart of church and nation.”\textsuperscript{695} Indeed, its second group of strategies, which concern multicultural pastoral care at national and local levels, concentrates on the importance of a “culture of welcome” being fostered in parishes. This “culture of welcome” includes not only practical acts of “loving assistance” and support to new immigrants in their settlement process but “also implies the accepting of the truly human values that immigrants bring in the process known as inculturation.” In turn, this involves serious dialogue with and an openness to new cultural and religious traditions which can lead to new initiatives within the mainstream Church.\textsuperscript{696}

\textsuperscript{693} \textit{Ibid.}, 10.  
\textsuperscript{694} “Statement on the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees”, no page/paragraph references.  
\textsuperscript{695} \textit{Graced by Migration}, 20.  
\textsuperscript{696} \textit{Ibid.}, 25-26.
The third group of strategies envisage the participation of visual and performing immigrant artists to help “the Australian Church further develop its artistic [and musical] patrimony and articulate its self-identity”. $^{697}$ Another group of strategies explores ways in which liturgical and devotional practices in parishes can be enriched through the input of cultural and religious traditions of immigrants. $^{698}$ Such emphases on the gifts which Catholic migrants and refugees bring to the Church and the ways in which they can be utilized as resources rather than being relegated to a multicultural ministry on the margins of the mainstream Church $^{699}$ relate to the pertinent challenge presented by Archbishop Mark Coleridge to the National Migrant Chaplains’ Conference when he states that the question should not only be about “preparing leaders for migrant communities” but “preparing leaders from migrant communities.” $^{700}$

Particular challenges for migrant chaplains and pastoral workers involve specific needs of different groups of migrants and refugees. One of the “One in Christ Jesus” Conference papers concerns pastoral care for the immigrant aged in a Catholic environment, stressing that this is now a major issue, given that those migrants and refugees who arrived in the peak migration period, from the 1950s and 1970s, are in the final decades of their lives. $^{701}$ Yet another of the papers discusses the particular problems of immigrants in rural and provincial dioceses, arguing that “each diocese has a different migrant profile and, as a

---

$^{697}$ Ibid., 26-27. Two particular recommendations involve Immigration Sunday being extended from one day to an Immigration Week and the establishment of a Catholic Heritage Sunday.

$^{698}$ Ibid., 27-29.

$^{699}$ Ibid., 29-30. These issues involve yet another group of strategies.

$^{700}$ Coleridge, “Preparing Leaders for Migrant Communities”, 1. Italics from the paper.

$^{701}$ Carl Melvey KCSG and Pat Pedulla, “Pastoral Care for the Immigrant Aged in the Catholic Environment”, Paper 7 at the “One in Jesus” Conference.
consequence, must tailor its response accordingly and design different pastoral strategies.”

Under the heading “Strategies for Addressing the Needs of Special Groups in the Church” *Graced by Migration*, as well as addressing the specific issues of older people, also focuses on women and sees the women’s religious orders and Catholic women’s organizations as having “a long history of assisting women at risk or in trouble, not least trafficked women” which needs to be continued. It argues for the importance of fostering the voice of immigrant and refugee women through empowering them with leadership skills. *Graced by Migration* also targets young people, especially second-generation ethnic youth, Eastern-rite Catholics and asylum seekers as groups for special attention.

**Building bridges**

The 2000 Statement recognized that “a common approach is necessary by all the bishops of Australia” and that ACMRO should make recommendations to the ACBC about the pastoral care of migrants and refugees and their needs. To this end points raised in the Statement became the subject for discussion at conferences for migrant chaplains and other pastoral workers in the field of migrant/refugee pastoral care which were organized by ACMRO. The title of the first of these, “Building Bridges”, is a theme which is very

---

702 Grech, “Immigrants in Rural and Provincial Dioceses”, Paper 4 at the “One in Christ Jesus” Conference.
703 *Graced by Migration*, 31-31 and strategies E5 and E6.
708 This is the purpose of the National Conference on the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees being planned for 27-29 October, 2009.
appropriate to describe the nature of initiatives put forward for migrant and refugee pastoral care. The conference itself had twin aims, both of which enunciate a crucial aspect of the theme – the desire to achieve a situation in which “migrant communities and communities of faith [could work] together more closely” on “effective strategies, provided by communities of faith for remedying disadvantages within migrant and refugee groups” and thereby strengthen these strategies.\textsuperscript{709}

“Building bridges” was also an important, albeit unofficial, theme at the 2007 National Migrant Chaplains’ Conference, especially with regard to the integration of migrants and refugees into the Australian community and the Church. Fr Frank Devoy, Director of the Office for Clergy Life and Ministry, writes in his paper for that conference that

\begin{quote}
[b]y your ministry, you actively bridge the boundaries of travellers who enter this land. You provide them with a sense of meaning, bring coherence to their new setting. You provide them a sense of cohesion in building support-networks for them. And, by providing a sense of hope, you make them aware that there is a new tomorrow on their new horizon. Without these gifts many would be lost.\textsuperscript{710}
\end{quote}

An equally vital aspect of the theme is also demonstrated by the “Building Bridges” conference which extended invitations to “speakers with experience of working among migrants and refugees within religious or community organizations” who would consider the alleviation of poverty and disadvantage among women, youth, and refugees, and harmony within schools in culturally diverse regions. Other speakers will provide a wider perspective on issues such as the problems facing refugees in Australia and on reconciliation and racism.\textsuperscript{711}

Such stress on consultation with first-hand experience those wider community bodies have of the special needs of migrants and refugees also arises in the strategies presented

\textsuperscript{709} See \url{www.acmro.catholic.org.au/policies/Achive.htm}.
\textsuperscript{710} Devoy, untitled paper to the National Migrant Chaplains’ Conference, 2007, 1.
\textsuperscript{711} \textit{Ibid.}
in *Graced by Migration* which, as well as emphasizing the importance of the work of migrant chaplains, points to “the need for a network of para-professional cross-cultural workers trained for specific tasks.” According to the 2000 Statement such people also “need to be bridges of reconciliation and unity among the people entrusted to their care.” To these ends they carry out the same role as migrant chaplains, diocesan priests, parish communities, schools and even ethnic communities. The latter, as long as they are in communion with the larger Catholic community, the Statement argues, “become havens where the newly arrived find support and encouragement in their Christian commitment.”

“Building bridges” is viewed in yet another perspective by *Graced by Migration* which, in the tradition of *Erga migrantes*, recognizes also the importance of a national Catholic church that reaches out to the newcomers who represent non-Christian religions in a spirit of cross-cultural understanding and interfaith dialogue to create an Australia of mutual trust that is a showcase of cultural, linguistic and religious diversity; that contributes to the social wealth of the nation through its teachings of transcendent values, ethnical norms and moral behaviour and through its educational, health and welfare institutions; and that creates an Australia that is a harmonious place of justice and peace.

This perspective is taken up by Bishop Kevin Manning in a paper on interfaith dialogue between Islam and Christianity which he presented to the National Migrant Chaplains’ Conference. In it he points out that, while the Church asks its faithful to engage in dialogue with Muslims, it is vital to have “a true encounter with a human person” rather

---

713 “Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees”, no page/paragraph reference.
714 *Ibid*.
715 *Graced by Migration*, 20.
than simply having “an exercise of the rational part of our being only.”\textsuperscript{716} He goes on to argue that this consideration is especially relevant for migrant chaplains who are likely to experience opposition to such dialogue from Catholics of various rites whose family origins are in countries where there is a Muslim majority, and whose experiences range from completely harmonious relations with Muslim neighbours to hostile relations, and, occasionally, violent encounters. … It is important to separate two elements when engaging with this group: that is, to differentiate between religious persecution, or lack of freedom to worship which must be condemned, and cultural differences which may apply in some circumstances.\textsuperscript{717}

A final aspect of the “building bridges” theme is stressed in another paper presented at the National Migrant Chaplains’ Conference. This concerns relationships between migrant chaplains and parish clergy and communities. Thus Bishop David Cremin provides suggestions for and examples of collaboration between parish priests and migrant chaplains which include parish priests treating migrant chaplains as equals, the exchange of Masses, a special liturgy for Pentecost Sunday, socialization between the two groups and intercultural meals.\textsuperscript{718} In this regard, Fr Devoy’s disclosure at the conference of the document, “Welcoming, Enabling and Integrating Overseas Priests”, at that time in preparation by his office, “to assist both newly arrived priests and their local counterparts to work together in welcoming and integrating these man into the life of Australia and the church” is significant.\textsuperscript{719}

\textsuperscript{716} Manning, “Interfaith Dialogue – new understandings, skills and strategies”, 2. For this kind of dialogue to occur he accentuates the need for education on the part of the all Catholics. 
\textsuperscript{717} Ibid., 7.
\textsuperscript{718} Cremin, “Address to Migrant Chaplains”, notes of which are available from the ACMRO website.
\textsuperscript{719} Untitled paper to the National Migrant Chaplains’ Conference, 2. Notes of the May, 208 Plenary Meeting of the ACBC, state that the document has now been received by the bishops and is to be used as a template to be implemented by each Province. The template involves overseas priests undergoing "a six month period of welcome and transition, during which the priest experiences the Australian culture, church life, the diocese and its structures and receives mentoring." www.acbc.catholic.org.au/bishops/pm/20080520224.htm.
Such a preoccupation is one which is a feature of the 2000 Statement and *Graced by Migration*. The former argues that there must be “opportune links” and cooperation between migrant chaplains and diocesan priests and parish communities. Thus the diocesan priests need to “[b]e aware that they are entrusted with the spiritual care of all the faithful”, including migrants living within their parish, and “be open and hospitable to migrant chaplains.”

In the latter document the bishops recognize the long history of friction between migrant chaplains and some parish priests but urge that, especially in a situation where there are more overseas priests and religious working in parishes, the migrant ministry needs to be in collaboration with parish outreach to migrants and refugees, particularly when territorial parishes are frequently multicultural and multilingual communities.

### Education and re-education

The third group of strategies in *Graced by Migration* forcefully argue for the need for education as well as re-education of both Catholic Australian and immigrant communities about Australia’s and the Australian Church’s history “which many feel is in danger of being forgotten and which is an important component in forming Catholic identity.”

The document goes on to state that migration is so central to both the Christian and Australian life that such re-education is crucial. Consequently, it proposes that,

> [i]n association with the Catholic schooling system, each year a special theme be chosen and elaborated in well-produced materials prepared by immigration and curriculum experts for use in both higher secondary schools and in parishes.

---

720 “Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees”, no page/paragraph reference.
721 *Graced by Migration*, 22-23. Also see Appendix Two – “Guidelines and Suggestions for Parish Priests, Parish Councils and Parish Workers”.
723 *Idem.*
Parallel with such recommendations for re-education related to migration *Graced by Migration* recommends the formation of a research and resource institute with a chair in immigration, intercultural and interreligious affairs at one of the Australian Catholic universities, which can represent to the wider society the mind of the Church on immigrant, refugee and transnational issues. Strategies related to this end are paired with others that involve the training of priests, seminarians, other religious and lay personnel in relation to the contexts of immigration and the specific situations and needs of migrants and refugees. This clerical and religious formation is something which the earlier 2000 Statement had also underlined.

**Conclusion**

As this chapter has demonstrated, the Catholic Church in Australia has become, and is still in the process of becoming, increasingly multicultural and multilingual in its composition and its outlook. Such characteristics have important implications for the fulfilment of the Gospel message, especially with regard to truly welcoming the stranger. How “to be Christ” to both Catholic and non-Catholic migrants and refugees continues to be an on-going challenge for all the Church’s faithful in Australia at both national and regional levels. It involves the need for goodwill and openness to the Spirit if the Australian Catholic Church is to embody and practise an authentic multicultural theology of “unity-in-diversity” in which the journeys of migrants and refugees are seen as

---

726 “Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees”, no page/paragraph reference.
emblematic of the pilgrimage of all Christian people and their experiences symbolic of the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This chapter has also examined the journey of the Church itself in Australia in relation to the changes which have occurred in pastoral responses at the episcopal level to migrants and refugees and their needs since c.1948 and the influx of the first post-war immigrants from Europe. It is a journey which has moved from a desire for assimilation to a realization of the importance of integration and inclusion so that migrants and refugees themselves may contribute to the nature of the Church in Australia. This journey has involved a shift from a focus on national needs to one which concentrates on the migrants and refugees themselves and the grace that they bring to the Church as well as their material and spiritual well-being. It has been a slow process which well illustrates the warning given by the bishops in their 2000 Statement.

The danger is to attempt to hurry the time needed for adjustment without respecting the fact that the seed sown in the ground has to be allowed to grow in its own time and different seeds spring at different times and in different seasons.  

In the following chapter the wisdom inherent in this warning will again be evident as pastoral care to migrants and refugees is explored at the grass-roots level of the Australian Catholic Church as it is manifested by the work of migrant and refugee agencies and bodies within the Archdiocese of Perth and the reflections of personnel on that work.

---

727 Ibid.
CHAPTER SIX

EMPIRICAL PRAXIS TOWARD MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PERTH – ORIGINS, MISSION AND ACTIVITIES

Introduction
While studies have been carried out on Church policy toward migrants and refugees, both at the levels of the universal and the Australian Church\textsuperscript{728}, little, particularly recent, research has been made into the empirical pastoral practice of Australian diocesan migrant and refugee services. Thus, in the Archdiocese of Perth the studies which have been carried out have primarily concerned the general areas of early Catholic social welfare, multiculturalism and the Church, and the evolution and development of the Catholic Migrant Centre.\textsuperscript{729} This and the following chapter represent an attempt to rectify this limitation with regard to the pastoral care of migrants and refugees in the Archdiocese of Perth in the last two decades of the twentieth century on into the twenty-first century. Not only do the two chapters investigate the empirical practice of the relevant services; they also provide an example of the utilization of the methodology of practical theology as outlined in the first chapter.\textsuperscript{730} Thus a study has been made not only of the nature and activities of the services, but also of the reflections on their work by many of the personnel.\textsuperscript{731}

\textsuperscript{728} Few studies of migrant/refugee policies and activities of the Australian Church at the ecclesial level extend beyond the end of the 1980s.

\textsuperscript{729} Afterwards referred to as the CMC. Most notably these are Barry Hickey, “The Development of Catholic Welfare Services in Western Australia, 1846-1970”, thesis for a Master of Social Work at the University of Western Australia, 1971, various pages, Melissa Del Borrello, “I was a stranger and you made me welcome”, \textit{Multicultural Communities Online}, 5, 1,( 2004), www.mulcultural.online.wa.gov.au/wppuser/owamc/newsletter_1_2004/cmc.html, and Mecham, \textit{The Church and Migrants}, 135-139.

\textsuperscript{730} See Ch. 1, 28-33.

\textsuperscript{731} As explained in that chapter, it has not proved possible to interview migrants and refugees in sufficient number or representation of the different stages of their settlement. However, use has been made in the writing of this chapter of three interviews carried out with previous refugees, now migrants, and related material such as a documentary video, \textit{In the Middle of Angels – Personal journeys of young refugees to Australia}, made by Aranmore Catholic College for the launch of Harmony Day, 21\textsuperscript{st} March, 2002. Archival material utilized for the writing of these two chapters encompasses what was available to the author.
The particular services whose work is investigated in these chapters include Centrecare Catholic Migrant Services\(^{732}\) (formerly the CMC), the Multicultural Apostolate (previously the Office of Multicultural Pastoral Care)\(^{733}\), the Edmund Rice Centre, Mirrabooka\(^{734}\), the Migrant and Refugee Committee of the St Vincent de Paul Society (WA),\(^{735}\) the Intensive English Centre\(^{736}\) of Aranmore Catholic College and the Mercy House of Hospitality, Carlisle (now defunct). These are/were the chief bodies within the Archdiocese of Perth which provide services and pastoral care to migrants and refugees.\(^{737}\)

Using predominantly archival material and transcriptions of twenty-six interviews, the chapter will examine the activities of these six services comparatively, exploring similarities and differences between them in relation to a number of common themes, namely their origins, expression of mission, and “welcoming the stranger” – what stranger and how? . The following chapter will investigate the challenges presented by changing ethnic and religious composition of migrant/refugee clientele, funding issues and their implications for policy directions, questions of Catholic identity and, finally, ongoing challenges for the future.

### Origins

\(^{732}\) Afterwards CMS.

\(^{733}\) Afterwards MA.

\(^{734}\) Afterwards the ERCM.

\(^{735}\) Afterwards the St Vincent de Paul MRC.

\(^{736}\) Afterwards the IEC.

\(^{737}\) Some other Church agencies, for example, Mercy Employment Centres, especially that located in Mirrabooka, do assist some migrants and refugees in the course of their work, but this assistance is not the focus of their social welfare activity. I also wish to acknowledge the hospitality and work of individual parish communities with regard to migrants and refugees and, especially, to undocumented asylum seekers, even though these contributions are not included in my research. Similarly, the Stella Maris Seafarers’ Centre also provides pastoral care to visiting transients and the Church provides chaplains for Catholic, especially overseas, students at the State and the one Catholic university in Perth.
While all six services have or have had as their *raison d’être* pastoral care to migrants and refugees, within that broad framework there are significant differences of origin, size and focus. CMS is the largest of the six bodies and has a very long history. Thus its direct formal antecedents go back to 1947 when an Episcopal Migrant and Welfare Association was established in Perth. Founded principally to aid in the Australian Government’s post-war Child Immigration Programme, the Association’s aims quickly became multi-focussed, including migrant sponsorship and appointment of migrant chaplains. However, in 1973 the Association was disbanded and replaced by a local Immigration Office which continued to work closely with the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau, founded in 1970. This Office itself was subsumed into Centrecare in 1983, along with the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau and the Catholic Marriage Guidance, and given a new name – the CMC.

Ironically, given its re-incorporation as CMS under Centrecare on 5 September, 2005, the CMC opted to become independent in 1985 and remained so for the following

---

738 Hickey, “The Development of Catholic Welfare Services in Western Australia”, 81-2. Del Borrello’s article, “I was a stranger and you made me welcome”, and the brief historical surveys in the CMC’s Annual Reports, 2, 10-11, and 10, 2-5, confirm Hickey’s statements. Mecham, *The Church and Migrants*, 135-9, also provides early details of migrant activities in the Perth Archdiocese.

739 Hickey, *The Development of Catholic Welfare Services in Western Australia*, 106. This close relationship was strengthened by two incidents. The first came with the agreement of Australian Immigration Department that its funded Grant-in-Aid worker be transferred from the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau to the Catholic Immigration Office. The second occurred when the Director of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau and Catholic Marriage Guidance, the then Fr Barry Hickey, became the Director of the Catholic Immigration Office in 1974. He remained in that position until 1983.

740 See del Borrello, “I was a stranger and you made me welcome” and CMC Reports, nos 2, 9 and 20.

741 Open letter from Melissa Del Borrello, last Director of the CMC, to other Church agencies and services, 1 September, 2005.

742 The previous year the Centre had moved into its own premises at 29 Victoria Square; a premises which, with the expanding work of the Centre, was extended in the late 1980s to include nos 25 and 27 as well. At the time of writing this thesis, Centrecare CMS occupied these premises until recently when it moved to Cannington.
twenty years. During that period it had its own Director and Management Board and was accountable directly to the Archbishop of Perth, through the WA Catholic Social Welfare Commission, and to ACMRO. Centrecare CMS is now directly responsible to the Director of Centrecare WA. The link to the Archbishop is now more tenuous, but CMS maintains a loose connection with ACMRO, as is evident in the ACMRO website. Centrecare’s Director attends meetings of diocesan migrant and refugee pastoral care directors with the Director of ACMRO, as did the directors of the CMC.

The incarnation of the Multicultural Apostolate as the Office of Multicultural Pastoral Care came in the late 1980s. Under the Archdiocesan Vicar for Migration the Office’s special focus was and still is the coordination of the work of the special migrant chaplains appointed for particular ethnic communities and societies as they emerged in Perth. When it was still the Office of Multicultural Pastoral Care it experienced a close partnership with the CMC, sharing its premises and providing Masses and spiritual care for staff as well as clientele of the Centre. Gerald Searle speaks of “working very

743 Its first director was Gerald Searle (1985 till the end of 2000), followed, after a brief period when the then Vicar for Migration, Fr Adrian Pittarello CS, was the Acting Director, by Melissa del Borrello (2002 till late 2004).
744 The Management Board, comprising seven people, three men and four women, held the first of its meetings on 5 March 1987, with the first Constitution of the CMC being endorsed by Archbishop Foley in September, 1988.
745 The first Archdiocesan Vicar for Migrants was Fr Dino Torreson, followed in succession by Fr Adrian Pittarello and Fr Antonio Paganoni, all Scalabrinians. With Fr Paganoni’s departure from Perth in mid-2008 the Archbishop appointed Fr Blasco Fonseca, the parish priest for East Fremantle, as the new Vicar for Migration and Coordinator of the Multicultural Apostolate.
746 These currently number approximately fifteen, chiefly priests, some of whom also have responsibility for territorial parishes. They are supplemented by pastoral workers, mainly religious sisters, and by chaplains at Perth’s tertiary institutions whose outreach extends to foreign as well as local students.
747 The Office of Multicultural Pastoral Care was first reported in the Fifth Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 1990, 32. As well as playing an integral role within the CMC, it also saw the Director of the Centre in attendance at its quarterly meetings. See Gerald Searle, “Report on Current and Envisaged Activities for Settlement of and Services for Refugees and Migrants”, 1, which was prepared for the Federal Catholic Immigration Committee of the ACBC, 12th June, 1991.
closely” with the first two Vicars for Migration and refers to the “harmony of personality” between Fr Dino and himself. This close relationship bore fruit in “two fantastic conferences.” However, with Fr Pittarello the relationship became “more like parallel lines.”

Certainly, by the time of the appointment in c. 2003 of Fr Antonio Paganoni the two bodies had gone their separate ways, with the newly named Multicultural Apostolate working out of the presbytery of St Brigid’s in Northbridge. The MA, like its predecessor, is accountable not only to the Archbishop of Perth but also to ACMRO.

Like CMS, the St Vincent de Paul WA MRC is part of a larger incorporated body. It predates the formal and independent establishment of the CMC, having been founded in April, 1976 by the then State President of the Society. It also had a longer informal history dating back to 1912 when the Fremantle Conference was regularly visiting ships and meeting migrants on their arrival in Western Australia. The direct accountability of the Committee is to the State Executive and, through it, to the National Executive of the Society. Like the remaining two services, the ERCM and the previous Mercy House of Hospitality, Carlisle, the MRC of St Vincent de Paul is not directly accountable to of Archdiocese of Perth, albeit within it.

---

748 The conferences referred to were “Multiculturalism and the Catholic Church in WA”, held in May, 1991, and “Asia Knocks”, held 14 to 16 June, 1995.
750 The Office of the MA now operates out of the East Fremantle presbytery.
751 Since the establishment of the MRC chairpersons/coordinators have been Gerard Russell, Bill Bryan, Betty Ryan and, up until the middle of this year, Br Geoff Seaman. The 2008 Annual Report indicates that Frank Pelusey is the new chairperson.
752 Afterwards the MHHC.
Both the two remaining services developed out of the concern for the plight of refugees by particular religious orders, the first, (the ERCM), from the Christian Brothers WA Province in March 1998 and the second, (the now closed MHHC), from the initiative of two sisters from the West Perth Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy – Srs Mary Keely and Maureen McCarthy - in c. 2001. While the ERCM was initially sponsored from the Christian Brothers, the MHHC, also sponsored by its parent order, received a grant from the Sisters of Charity. Although still headed by a Christian Brother, its first and so far only Director, Br Steve Bowman, the ERCM became autonomous from its parent order after an evaluation and review of its operations in 2002. Therefore, while still loosely accountable to the Christian Brothers WA and SA Province, it is run both by its Director and its Committee of Management which is comprised of between eight to ten members.

The final body, the IEC at Aranmore Catholic College in Leederville, was transferred in 1990 from John XXIII College. Direct accountability is to DIAC, through the one-off New Arrivals Grants for all permanent residents who need intensive English language training, and to the Catholic Education Office in Western Australia, as well as to the College’s students and their families. While the IEC specifically caters for the needs of young non-English speaking newcomers, mainly refugees, it also prepares them for

---

753 At this time and subsequently until the closure of the detention centre in 2004, Sr Mary was working with undocumented on-shore asylum seekers at Port Hedland while Sr Maureen operated from Carlisle. Details from interview with Sr Mary Keely, 9 June, 2006.

754 Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc. Handbook, 1.1, describes the Centre as a “ministry of the Trustees of the Christian Brothers WA and SA, non-government, charitable, incorporated organization”. See 2.3 for description of the Committee of Management and its responsibilities and 2.4 for a description of the role and responsibilities of the Director.

755 Previously DIAC was known as the Department of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Citizenship.

756 Most of the students at Aranmore who need intensive English training are on humanitarian entry visas and, as well, the college receives recurrent State and Commonwealth grants.
mainstream schooling in a secondary college whose student population is highly ethnically diverse and multicultural.757 This was reflected in the graduating class of 2006, 51 out of 120 students were clearly of overseas or Aboriginal origin or ancestry, with their countries or nationalities including Ethiopia, Jordan, Uganda, Kenya, Japan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Zambia, Rwanda, Singapore and Vietnam.758

Expression of Mission

All six services have placed a strong emphasis on the need to restore and/or preserve the human dignity of their migrant and refugee clientele, irrespective of race or ethnicity, age or gender. This emphasis is accompanied by an equally strong desire to help migrants and refugees integrate into the community through the medium of holistic pastoral care which relates to their spiritual and material needs. Naturally, migrant and refugee service providers like CMS and its predecessor, the CMC, the ERCM, the St Vincent de Paul MRC and, previously, the MHHC have service in relation to settlement issues and migrant/refugee integration into the community as very much their raison d’etre.

So, for example, in its two initial Annual Reports the CMC wrote of its mission as a social service of the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth that assists migrants and refugees with their migration, arrival, settlement and outgoing needs, regardless of their race, creed or nationality in accordance with the Church’s social teaching on migrants and refugees. It is based on the words of Christ – I was a stranger and you made me welcome.759

757 The College also has a programme, English as a Second Language (afterwards referred to as ESL), for especially students who have progressed from the IEC to the mainstream school.
758 Arannore College, 2006 Annual, 9-16. The graduating class of 2006 was made up of a total of 120 students. The sections on the graduating classes in the 2007 and 2008 Annuals, 10-12 and 10-13 respectively, provide no information on the nationalities of the students. However, from the photographs it was evident that a goodly number of students of African origin were graduating.
759 From the first Annual Report of 30 June, 1986, through to the last, 30 June, 2004, mission statements have contained almost identical wording to the one cited from the first Annual Report, 5.
The philosophical principles and statements of goals and objectives contained in later Annual Reports reinforce this mission of the CMC with their emphasis on the universality and common equality of all humanity, the human dignity of each migrant and refugee which requires an openness to cultural and religious diversity, and the need to carefully discern the needs of the Centre’s clientele so that its ministry may enhance their integral development, safeguard their rights and enable their integration into the host society.  

Now in its present incarnation as CMS the emphasis is more on community and is linked with a desire “to provide excellent, respectful and caring services, which facilitate healing and encourage all persons to develop to their fullest potential.” The mission of all Centrecare’s services, including CMS, is well summed up in a comment by the Director of Centrecare:

> Centrecare is about lack of boundaries between peoples and respect and communality rather than differences; that we are one people and we need to approach our work and the way we treat each other through those eyes. We have chosen, I think, as an organization over the years to become less concerned with differences and divisions and put greater emphasis on commonality.

In similar vein, the ERCM stresses empowerment of people, “including refugees, the indigenous, staff members and visitors, through education, … the quality of presence and respectful relationships, … the development of community networks” as well as

---

760 This is a summary of the CMC’s principles as expressed in the Ninth and Tenth Annual Reports for the years 1993-1994 and 1994-1995, 14-15 and 8-9 respectively.
763 Interview with Tony Pietropiccolo, 15 April, 2008.
764 The ERCM also provides services for and pastoral care toward the Aboriginal people living in the region, especially the youth.
personal dignity and respect for “every person, regardless of colour, race, creed or ability”.  Both it and the St Vincent de Paul MRC have at their heart the charisms of the respective founders of their parent bodies, Blessed Edmund Rice and St Vincent de Paul. These charisms stress the importance of social justice especially in relation to those on the margins of society or, as one Annual Report of St Vincent de Paul WA puts it, “the disadvantaged in WA.” The mission of the Society is to

heighten the awareness of Jesus Christ .. [through] sharing ourselves … with the poor on a person to person basis. We seek to co-operate in shaping a more just and compassionate Australian community … . Our preferred option in this mission of service is to work with the poor in development by respecting their dignity, sharing our hope and encouraging them to take control of their destiny.

Like the two foregoing bodies, the MHHC was also influenced by the charism of the founder of its parent Congregation, Catherine McAuley, although its area of service was more limited in scope and less formalized. According to Sr Mary, its mission was to “offer hospitality … to people in need”, especially women. Yet another service provider with a narrower focus on the provision of English language education, the IEC of Aranmore College, shares in the school’s affinity with the charisms of Catherine McAuley and Edmund Rice. It is also influenced by the mission expressed in the school’s Community Prayer to

help us grow in faith, in hope, and in love, so we are open to the many cultures of the students who are part of this school community. May we respect each person’s uniqueness and affirm their talents.

767 Interview with Sr Mary Keely, 9 June, 2006.
768 Aranmore College, 2006 Annual, 2.
Finally, the MA, while not so clearly fitting the service provider model and with a focus more directly on the spiritual and sacramental needs of the Catholic ethnic communities in the Archdiocese, clearly shares in the values expressed in the mission statements of the other agencies as well as their pastoral roles. As the immediate past Vicar for Migrant Affairs put it when asked about his role as coordinator of multicultural services:

[T]here are several aspects. One is representing the Bishop in acting as his liaison officer between the chaplains and the ethnic communities and the bishop and vice versa. … Then there is the role of leadership. … there is a network of chaplains; there are communities, each one of them following their own rhythm in terms of adjustment to the Church. So the role for me is to harmonize these different sorts of paces towards the so-called full integration. This means soliciting from the local church attention and concern for the ethnic communities; helping the local church to understand diversity as it expresses itself through the ethnic communities, and, at the same time, helping the ethnic communities to come to terms with the new social, religious environment which they find themselves in, of course, in relation to the local church which is them as well, and the other communities. Number three – to, again, represent and voice the concerns of the chaplains and ethnic communities to the National Office and vice versa. … These would be about the three official duties and tasks; the fourth task obviously being the priest and pastoral care.  

“Welcoming the Stranger” – What Stranger and How?

While the activities of all of the migrant/refugee pastoral care bodies in the Archdiocese of Perth, especially the larger ones like CMS, are complex and multi-facetted, all embody, consciously or unconsciously, a theology of hospitality and welcome, especially to “the stranger in our midst”. Moreover, although the direction of different services may be to particular sub-groups within the broad categories of migrant and refugee, each service places emphasis on integration and inclusiveness. All of their activities raise the

---

769 Interview with Fr Antonio Paganoni, 18 June, 2007. The archives of the MA did not contain a formal mission statement.
vital question - what is the nature of pastoral care for a Church-based agency or body reaching out to migrants and refugees in contemporary Australian society?770

The MA’s work is very much directed toward the Catholic ethnic and immigrant communities in Perth, both the older-established ones like the Italian and Polish communities and the newer ones like the African Catholic communities. Some communities, like the Vietnamese or the African, have and do contain a very high proportion of earlier or relatively recently arrived refugees.771 Their composition stands in contrast to that of the older communities which are composed, in the main, of ageing first generation migrants who migrated as displaced persons from war-torn Europe and who have been followed by second- and third-generation Australian-born families.

Essentially, there would appear to be three different models of ethnic community catered for by the MA. The first comprise the well established communities with their own centres, for example the Vietnamese, Croatian, Polish, Italian, African and the Ukrainian communities. The second are made up of communities without a physical centre, groups like the Indonesian and the Chinese. The third the previous Vicar for Migrant Affairs described as “fringe communities”, for example, the Maltese, Burmese, Indian and Korean, which have some separate activities but no organisation with their members being mainly located within territorial parishes.772 All in the first group, as well as the

---

770 To some extent this chapter discusses this question but it is confronted more directly in the concluding chapter.
771 Many of the initial Vietnamese came out as “boat people” in the immediate aftermath of the Vietnam War. Most of the sub-Saharan Africans have entered Australia as humanitarian refugees, so, for example, the Sudanese have come as refugees, either from war-torn Sudan itself, or else from refugee camps in adjacent countries like Kenya.
772 Discussion with Fr Antonio Paganoni, 20 April, 2006.
Portuguese and Arab communities, have their own appointed priests as migrant chaplains, while in the last two groups only the Italian and, more recently, the Chinese, communities have their own specifically appointed migrant chaplain. However, the Burmese, and the Maltese have parish priests of their own nationality to whom they can refer. Communities like the Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Horn of Africa and Burmese also receive pastoral care from especially appointed pastoral workers.\footnote{Details taken from a List of Migrant Chaplains and Pastoral Workers provided to me by Fr Paganoni, in conjunction with details from the Archdiocese of Perth Directory, 2007-2008, 146-147.}

“Being the priest and [providing] pastoral care” obviously applies to all the migrant chaplains within the Archdiocese, not only the Vicar for Migrant Affairs, and, with the omission of priestly and sacramental functions, also to the pastoral workers. Moreover, as Monsignor Murphy indicates, the role of migrant chaplains (and pastoral workers) is continually evolving to include a wide range of duties which include

- safeguarding the migrants’ ethnic, cultural, linguistic and ritual identity …;
- guiding migrants to authentic integration by avoiding a cultural ghetto …;
- creating a missionary and evangelising spirit, by sharing the situation and conditions of migrants, with the ability to adapt and make personal contacts in an atmosphere of a clear witness to life;
- [and] acting in union not only with the local bishops, but also with the diocesan clergy, especially with the parish priests.\footnote{Murphy, “The Changing Role of Migrant Chaplains and their Pastoral Relationship with Parishes”, “One in Christ Jesus” Conference, Paper 1.}

Thus, while the MA is not a social service of the Church, the chaplains and pastoral workers find themselves involved in a range of social service-type activities. This is well illustrated by reports by Srs Patricia Byrne and Margaret Culhane on their respective involvements with the Vietnamese and African communities in Perth. Sr Patricia writes of taking new arrivals
Similarly, Sr Margaret speaks of giving extra tuition in English to Sudanese women, arranging transport to Mass, giving massage to a deeply traumatised Sudanese woman, hospital visits, assistance to an Algerian asylum seeker in the Perth Detention Centre, making home visits, organizing outings to the beach for newly arrived families etc. Such social service type activity can also occur with older-established communities and helps to sustain the ethnic and religious identity of the group. Thus Fr Nikola Cabraja, the migrant chaplain to the Croatian community, runs a Croatian ethnic school where students learn the language and faith of their ancestors.

Like the MA, the St Vincent de Paul MRC has and does direct its work mainly, but not exclusively, to Catholics among the recent refugee communities in Perth, helping to provide these people with the material goods needed for settlement, especially when they move into private housing. The Spirit Newsletter gives some idea of this material assistance to newcomers:

Many migrants, refugees and asylum seekers arrive each year in Western Australia, some with little more than the clothes they were wearing. Settling in a new country is never easy but Vinnies helps to make the transition as trauma-free as possible. ... The MRC assists almost two thousand new arrivals from up to 20 countries every year. That assistance takes many forms, including the provision of household items, clothing

---

775 Sr Patricia Byrne, “Report on Involvement with the Vietnamese Catholic Community”, MA Archives, no date cited.
776 Sr Margaret Culhane, “Report on Involvement with the African Community in the Northern Suburbs”, MA Archives, no date cited. Such information was reinforced by the interview with her on 29 January, 2008.
778 Annual Reports for 1990, 8, 1991-92, 9, and 1995, 28, also speak of Committee members’ visits to government immigration blocks of units at Tuart Hill, Osborne Park and Beaconsfield, during the period of their existence.
vouchers and, in conjunction with Chisholm Catholic College, Christmas Hampers. The Committee also assists in the granting of loans to newcomers. 779

In addition, the Committee endeavours to assist new arrivals to integrate into the community and, where Catholic, to introduce them to territorial parishes in their vicinity.

With the former work it is aided by the “Young Vinnies” section of the Society, particularly in relation to the holding of migrant and refugee picnics. The Vinnies’ Youth Newsletter for 2006 provides a summary of one of these picnics.

The migrant picnic was a really fun event. A group of a young adult volunteers and Young Vinnies from Sacred Heart College joined Br Geoff Seaman and the MRC at Carine Open Space to meet up with a number of families who had just arrived in Australia. Most of the kids were from Africa and some had only been here for five months. Many of the kids in these families couldn’t even speak English so we had to get older brothers and sisters to translate. …

We introduced the kids to a variety of games … . It was a really fun day and we left with a number of new friends and great memories. 780

Unlike the MA and the St Vincent De Paul MRC, the remaining four bodies had and have outreach to a more pluralistic range of migrants and refugees which includes non-Christian and other Christian as well as Catholic clientele. CMS offers a broad range of services, although nowhere near so extensive as its predecessor in the early years of its existence. Initially the CMC had endeavoured to cover a wide range of loosely-linked activities which included personal, marriage and family counselling and advice on

779 St Vincent de Paul Society WA, The Spirit Newsletter, 1, (2006), 5. The Annual Report for 2008, 39, indicates that 120 Christmas hampers were distributed in December, 2007. The reference to loans refers to Leviticus Loans, set up by Mercy Community Services but aided in its operation by the Migrant and Refugee Committee. See Annual Reports for 1998-1999, 14, 2002, 22, 2003, 19, 2004, 17, 2005, 12 and 206, 14. Leviticus Loans, which provided interest-free loans to selected applicants for larger household items such as “white goods”, is no longer functioning. Prior to Leviticus Loans the Committee facilitated the Australian Government’s Calfric Loans; see Annual Reports for 1981-82, 1983, 1986, 1987,13, 199-92, 9 and 1995, 28. The Committee also assists the Christian Brothers in providing interest-free travel loans to enable relatives in WA to pay for airfares so that their refugee relatives can travel to Australia. With all the loans the expectation was/is that the recipients should repay these loans as they can. Information from interview with Br Geoff Seaman, 16 January, 2007.

780 St Vincent de Paul Society WA, Vin-Sent, (July 2006), 3. In the 2008 Annual Report, 39, special mention is made of the assistance of the staff and students of Sacred Heart College to help entertain the some 100 newly arrived refugee families who attended.
household budgeting, immigration sponsorship or general welfare to English teaching, child-care assistance and facilitation of the Child Migration Scheme. In addition, it had assisted the establishment of clubs for different ethnic groups and, from August 1996 to July 1998, published seven issues of a newsletter entitled “Welcome”. It even facilitated research, talks and two conferences. Throughout its autonomous history the CMC’s goals, objectives and pastoral praxis display an affinity with the mandate given to the diocesan immigration offices by the Australian bishops in 1950 and endeavour to give “teeth” to the mission and philosophical principles of the Centre’s ministry.

The Corporate Plan, which first appeared in the Ninth Annual Report of mid-1994, indicates a growing maturity of the Centre’s thinking about its role as a provider of pastoral care to migrants and refugees. Particularly from mid-1998 the CMC became

---

781 This information has been gleaned from a close study of the CMC Annual Reports, Nos 1-19, from 30 June, 1986 to 30 June, 2004, CMC Newsletters, 1996-1998 and an interview with its first director.
783 These talks were given by staff to parish and community groups and also via radio interviews and displays. Staff were encouraged to attend talks and seminars to extend their own awareness of pastoral care to migrants and refugees.
784 See 193, footnote 21.
785 The goals of the CMC first appeared in the Second Annual Report, 5-7, and, together with related objectives, were regularly included in subsequent reports to mid-1997.
786 This mandate called for sponsorship of migrants not qualifying for government assistance, arrangement of interest-free loans for migrants through the International Catholic Migrant Loan Fund, the provision of counselling services for migrants, the notification to parish priests of the location of migrants, liaison with government and other agencies concerned with migrants as well as with migrant chaplains. See Lewins, The Myth of the Universal Church, 45.
787 This maturity of thought was strongly influenced by financial constraints, see the Eighth Annual Report, year ended 30 June, 1992, 1-2, together with subsequent retrenchments of four members of staff, 3. Searle,
more streamlined in the pastoral care it offered and saw itself more purely as a “social service body” rather than a widespread dispenser of pastoral and spiritual care on behalf of the Catholic Church.788 Towards the end of its time as an autonomous body the Centre was offering eight basic services. These included a Community Settlement Service Scheme divided into two areas, one for general advocacy, casework and community work and the other for refugee youth settlement. Also for refugees the CMC provided an Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Scheme, again divided into two branches, the first for initial information and assistance to newly arrived refugees and the second for support to the proposers or sponsors of families and entrants under the Federal Government’s Special Humanitarian Programme. For migrants CMC facilitated Employment and Training Services, a Migration Advice Service and a Former Child Migrant Service. For ageing migrants, especially those in nursing homes, it provided a Community Visitors Scheme.789

These services have been carried over into CMS but have been further streamlined into six – the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy790, the agency’s predominant service which works with refugees and their families for the first six months after their arrival, linking them into government agencies like Medicare and Centrecare, teaching them life skills and the expectations of Australian society and government with regard to their integration; the Settlement Grant and Employment Directions Programme which

in my interview with him, also made this observation and commented that a related factor was that, with the Centre’s increasing reliance on government funding, it became heavily involved in the refugee settlement area.

788 This is evident from the Summary of Services which replaces the Corporate Plan in the Annual Report for that year, No. 13, 30 June, 1998, 8.
789 This summary is taken from the Nineteenth Annual Report of the CMC for the year ending 30 June, 2004, 6.
790 Afterwards referred to as IHSS.
follows on the pastoral care of refugees as well as providing for the practical needs of migrants; the Community Visitors Scheme; the Migrant Advice Service, and the Former Child Migrants Service.\textsuperscript{791} These six services involve CMS in outreach to a wide spectrum of the migrant and refugee community in Perth – the newly arrived, the partially-established, youth, elderly, especially those in aged care facilities, and the former child migrants. However, as its Manager pointed out, it works on a “hierarchy of needs” model. Consequently, increasingly since the 1990s its focus has been on newly arrived refugees.

Nevertheless, particular migrant needs are still catered for by the Community Visitors Scheme and the Former Child Migrant Service. This latter service was established as early as 1984 on behalf of the Christian Brothers, the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Nazareth and provides assistance and counselling to the former child migrants who came to Western Australia between 1938 and 1965 as well as access to personal records held on file\textsuperscript{792}, tracing of family members, assistance with applications for travel funds, provision of support and advocacy services and pastoral care.\textsuperscript{793} For its service of healing and reconciliation for former child migrants it works closely with the Professional Standards Resource Group (WA).\textsuperscript{794}

\textsuperscript{791} List taken from the Centrecare Annual Report 2006/2007, 12.
\textsuperscript{792} The Service holds over 900 personal files on record, according to Sr Flo Sullivan RSM, coordinator of the programme, interview carried out on 19 February, 2007.
\textsuperscript{793} Details from \textit{Former Child Migrants Service} brochure, no date given. Pastoral care also includes educational activities such as computer classes and social activities, see \textit{The CBERS Network}, 2, (November, 2006). The initials stand for Christian Brothers Ex-Residential Services which operated originally from premises in Subiaco. However, the acronym has now been adopted to describe the clientele themselves. Information also from interview with Sr Flo Sullivan RSM.
\textsuperscript{794} This group “provides advice and liaison with Church bodies in matters concerning professional standards in general and in relation to specific cases of alleged misconduct; oversees the procedures for
While the clientele of CMS come from the whole geographical spectrum of Perth, the ERCM caters to migrants and newly arrived refugees in the northern “corridor” of Perth, especially in the more inland northern suburbs. Significantly, as early as 1989 this northern metropolitan region had the highest concentration of migrant Catholics (72,754); a concentration which has now been increased and diversified through the settlement of refugees who are both Catholic and non-Catholic and who, together with Aboriginal people, form the majority constituency for the ERCM. The Centre provides generalist casework, referral and advocacy services to humanitarian entrants and new migrants, classes in English language, computer skills, cooking, sewing and art/craft for refugees, informal activities for refugees and indigenous youth as well as social events for families, Lifeskills development and education in household management and family care for recently arrived refugees. While generally the focus of its programmes is on education for living, the Centre has, in the past, collaborated with St Vincent de Paul MRC to provide refugee household assistance where needed. However, this assistance has been terminated due to a change in Commonwealth government policy.

---

795 Torreson, *A Dream, a Journey and Some Shoes*, 11. It is also a region which holds a high percentage of Perth’s Aboriginal population, hence the Centre’s outreach to them as well.

796 *Handbook*, 1.5. Its most recent activities, reported to me recently by the Director, are a driver education programme, began in July, 2008, and a youth leadership programme focussed on young people from new and emerging communities.

797 The Annual Report for the year ending 31 December, 2003, 4, notes that “during the year approximately 125 family units from 19 ethnic groups were given assistance by way of donated household items … in collaboration with the MRC of St Vincent de Paul.”
An innovative aspect of its pastoral care is directed toward women. So, a specific “Women Together” programme has as its aim “to provide an opportunity for women from refugee and non-refugee backgrounds to socialise with the focus on cooking”.

Every week a group of women from all over the world gather around a kitchen stove to share cooking experiences and the stories of their homelands. For all our diversity, there is a bond between us which is impossible to explain. So much of what we share is familiar, as there is a lot about food preparation that is universal. But there are always new ideas. Recipes and techniques to learn, and to inspire us to share yet another dish which is originated in homes in Afghanistan, Brazil, Vietnam, Liberia, Iraq, El Salvador, Iran or Sudan. … The group began as an attempt to provide a place for women who needed the company of other women, a place and time when they could just “be”, with a band of local women ready to help them sort out the many problems confronting them as they tried to adjust to a new culture and a new language. The stove was our common ground, where we could all be on an equal footing, free to teach each other without any need for classroom rules and roles.

A by-product of the programme is a reinforcement of English speaking by its participants. One of its other “fruits” has been a book publication which incorporates the refugee stories and shared recipes of nine women who have been part of the programme and who represent the cultures of the countries mentioned in the quotation.

As the book demonstrates, the Centre also encourages a multicultural interaction between its clients and Australian citizens. Even the more formal programmes themselves are used as opportunities for cultural integration social interaction and inclusiveness. Thus the Multicultural Sports and Recreations Programme is for migrant, refugee and indigenous youth while specific educational programmes like the General English and Conversational English are occasions for the building of intercultural harmony.

I’ll never forget going into an English class a couple of years ago and seeing a Buddhist nun, a Catholic nun, an Indian Sikh, a Muslim lady and … a number of other people in the class all learning English and I think that’s really what Edmund Rice is all about.

---

798 Lorraine McGinniss (ed.), feasts and friends – women and food from across the world (Fremantle: Arts Centre Press, 2005), 5 and 8.
The Centre also spearheads training in social justice principles. One of the ways in which this training is engendered is through its immersion days for students from five Catholic secondary schools in Perth - Mater Dei, Aquinas, Trinity, Servite, Chisholm Colleges.

Students … come to the Centre on particular days or particular times of the times of the year, depending on their approach, to do what we call mission service. Now we have a school service policy where we won’t take students unless they’re prepared beforehand. So … the school has to get us out to run a workshop in the school that covers a number of different things including aspects of working cross-culturally, social justice [etc.] So it’s some preparation rather than just using the Edmund Rice Centre as a place to send students for a day or whatever. And then, from time to time I get called upon to do retreats … to present say a La Salle College Year 12 retreat on social justice matters.  

Another extension of the multicultural interaction and social justice training is to parishes and community groups. This is often combined with social activities in which the parishes and groups have the opportunity to show hospitality to the migrant and refugee clientele of the Centre.

We try and encourage parishes to reach out particularly to migrants and refugees, just in simple ways like hospitality. Say, for instance, the North Perth Monastery hosts people from here once a year and they run a simple barbecue and games for the children. And people from all faiths and backgrounds go to it … they just love it. Last time they asked could they be shown through the Monastery church as they’d never seen it before.  

Other community groups and institutions have also been approached to show hospitality to the Centre’s migrant and refugee clientele. Hence the Centre’s Refugee Family Social Activities, “Women Together” and Refugee Youth leisure programmes include visits to a variety of venues. Guest speakers who give talks for the “Women Together” and Lifeskills Programme visitors to the Centre are yet another source of interaction.  

\[
\text{Ibid.} \\
\text{Ibid.} \\
\text{See examples in the Annual Reports for 2003, 4, 2005, 12-14 and 2006, 13 and 15.} \\
\text{See details in the Annual Report for 2005, 12-14.}
\]
well as multicultural and community interaction, the Centre also places a strong emphasis on inter-faith interaction with its innovative “Living in Harmony” weekends\textsuperscript{804} and visits through the Centre’s programmes to different religious institutions and marking important days such as Harmony Day.\textsuperscript{805}

More restricted in scope but nonetheless filling a clear need for welcome and integration was the pastoral care and settlement work of the MHHC, particularly to refugee women and children. It began as a refuge “where [any] women in need could go”, “a house of hospitality”, “a place where women could come and follow up their activities”.\textsuperscript{806} However, from 2001 when Sr Mary Keely was approached to provide pastoral care to the inmates of the Port Hedland Detention Centre till its closure in 2005, the House became more a “safe” place where women asylum-seekers and their families, especially those from Afghanistan and Iraq\textsuperscript{807}, could gather to interact with one another and pursue programmes like sewing and English and swimming lessons. Although not an official service provider with government funding, under Sr Maureen the MHHC also worked with CARAD\textsuperscript{808} to help refugees, especially those on TPVs and Bridging Visas, to find and settle into private housing.

\textsuperscript{804} See for more information about these “Living in Harmony” weekends in Ch. 7, 226.
\textsuperscript{805} Details from Annual Report, 2005, 12-14.
\textsuperscript{806} Interview with Sr Mary Keely. The House in its early days provided a centre of hospitality and sanctuary especially for Aboriginal women, Archdiocese of Perth Directory 2007-2008, 7.
\textsuperscript{807} Among its refugee clientele were also some African women. A number of its clientele had been detained at Port Hedland. Two such cases were Azar Rafiee (from Iran) and Najiba Nabizadah (from Afghanistan) whom I interviewed at the Mercy House of Hospitality on 19 June, 2006.
\textsuperscript{808} CARAD is an acronym for the Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees, an ecumenical, non-denominational body which was established in January, 2000 to assist especially undocumented asylum seekers, both in detention and on Temporary and Bridging Visas, with material needs and to help them integrate into the community.
Less tangible but very important benefits of the pastoral care of the MHHC were the confidence and self-esteem it engendered among its female clientele. Sr Mary commented on the growth of the women’s “confidence in being able to do things. One of our ladies has done a nursing course. ... It’s wonderful to see them driving cars.” As nearly all of the women who attended the House of Hospitality were Muslim, a sense of freedom was another intangible benefit.

[They were] so much freer when there were no men around. The fact that they could come in and take off their veils, swim in all sorts of attire; no bikinis, always covered, but feeling free and relaxed. But any sign of a man and out came the veil. We made sure that there were no men around. There were only children that they brought themselves … and there were volunteers looking after the children.

The IEC at Aranmore College also provides much more than solely skills in speaking and writing English to predominantly newly-arrived refugee young people as it prepares them for mainstream schooling. Activities over the years 2006-2008 have included swimming lessons, picnics, a camp at Rottnest Island, a cooking programme and training in football and other sports as well as excursions to a variety of venues. While Aranmore is one of a number of secondary schools in Perth which provide intensive English training for newly-arrived students, it is the only Catholic school in Western Australia to host such a centre even though most of the IEC’s clientele are not Catholic. Nearly all have come to Australia, either with their immediate families, other relatives and extended family or alone, under the Federal Immigration Department’s humanitarian refugee programmes.

---

809 This was Najiba, as revealed in my interview with her.
810 Interview with Sr Mary Keely.
811 Ibid.
812 Details from 2006-2008 Annuals, 51, 45 and 45 respectively.
The Centre operates three levels of teaching – elementary, intermediate and advanced - before the students proceed into mainstream schooling either at Aranmore or at other secondary schools. Manager, Greg Lowe, comments,

[Having an IEC means these Aranmore students can receive more personalised attention and tuition. This enables them to develop their skills and settle more quickly into the Australian way of life more easily.]

He added in a subsequent interview that the newly-arrived refugee youth don’t know how to be students in Australia. “So, they can’t take the initiative or responsibility for their own learning, doing homework …” and even thinking for themselves.

[The type of work which is required here … can be quite challenging because it requires concentration and … critical thinking; skills which they haven’t really got because they’ve never had to apply them.]

Consequently the learning curve is a steep one for them. There is a huge difference between those who have been in refugee camps and those who have migrated more directly to Perth from their countries of origin. The latter, as the Principal indicated, have “a strong educational background” and may only need six or twelve months of tuition in the IEC before they can proceed to mainstream school whereas the former may take up to up two or more years. Nevertheless, as testimonies by two IEC students indicate, the reward of being able to speak English competently is very important. Both stress the connection between this and integrating into Australian life and acquiring friends.

---

813 2006 Annual, 50.
814 Interview with Greg Lowe, 26 June, 2007.
815 Ibid.
816 Interview with Jim Elliott, 8 June, 2007.
Such a connection is particularly important when young refugees have entered Australia without their families.\textsuperscript{818}

Because the whole College is very diverse multiculturally, the activity of the Centre is carried out in an environment which is sensitive to the needs of students from different cultural backgrounds. Thus one of the College’s teachers acts as the coordinator for overseas students in the mainstream school, the mainstream school operates the ESL programme, the College celebrates Harmony Week each year and encourages visits from overseas students and groups on short-stay visits to Perth.\textsuperscript{819} For example, in 2006

\[ \text{At a special Paraliturgy [for Harmony Week] some students wore their national dress and others said prayers in their native tongue. During the homily Mr Elliott [the principal] encouraged students to view a stranger as a friend they haven’t met yet.} \textsuperscript{820} \]

Another activity, the result of which was launched on Harmony Day on 2\textsuperscript{nd} March, 2002, was the making of a video involving interviews with three ex-refugee students of the College - from Afghanistan, Bosnia and Rwanda – who speak movingly about their experiences of being a refugee, their reasons for leaving their countries of origin, their journey to Australia and their subsequent lives in Australia.\textsuperscript{821} One particular feature of both the IEC and the ESL is the attention to mentoring for the students and support for their families. The Annuals provide examples of visits to the IEC from CMS, ASeTTs and the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre personnel to provide counselling, life

\textsuperscript{818} See testimony of Sudanese student in ibid., 46.
\textsuperscript{819} Fourteen Thai students, with their teachers visited Aranmore, in 2006 to perfect their English.
\textsuperscript{820} 2006 Annual, 89.
\textsuperscript{821} In the Middle of Angels. The three young people featured in this video are all “success” stories for the College’s Intensive Language Centre in that they all progressed on to and successfully completed mainstream schooling in the College and are now out in the community pursuing further studies or careers.
skills workshops and family support\textsuperscript{822}, while in 2007 the ESL received a visit from some women of the Sudanese community in Perth to meet members of the pastoral and ESL teams. The coordinator of the ESL programme notes that

\begin{quote}
\textit{it was an extremely important and moving meeting which left us very connected and motivated to do more to bridge gaps between the College and the community.}\textsuperscript{823}
\end{quote}

## Conclusion

This chapter has examined the historical context in which the six bodies extending pastoral care to migrants and refugees arose, together with their perceived mission and the activities in which they have engaged. That these activities relate to the varying nature of the clientele of the bodies is evident when one asks the question “what stranger?” Thus CMS, the ERCM, the IEC of Aranmore College and the Mercy House of Hospitality have worked predominantly with newly arriving and integrating refugees while the Multicultural Apostolate has cared for and helped to maintain the different Catholic ethnic communities made up of longer term migrants and their families as well as more recently arrived refugees. The MRC of St Vincent de Paul WA has provided assistance to both newly arrived migrants and refugees, mainly Catholic.

Another distinction which the chapter has signalled is in relation to the nature of the bodies themselves. Thus five of them fall into the category of service providers, namely CMS, the ERCM, the MRC of St Vincent de Paul and, to an extent, the IEC of Aranmore College. Moreover, in the work of settlement and integration of newly arriving refugees, these service provision bodies operate in large or small part under government tender or

\textsuperscript{822} See the \textit{2006 Annual}, 50 and the \textit{2007 Annual}, 45
\textsuperscript{823} \textit{2007 Annual}, 58.
subsidy. However, it is equally clear that it is difficult to separate this provision of material services to migrants and refugees from spiritual and psychological pastoral care. Thus, even the MA is involved in attending to the material needs of especially the refugees in its newer ethnic communities and the previous MHHC provided both for the material as well as the spiritual needs of its mainly female clientele. Moreover, the so-called service-providers, like CMS, the ERCM and the MRC, are concerned with the spiritual and psychological welfare of their clientele, albeit not in a narrow denominationally religious sense.

This chapter is chiefly historical and descriptive and serves to provide an essential prelude for the following chapter which critically explores challenges and problems arising from the pastoral work carried out by the migrant-refugee care bodies. These challenges and problems cover a variety of issues including the changing ethnic and religious composition of the agencies’ clientele, implications of the current funding for service-providers and the nature of the Catholic identity of these Church-based bodies.

CHAPTER SEVEN
EMPIRICAL PRAXIS TOWARD MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PERTH – CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

Introduction

This chapter will complete the examination of empirical praxis toward migrants and refugees in the Archdiocese of Perth, begun in the previous chapter. It will critically explore challenges and issues which confront the migrant/refugee bodies in their task of pastoral care. These will encompass the changing ethnic and religious composition of migrant/refugee clientele, funding issues and their implications for policy directions, questions of Catholic identity and, finally, ongoing issues for the future.

Changing Ethnic and Religious Composition of Clientele

The five organizations which are still providing pastoral care to migrants and refugees have had and continue to face the specific challenge incurred through the varied as well as changing ethnic and/or religious composition of their clientele and the implications this has for their pastoral care and how it is carried out. To take one example of the diversity of ethnicities represented, during the years 2006-2008 Aranmore College IEC taught students from the Sudan, Zambia, Uganda, Afghanistan, Burma, Chile, Iran, Iraq,
Japan, Venezuela, Korea, Egypt, China, Poland, West Papua, Sierra Leone and the Congo.\textsuperscript{824}

All the organizations have been affected by the waves of migration from the different geographical regions of the world. Thus, as the IEC figures for 2006-2008 show, the majority of the students currently come from African nations, especially the Sudan, Zambia and Uganda.\textsuperscript{825} However, the Aranmore Principal commented in 2007,

\begin{quote}
This is my sixth year and before that there was a wave of Bosnian refugees. Prior to that there was a wave of Vietnamese refugees. In my time it changed from the Bosnian to the Sudanese and Afghans. We had those two groups very strongly. At the moment it’s still Sudanese and we’re expecting Burmese.\textsuperscript{826}
\end{quote}

In like mode the ERCM Director stated,

\begin{quote}
When [the Centre] first started there were very few Africans. People were mainly coming from Iraq with authorities trying to clear out refugee camps in Saudi Arabia after the Gulf War and then there was the big intake of Kosovo and Bosnian refugees. … [Recently] a reporter at Channel 7 wanted to interview me about the northern suburbs becoming a little Africa. … There are people from all different [African] groups - from Sudan, Liberia, the Congo, Eritrea, Somalia. It’s just amazing the variety of people. Sudan is the biggest group at the moment but it’s changing. There’s significant numbers of people coming from Burma. On the Thai border there’s a big refugee camp. That’s generally been my experience of how Australian immigration and humanitarian programmes operate.\textsuperscript{827}
\end{quote}

His impressions are confirmed by a recent Annual Report from the St Vincent de Paul MRC which notes that in the twelve months to June 2008 of the 1,273 refugees entering Western Australia the highest individual members were 372 Burmese, followed by 194 Sudanese.\textsuperscript{828}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{824} Details from 2006-2008 Annuals, 51, 45 and 45 respectively.
\textsuperscript{825} Idem.
\textsuperscript{826} Interview with Jim Elliott. This statement was confirmed by the IEC Manager in my interview with him.
\textsuperscript{827} Interview with Br Steve Bowman.
\textsuperscript{828} 2008, 40. Latest Humanitarian Entrants’ figures appear to show growing numbers of refugees from Sri Lanka.
\end{flushright}
Changing ethnic patterns of their clientele have been very evident also in the history of CMS and its predecessor, the CMC. Thus, in the second year of the CMC’s existence, of the 51 nationalities represented by clients the single largest ethnic group was Vietnamese, closely followed by Filipinos and the Chileans.\textsuperscript{829} By the middle years of its operations the Centre’s clientele represented 65 different nationalities, of which the largest groups were from El Salvador, the former Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.\textsuperscript{830} Another significant change had occurred by the Centre’s final years with the majority of its refugee clientele coming from the sub-Saharan Africa with the largest groups arriving from the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi.\textsuperscript{831}

CMS’ Executive Manager confirmed that since 2004 similar changing ethnic patterns have continued. He also pointed out the linguistic challenge that this has posed for CMS.

\begin{quote}
Africa has more than two hundred official languages and there’s over seven hundred dialects in that country, whereas previously when we were dealing with the Middle East – with Afghan and Eastern European clients – certainly there was much less diversity of language within that group. We’ve got so many staff who speak [those] languages that we could get by. One of our case-workers actually speaks seven languages and he still has African clients for whom he needs a translator. And even with Swahili, which is one of the main African languages, there’s three different regions of Swahili, and they can’t communicate with each other.\textsuperscript{832}
\end{quote}

The IHSS Team Leader spoke about the importance of bilingual workers in the reception of refugee arrivals at Perth airport.\textsuperscript{833} Such a linguistic challenge applies to the other services providing pastoral care to newly arrived refugees who, like CMS, rely on the translation services from those refugees who have acquired sufficient fluency in English.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{829} CMC, First Annual Report, 30th June, 1986, 18.  \\
\textsuperscript{830} CMC, Tenth Annual Report for 30 June, 1995, 77.  \\
\textsuperscript{831} CMC, Nineteenth Annual Report for 30 June, 2004, 10.  Smaller numbers also came from Rwanda, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Burma.  \\
\textsuperscript{832} Interview with Nigel Calver, 7 January, 2008.  Comments from eight of the nine personnel of CMS interviewed reinforced this statement  \\
\textsuperscript{833} Interview with Siobhan Foley, 30 January, 2007.
\end{flushright}
The changes in the ethnic composition of the services’ clientele is related to the change in their status at the time of their arrival in Australia. At first they could be classified as migrants and displaced persons but, increasingly, the newly arriving clientele have come as refugees. From approximately the mid-1990s until c. 2003 many of these newly arriving refugees were undocumented asylum seekers who were incarcerated in detention centres after their arrival on Australian shores. When asked about this the Aranmore IEC Manager replied,

Certainly the Middle Easterners [i.e. those from Iraq and Iran] and some of the Afghans were in detention before being released and then they found their way here. So, we’ve been through that whole boat people-detention centre saga, particularly with what happens to the young children and the mind-set that they come away with from that experience.

Because of the harsh conditions of the TPVs and the Bridging Visas issued to newly released detention centre asylum seekers material needs and psychological support were very much the concern of the CMC from 1992. In that year the Centre launched a community refugee assistance group in conjunction with the Conference of Churches WA “to assist people arriving in Western Australia under the government’s refugee and special humanitarian programmes as asylum seekers.” Then in mid-1994 it was searching for premises to be used as sanctuary for undocumented asylum-seekers “who have no access to financial, medical, housing and educational assistance.” Other migrant and refugee pastoral care agencies, for example, the ERCM from its

---

834 Naturally, there is a continuum between refugee and migrant. Thus, all refugees, if they stay, eventually become migrants.
835 Undocumented asylum seekers are still arriving on Australian shores but, with the exception of the offshore centre on Christmas Island, the detention centres within Australian borders are now closed. As well, the present Labor Commonwealth Government has prepared legislation which will severely limit the incarceration of any undocumented asylum seekers in detention centres and exclude women and children.
836 Interview with Greg Lowe.
837 CMC, Ninth Annual Report, 30 June, 1994, 37
commencement in 1998, the Mercy House of Hospitality Carlisle and the St Vincent de Paul MRC, also offered material and psychological assistance to undocumented asylum seekers and this was the reason for the formation of the aforementioned organization, CARAD.  

At the present time most of the refugees entering Australia are doing so mainly under the Australian Federal Government’s Humanitarian Refugee Programme. Either they come under the 200 class visas which are government-sponsored or else they enter using the 202 class visas under which the recipients are sponsored by a church-based organisation or the family or friends/compatriots of the recipient. The Team Leader of IHSS Coordination noted that most of the Middle Eastern immigrants are now coming in under the 202 proposer visa, i.e., that families are proposing and sponsoring them for resettlement in Australia. The immediate past chairperson of the MRC pointed out that about half of the humanitarian refugees who come to Australia are required to pay their own way and, therefore, the interest-free loans provided, for example, by the Christian Brothers are essential.

For the MA this combination of changing waves of ethnicity together with growing numbers of refugees seeking pastoral care has been manifested in the newer emerging ethnic Catholic communities in the Archdiocese. Ethnic communities like those of the Sudanese and Ugandan Catholics are largely made up of refugees who have come from

---

838 See Ch. 6, 210, footnote 81.
839 Interview with Siobhan Foley. Not all refugees have come in on 2002 visas. For example, Aranmore’s IEC has and has had a number of African students who are without parents or relatives in Australia. Interviews with Jim Elliott and Greg Lowe; also see video In the Middle of Angels and 2007 Annual, 46.
refugee camps like Karcuma in Kenya after fleeing from war-torn Sudan or the Lord’s Resistance Army in northern Uganda. Even the longer-established Burmese community is not immune from this given the increasing numbers of Karen Catholics now entering Australia as refugees from the military regime in Burma. This has presented challenges for the MA not only with regard to the provision of migrant chaplains, together with parish priests, who can speak to the newer communities in their own languages and relate to them culturally, but also in terms of the differing needs of these newer arrivals which relate as much to settlement matters and social and economic integration as they do to sacramental and worship issues.

Nevertheless, the issue of worship has been and is a common concern for all the ethnic communities, whether they be older established or newer establishing ones. “Ethnic communities are communities bound by race, by religion, by national culture and [by] language.” Therefore, worship and religious practice, particularly for first generation Catholic migrants and refugees, is much more than simply celebrating Mass in their native tongues. Each ethnic community has its own particular style of worshipping and, consequently, it is crucial to assist the communities to inculturate their faith in ways with which first generation Catholic migrants and refugees can identify. Such was reflected in three weekend workshops organized and hosted by the MA in 2006. The first two of these involved presentations by different ethnic communities and the third incorporated a “percolation of reflections on two major [and common] themes – identity and

---

841 Interview with Fr Antonio Paganoni.
community." This concern has its specific dimensions which are related to the changing waves of migration. Thus,

[while the aim of immigrants is always to integrate into the society [into] which they [come], many elements that made their Catholic faith so vibrant back home – even when that home persecuted them just for believing – simply don’t exist in many Australian parishes.]

The force of this can be demonstrated by looking at the religious culture that post World War II migrants and displaced persons brought with them.

The first generation Italian immigrants – Italians, Polish or Germans – arrived with their own religious heritage and somehow they have maintained it because that’s what they arrived with and that’s what they have remained with – the Italian fiestas, the cult of the saints and the dead, ... anniversary masses being celebrated with a lot of extended family members participating.

The present question for such ageing ethnic communities is how is this religious/cultural heritage to be maintained into the second and third generations.

The second and third generation Italian descendants attended Catholic schools. They are lost to the Church. [However], some of them are beginning to wake up. They’re beginning to question why their nonno or nonna or great-grandfather did certain things. So some of the stories have been kept within the home environment. And so now the role of the third and fourth generation is to re-trace the steps ... Most have been secularised. Most have looked upon the spontaneous, natural religiosity of their grandparents or great-grandparents with a certain amount of coldness and disdain. ... Others are well-disposed to accepting the religious legacies of their forefathers. [But] they look on their heritage as something distant.

---

842 Discussion with Fr Antonio Paganoni. Unfortunately, no documentation was available from these workshops.
843 Barich, “Migrants come alive when tradition is nurtured”, 10. Barich cites the opinions of the new Vicar for Migration.
845 Interview with Fr Antonio Paganoni.
These statements reinforce the importance of the Croatian migrant chaplain’s activity in running a Croatian ethnic school which keeps “that vital connection with tradition that enkindles the fire of [the Croatian] faith.”

Newer ethnic communities also share in this need to worship according to their national cultural heritage, although their emphases may be different.

The Vietnamese community’s base at Westminster is a “hive of activity”. On special feast days, several hundred will come for a full day and night’s worth of events, starting with Mass, then a procession, then marriage and family instruction that last until 9 pm. “With the Communist background that their parents and grandparents endured, the family unit and traditions are crucially important to the Vietnamese.”

Consequently, a number of the ethnic communities, both old and new, either have their own place of worship with their own priests like the Ukrainian, Vietnamese and African communities or else have special masses in their own language within territorial parishes, like the Croatian, Spanish Italian, Polish and Chinese communities. The previous Vicar for Migration emphasized the importance of the chaplain to the maintenance of the religious life of the ethnic communities. “The dilemma is weakening the sense of community by taking the priest out and giving him the added responsibility [of a territorial parish] – it is a risk.”

Such endeavours to maintain the religious life of the ethnic communities are not only part of upholding the nexus between ethnicity and religion but also impinge on the issue of

---

846 Barich, “Migrants come alive when tradition is nurtured”, 10.
847 Ibid., 10. In this quotation Barich is citing Fr Blasco Fonseca.
848 For more detail about places of worship for the ethnic communities see the Archdiocese of Perth Directory.
849 Interview with Fr Antonio Paganoni.
hospitality to the stranger. The difficulty of attempting to integrate especially newer migrants and refugees into territorial parishes and the tensions which can arise are issues of which the immediate past Chairperson of the St Vincent de Paul MRC is well aware.

As part of their happy settlement in Australia we would like to ensure that those of them, particularly those who are Catholic, are able to preserve their Catholic faith strongly; that they will feel a particular welcome from the Catholic Church. Not that that applies just to those who are Catholic. … we are looking to welcome everybody, no matter who they are. [But] we have that extra level of concern. Catholic refugees coming in should benefit from a special attention from the Church. … One of the things that does concern me is that there are other groups of [Christian] people, I think, with pretty good intentions, and, if the Church doesn’t offer a welcome and help them, they certainly will and the Catholic refugees will find themselves just giving their [religious] allegiance elsewhere. And I think that is a pity.  

His views were confirmed by the migrant chaplain to the African communities who stressed the alienation for the Sudanese, as well as other African, Catholics from worshipping in an Anglo-Celtic style:

Here we come to the church, the Mass is 40 to 45 minutes, very short you know, but in Africa it’s a different thing. Sunday means a day of prayer and they come and the Mass lasts two hours with the loudest singing and clapping hands and afterwards they are around the church. They socialise, they get to know each other. It is a community; not just to come as a family and disappear afterwards … and they love it if you celebrate in Arabic! They know the songs and other things and they feel at home whereas English remains a foreign language. … [W]e have a big choir and we have the liturgical dance group.

The new Vicar for Migration believes that territorial parishes can do much more in embracing these groups into their own parish life and worship, for example, by working into their liturgy the cultural music played by an ethnic community. He asks,

If people see Sudanese drums or South American guitar music, are the people in the pews, likely to frown, or will they think ‘these people are part of the universal Church?’

---

850 Interview with Br Geoff Seaman.
851 Interview with Fr Albert Saminedi SDB, 16 May, 2007.
852 Barich, “Migrants come alive when tradition is nurtured”, 10.
The other important changing challenge for migrant/refugee pastoral care providers within the Archdiocese relates to growth of the percentage of non-Christians as well as other-Christian affiliations among the migrants and refugees since the beginning of the 1990s. This is particularly relevant to three of the five still-existing bodies – the CMS, the ERCM and the IEC of Aranmore College – and, once again, has important considerations for the nature and quality of the pastoral care exercised by the relevant bodies, especially in its spiritual dimension and in relation to cultural sensitivity and respect.

Therefore, whereas originally the CMC was established predominantly to cater for Catholic migrants and refugees, an expectation which was reflected in the nature of their activities, the clientele from especially the middle years of the 1990s has reflected the growing number of the non-Christian people among the population of Western Australia, particularly adherents of Islam. The Coordinator of Volunteers for IHSS Case Coordination commented that, while most of the refugees received by CMS are still Christian, it also receives Muslims from Somalia, Eritrea and elsewhere in Africa, and earlier, from the Middle East, as well as the occasional Buddhists from Burma and elsewhere in Asia. He also commented on the number of other Christian religions represented by the current clients of CMS, especially Pentecostalism.

---

853 See Ch. 5, 154-5.
854 Idem.
855 Interview with Volker Schafer, 24 January, 2007. This information was confirmed by the interview on 6 February, 2007, with one of the case workers for the IHSS, Christina Ward. She added that “a lot of the Burmese are Baptist” while a number of the African clients are Pentecostal.
CMS no longer attempts to cater for the specific religious needs of its clients and attempts to remain as non-sectarian as possible. Thus, the Team Leader of IHSS Case Coordination commented:

I think that when families first come over they are very vulnerable in that they are trying to learn and they’re so eager to learn and [are] also trying to fit in that I don’t see it as my role to push them in any [religious] direction. You know what I mean, like to judge whatever their belief system is.856

She also stressed the importance of refugee pastoral carers in endeavouring to understand the newcomers’ belief systems and, in that way, “have a conversation with them, that’s not done in a judgmental or condescending way; that Australia is based on a Christian nation.”857

However, as one of the case-workers indicated, when requested, she does suggest churches where her clients might go. In this she receives information from the only religious sister among CMS personnel about local Catholic churches. She also mentioned the popularity of the Pentecostal Church in Cannington, especially for African refugees, irrespective of whether they are Catholic or not, because of then open welcome it provides.

A couple [who are Catholic] have gone along and come back to me and said “It was great just having that community support.” No-one’s trying to convert them. It’s just that they don’t have Swahili services in Catholic churches here. Whereas in the Pentecostal [church], because there are so many Africans who are Pentecostal and a lot of them are deeply religious, they are able to listen to a service in Swahili without any pressure on conversion … they are not asked for money or told they are only able to come if they go to the service. They can sit on the lawn and wait for the service to be finished and then have a cup of tea. And I’ve found that that’s really added to the settlement process. And then when they’re confident … and they’ve got a bit of English then they can move on to their particular religious services.858

856 Interview with Siobhan Foley.
857 Ibid.
858 Interview with Christina Ward. It is salutary to put this anecdote alongside the comments by Br Geoff Seaman and Fr Saminedi, 224.
Like CMS, the ERCM encourages openness to religious affiliation as well as ethnicity, even though a significant number of its staff and volunteers are retired religious and an affinity with the charism of Edmund Rice is encouraged.

[W]e build into our programmes Scripture … and training for people in terms of working cross-culturally, … We also build in opportunities for people to spend time in reflection, based on the Scriptures, the Gospels, or even the writings of Edmund Rice, or writings from other religions.859

In particular, the Centre fosters an inter-faith as well as multicultural dimension through its “Living in Harmony” weekends which are intended to facilitate understanding and acceptance of the changing ethnic and religious composition of Western Australia’s population. For these weekends the Centre invites people from different religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds to spend a weekend at the Trinity College camp in Dwellingup.

We take about thirty or forty people … about five who come from a Muslim background, five from a Buddhist background, five from a Catholic Christian background, five from Ba’hai or another group … [W]e have the local indigenous people sharing their stories –both personal and cultural – and they take people on a bush walk, explaining their foods and everything. And then we have opportunities for individuals to share their own personal story in small groups. And then after that we have presentations by the four or five different religious groups that are represented. And basically these look at their founder, their basic theological principles, their practices, and then people from other groups can ask a question that puzzles them … . And then at the end … on the Sunday we have a multi-faith service. And they are just the most amazing experiences. … I think [the weekends] do a lot to build greater understanding between peoples and emphasize the spirituality that binds us together rather than that which divides us.860

In contrast, Aranmore College, while recognising and respecting the presence of non-Christian refugee students in the IEC, requires the Centre’s students to participate in the

859 Interview with Br Steve Bowman.
860 Ibid. ERCM’s weekends carry into practice the sort of dialogue called for by Erga migrantes.
The Principal, when asked about whether having non-Christians in the school presented difficulties, replied:

Not usually because I do go through that very carefully with them at interview time. We did have one occasion when two boys came in and they were fairly new refugees and I said to them: ‘Religious education is part of it and morning prayer’ and they said: ‘Well, we’re Muslim’. I said; “Yes, I know. We have other Muslim kids in the school and it’s not a problem. Yes, you do have to do religious education … and be attentive at morning prayer. You need to come to Mass whenever we have that.” There was a bit of an exchange and I said: ‘I think you’d better go away and think about that and take it on board’. But most of them say: ‘Yes, that’s O.K.’ So there’s probably a range of Muslims from the very fundamental to those who are very much attuned to what we’re on about. … In the main they take it on board and they’re quite interested in learning about the Catholic faith. … They’re a good source of questions and make class more interesting than our Catholic kids. … Extraordinary things happen from time to time. One of the non-Catholic Vietnamese girls last year started a prayer group.862

The Manager of the IEC also pointed to a positive benefit of the exposure of non-Christian, especially Muslim, students to Catholicism:

We’ve had a lot of Muslim students – we still do – on campus but I think certainly with the families it opens their eyes to the fact that Catholicism is not, should never be seen as, threatening in a violent way. Challenging, yes, but not threatening. We’re not fundamental and I think that comes through. … A few years ago … we had two of three fundamental Muslims – this was 9/11 – and their response was quite different … . They were quite pleased with the events of 9/11 much to the shock of some of the other Muslim [students] and it became quite clear that one was more of a political agenda perhaps but they were getting it confused with Islam. … Hopefully [the majority] are able to understand that Aranmore is a little bit different and they can put their finger on the fact that it is Jesus. … I have found that with the Muslim students [the Virgin] Mary is a really God bringer together of the communality thing. So I teach them the ‘Hail Mary’ and I just say: ‘Look, you can say mother of Jesus instead of Mother of God if that’s awkward for you at the moment’ and they’re very happy to do that.863

---

861 Interview with Greg Lowe. Greg is a lay deacon in the Perth Archdiocese.
862 Interview with Jim Elliott.
863 Interview with Greg Lowe.
Funding issues

One of the common features of most of the services still exercising pastoral care toward migrants and refugees in the Archdiocese of Perth is their increasing reliance on funding from DIAC as well as other non-Catholic, predominantly government, sources. The main exception is the MA whose personnel are funded through priestly and religious stipends. Other exceptions are two of CMS’ programmes - the Former Child Migrant Service which, since its inception, has been funded by the three religious orders – the Christian Brothers, the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Nazareth – who participated in the child migrant scheme, and the Migrant Advice Service which is staffed by volunteer lawyers providing pro bono services.

In the cases of CMS, the ERCM, Aranmore’s IEC, and to an extent, St Vincent de Paul’s MRC this increasing reliance on funding from particularly government sources relates to the nature of their work as service-providers for either the settlement needs of newly arriving refugees or the linguistic and educational needs of non-English-speaking immigrant students. This has involved the first two working under contract or tender, while the MRC receives a government subsidy and the IRC receives grants and monies through the new arrival entitlements and their Health Care cards.

Initially, the predecessor of CMS, the CMC was funded predominantly from the Archdiocese itself and only received occasional grants from various Federal and State bodies. However, while sources of funding remained the same over the years of its existence, the proportion of funding changed significantly, especially from 1993 with the
severe funding cuts in Archdiocesan finance to a number of its agencies, including the CMC. This led to financial crisis for the CMC and, in turn, staff retrenchment and much demoralization, causing the then Director of the Centre to refer to 1993 as an “annus horribilis”. In a later interview he spoke of the period and the consequent results:

In the first half [of my period as Director] the Archdiocese invested really heavily in migrant services and so were able to pay my own salary, we had a full-time welfare worker, a full time social worker. We were able to provide those kinds of services, but then when the Archdiocese had financial problems … it was a very difficult time. And then the government started providing lots of funding. You know, they gave it out to community organisations and that’s how we got heavily involved in the refugee settlement area. We diversified a lot.

Towards the end of the Centre’s autonomous life funding from DIAC, or as it was then known, the Federal Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, had clearly become very important to the Centre’s pastoral activities, especially to the growing number of its refugee clientele. Thus, in the financial year 2002-2003 DIAC provided an estimated 47% of the Centre’s funding and 46% in the financial year 2003-2004. This was primarily through contracts and tenders for the provision of such services as the IHSS, the Community Settlement Services Scheme, the Refugee Youth Settlement Service and the Immigration Advice and Assistance Service. Such Federal government contracts and tenders for this work were supplemented by the funding from the WA Department of Education and Training and Employment and Training Services.

---

864 Eighth Annual Report, year ending 30 June, 1993, 1. He added that the CMC had been “the largest recipient of Archdiocesan core funding bar one and has therefore been second in line for the most severe cuts.” These funding cuts help to explain the paring down and streamlining of the Centre’s pastoral work as well as a greater reliance on the use of volunteers. Nevertheless, the Archdiocese continued to underpin the Centre’s use of premises in Victoria Square. Towards the conclusion of this research CMS was proposing to move to premises in Cannington.

865 Interview with Gerald Searle.

866 Details from “Sources of Funding” diagrams in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Annual Reports, for years ending 30 June, 2003, 5, and 30 June, 2004, 5. As well as the continuing funding of the Former Child Migrant Programme by the three relevant religious orders, small funding inputs came from community and state government bodies like the Law Society of Western Australia, the WA Office of Multicultural Interests, the Lotteries Commission and the Foundation for Young Australians as well as from donations.
Since the absorption of CMC into Centrecare 80% of Centrecare’s funding comes from State and Federal Government and, as indicated, all the services provided by CMS, with the exception of two, are funded by tender.\textsuperscript{867} Indeed, one of the reasons for the need for the CMC to once again come under the stable of Centrecare services was related to funding issues and the ability of a larger, incorporated organization to contract successfully for tenders. As the Centrecare Director stated,

The funding requirements of government and the accountability systems that they required were such that the CMC was finding it hard to meet those expectations and, given its size, it struggled to manage to have the managerial systems that it would need to actually have to get the type of funding which would enable it to get on with its work in the long run. So it was more like a capacity constraint that the CMC faced at this time [c. 2004] and they then approached us as to whether or not our organization would be willing to take entire responsibility for it.\textsuperscript{868}

Such funding is also imperative for the professionally trained staff required particularly for adequate pastoral care to newly arriving refugees. Such is evident from the following comment by the Director in relation to the highly specialized and newly instituted Trauma Counselling Service of CMS, also funded by DIAC.

The whole service is only for six months. {But} the issue is not about how long. … The issue is about affordability and the source of funding for that sort of expenditure is government funding. There are no other sources of funding. So, if you’re going to have a trained worker who has to be paid fifty to sixty thousand dollars a year, because to provide any other service would not be to do justice to the people receiving that service, unless you’ve got access to those funds you couldn’t provide the service that you would like. … The amount of services we can provide is always going to be limited by the limit of our resources.\textsuperscript{869}

His statement about adequately remunerating staff is salient when the numbers of professional personnel are taken into account. In the case of CMS its IHSS programme

\textsuperscript{867} Centrecare Annual Report for 2006/2007, 13 and interview with Nigel Calver.

\textsuperscript{868} Interview with Tony Pietropiccolo.

\textsuperscript{869} Ibid.
alone employs fourteen people.\textsuperscript{870} Another issue of funding, especially through government contracts and tenders, is that the funding is often short-term with most of the contracts being one year, sometimes three years. This also impacts on staffing, making it “hard to find good people who are willing to be employed just for a year at a time.”\textsuperscript{871}

The ERCM and Aranmore College’s IEC are similarly dependent on outside, especially government, funding to upkeep their work. In the case of the ERCM twenty-two of its paid staff (part-time) are funded by various grants.\textsuperscript{872} The 2006 Annual Report of the ERCM included in its sources of funding Commonwealth Government contracts for its Settlement Grants and Lifeskills for Living in Australia programmes as well as grants from the Departments of Education and Training, Sport and Recreation and Corrective Services of the State Government for its First/Second Click Computer, Multicultural Sport and Youth Leisure and Indigenous Children’s programmes.\textsuperscript{873} The Chairperson of its Committee of Management emphasized that government funding had been instrumental in the growth of the Centre from March, 1998, as well as being of mutual benefit to both parties:

[The Centre] was set up in a very small capacity and increasingly … there were more migrants and refugees coming to Australia each year and government policy was changing. Less government agencies were set up with the responsibility to look after newly arrived migrants and refugees and increasingly they were looking to non-government agencies, particularly the church agencies, to fulfil some of the knots of the requirements that you need to provide for newly arrived migrants and refugees. … So there were more and more refugees, more and more grants, and the agency grew from a

\textsuperscript{870} Details from a subsequent discussion with CMS Executive Manager, 25 March, 2009.
\textsuperscript{871} Interview with Dr Tony Curry, Chairperson of Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Committee of Management, 22 January, 2008.
\textsuperscript{872} Details from a subsequent discussion with ERCM Director, 25 March, 2009.
\textsuperscript{873} ERCM Annual Report, 2006, 2. The Report also notes support from the Christian Brothers (“Women Together”, English as a Second Language, Youth leisure and Indigenous Children’s programmes), St John of God Foundation (“Women Together” programme) and Lottery West (volunteer training) as well as its own fundraising initiatives.
“one-man band” with probably a turnover, I’m guessing, of around $20 thousand to, by early 2000, six times that and then in the last four or five years it’s tripled again. So our turnover at the moment is something like $350 thousand. In real terms this is relatively small but, considering what [the Centre] was ten years ago …, it’s been amazing.874

Aranmore’s IEC relies heavily on government funding, chiefly, the one-off new arrivals’ grant from the DIAC for permanent residents who need English language training. The Manager pointed out that for African students this can be quite substantial. Moreover, the College itself has a stake in Commonwealth grants and, if the IEC students proceed to mainstream schooling, it can claim from the refugee students’ Health Care cards.875 However, it is never sufficient. As the Principal pointed out,

When they first come … and it’s their first time in an Australian school, we do get a new arrivals’ grant for them but we use that for uniforms, multi-rider bus tickets and, often, books. So a lot of that money is chewed up there, and then we’ve got to try and provide staff in the IEC for them as well. … At the moment we’re not doing that terribly well because we have thirty-five students …[and] only three teachers. So, we’ve put in for a couple of grants recently to seek for more assistance.876

Student numbers within the IEC grew from 23 in 2006 to 33 in 2007 and 32 in 2008 but the three full-time teachers remained constant in number.877 Not only numbers but also the ethnic diversity of the IEC students and the personalised attention necessary in IEC teaching increases the pastoral strain for the three IEC staff.

As the above comments indicate, such a situation has significant implications for the quality of the pastoral work carried out by migrant/refugee agencies and, naturally, there are negative as well as positive aspects. Not only is there the need for greater

874 Interview with Dr Tony Curry.
875 Discussion with Greg Lowe, 16 March, 2009. It should be added that the College charges minimal fees for IEC students proceeding to the mainstream.
876 Interview with Jim Elliott.
877 Details from 2006-2008 Annuals, 51, 46 and 45 respectively.
accountability of these bodies to government if their tenders and contracts are to continue but much paperwork is involved. So, for example, a Service Agreement between the then Department for Immigration, Migrants and Indigenous Affairs in September/October, 2003, in relation to the provision of community settlement services to migrants by the ERCM, indicated the need for regular reporting “through provision of Milestone Reports, Client Service Statistical Reports and a final report at the end of the Funded Term.”

While less constraining, there is also constant need to be vigilant about the possibility of government funding requirements on the quality of the services offered. When asked about this in relation to the autonomy of CMS the Executive Manager replied,

Yes and no. On the outside they (DIAC) turn round and say “Here’s the money. You run the programmes. As long as you get the outcomes that are set down, how you get those outcomes is up to you”, but then there’s that underlying ‘Don’t do it that way. Do it this way’ or ‘We’d rather you did more of this than that’. So they say, on the one hand, “You guys have control over it’ and then, on the other hand, they come in subtly and say ‘We’d like to have a bit more control than we say we do’. … I guess it’s a bureaucratic thing of them monitoring because their whole motivation is (a) don’t spend any more money than you have to and (b) make sure nothing happens which is going to come into the Senate estimates. … They’re their two main concerns. … Whereas my view is that we want to create the best possible environment for our clients and meet the needs that they actually have as opposed to what the government says they should be provided with. So, in that respect, if it’s keeping [DIAC] happy and it doesn’t affect what happens to the client, I’ll do it. But, if keeping [DIAC] happy has a direct negative effect on the client I’ll say “No, I’m not doing that”.

Centrecare’s Director reinforced Calver’s views,

I think there can be some situations where government funding can become so routine and so devoid of consideration of people’s needs that it can become very mechanistic if you allow it to. The issue is to what extent does the organisation ameliorate that with government to make sure that people are still being treated in a respectful way.

---

878 ERCM, Service Agreement between DIAC and the Trustees of Christian Brothers WA Inc. – Edmund Rice Centre WA.
879 Interview with Nigel Calver.
880 Interview with Tony Pietropiccolo.
Nevertheless, the bottom line is that services like the IHSS and the Settlement Grant Programme could not be maintained without government tender, “so making sure that we don’t jeopardize that in any way is important”.

Is it appropriate to speak of Catholic pastoral care to migrants and refugees?

Be they welfare agencies, hospitals, schools or universities, a major challenge for all agencies and organizations which have their origins in the Church is how to maintain their Christian identity and operate out of a Christian ethos. Related to this challenge is the question: what are the implications of this Christian identity and ethos for their activities and how do such bodies relate to the wider community? David Pollard puts the dilemma very well when he writes,

The fact of an agency defining itself as Christian means that it has defined what makes it unique. [However,] once an agency has defined itself as Christian, it needs to understand what the implications of that definition are for its work, i.e. it needs to theologise about its work.

He goes on to point out that in recent times the Christian identity of Church-based organizations “has come a poor second to secular humanism.”

It is no easy task to define the contemporary role of a Christian welfare body in a society in which secular humanism, rather than the Christian message, has provided the bases for many people’s values. In addition, as has been shown in the previous section, such

---

881 Interview with Nigel Calver.
bodies are increasingly dependent on outside, secular sources of funding which means that budgeting issues, provision of professionally qualified staff, irrespective of religious allegiance, and satisfaction of the requirements of the funding institutions are priorities which may conflict with the Christian ethos of the agency.\textsuperscript{883} Ian Ellis describes the predicament well when he speaks about the accountability of church-based agencies to outside funding bodies and describes the agencies as “stewards of public money” who must “provide a public service in response to public needs” and wishes.\textsuperscript{884}

More significant for the maintenance of a Catholic identity and ethos is the issue of religious allegiances or lack of them of many of the clientele and personnel of such agencies. Increasingly not only are many of the migrant/refugee clientele of services like the CMS, the ERCM and Aranmore’s IEC not Christian, let alone Catholic but the same also applies in varying degrees to the staff of the CMS and the ERCM. For example, most of the CMS staff are not practising Catholics or even Christian. One of the few practising Catholics commented, “I’m actually in the minority.”\textsuperscript{885} This latter was confirmed by Centrecare’s Director when he told the writer that “some [staff] are Muslims, some are Buddhist.”\textsuperscript{886} Ethnic (and, to a lesser degree, religious) diversity had been a characteristic of the CMC staff from quite early in its autonomous history and was

\textsuperscript{883} Nigel Calver’s comment, 234, indicates the potential conflict.
\textsuperscript{884} Ian Ellis, “If service, in our serving – a perspective”, in Daddow, Church Agency or Christian Response?, 28.
\textsuperscript{885} Interview with Mirek Kanik, 30 April, 2007. Mirek, together with other interviewees, also made mention of the fact that a number of their interpreters came from their clientele and reflected similar ethnic and religious patterns. Volker Schafer made clear, however, in his interview that volunteers were generally not selected from among the more recent ethnic communities.
\textsuperscript{886} Interview with Tony Pietropiccolo. This was demonstrated by interviews carried out with nine full-time members of staff, only three of whom identified themselves as practising Catholics, one of whom was a religious sister. One other identified herself as a non-practising Catholic.
reflected in their linguistic skills. Similarly, personnel of the ERCM are diverse in relation to religious allegiance. Instead the emphases are now more on professional qualifications, experience, ability to “do the job” and suitable temperament, rather than religious affiliation. As one of the case workers for the CMS’ IHSS revealed,

[Religious affiliation] was never an issue. When I applied for the job … I wasn’t even asked “Do you have a religion? What is it?” Before I came here I did relief work as a volunteer at the Edmund Rice Centre … and they’re the same. They don’t ask you. I think it’s attitudes and experience. “Why do you want to work here? What training have you got? Why do you want to work with this group?”

In contrast to the two foregoing agencies, the MA has a strongly conventional Catholic identity and ethos in that its personnel are predominantly priests and religious and their “clientele” – the ethnic communities – are, in the main, actively practising Catholics. Personnel-wise, other agencies like the St Vincent de Paul MRC and Aranmore’s IEC are made up of either actively practising Catholics or people who have a strong sympathy with Christian, specifically Catholic, principles, even though their clientele may vary in their religious affiliation. Moreover, especially with the IEC the expectation is that both staff as well as students will be exposed to Catholic teaching and worship.

---

887 From the time of the Second up until the Fifteenth Annual Reports, details were given of the nationality and languages spoken by all full-time staff as well as interpreters.


889 Interview with Christina Ward.

890 Interview with Greg Lowe.
One of the vexed issues for services like CMS would appear to be how to find appropriately trained staff who are also Catholic, given the wider community’s expectations. Thus Centrecare’s Director comments,

People say “get Catholic staff” but where are the Catholic staff? And, even if there are Catholic staff and they want to work, not everyone wants to work for Centrecare, one because of the wages, second because of the opportunities. … And so there is a whole variety of people who are connected to CMS. They may have different religions; there may be only a smattering of Catholics. Those who are there need to be qualified for the service they’re delivering because of community expectations. Our community expectations have shifted enormously. Someone comes through our door to see a counsellor. They are not expecting to see Mrs Jones who was trained through a six week course at the local church on how to do counselling. They’re expecting to have access to a tertiary qualified, well trained, well supervised practitioner. … We need to do the best we can for the people who come through our doors. It isn’t just about having a churchy organisation.\(^{891}\)

His comment was reinforced by that of CMS’ Executive Manager.

We prefer a university qualification [but] at the same time we’ll always look at experience and also prior work experience and your cultural knowledge in relation to the clients and overlook the university qualification. We have both university and non-university-qualified people. … We’ve had a couple of staff members who I guess have a very strong understanding of a culture because they come from it and have worked with refugees overseas and things like that and that’s the reason they’re employed here. It’s not because they’ve got university degrees. It’s because they’ve got that intimate knowledge that no-one else can get by going to university.\(^{892}\)

Even in its earlier manifestation as the CMC, while there was an expectation that the director should be of the Catholic faith, this was “not one of the criteria to be employed at whatever level” for other staff.\(^{893}\) While not so explicit, the *Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Handbook* clearly indicates the need for well-qualified staff and volunteers.\(^{894}\) In its section on “Code of Conduct” it stresses professionalism as well as cultural and religious sensitivity.\(^{895}\)

\(^{891}\) Interview with Tony Pietropiccolo

\(^{892}\) Interview with Nigel Calver.

\(^{893}\) Interview with Gerald Searle.

\(^{894}\) *Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Handbook*, Sections 1 – 2.

\(^{895}\) *Ibid.*, Section 3, 18.
Moreover, in both agencies monitoring and review of the pastoral care of personnel reinforce the stress on professionalism and suitability for the task in hand rather than religious allegiance. Thus, the *Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Handbook*, in its criteria for staff review which may be carried out “annually or, at any other time as requested by the Director”, notes that such review will include reflection on past performance and current achievements, provision of feedback, identification of opportunities for improvement, setting of goals and priorities for next review period, identification of training and development needs, discussion of strategies of improving performance.  

The monitoring system of the CMS involves both review and client assessment, again with the emphasis on professional performance, not on religious allegiance. Thus, “a performance management with all staff members [is held] at least once every six months [and] everybody who’s a new staff member has a performance review after three months.” The Executive Manager stressed the role the clients play in review of staff.

Volunteers on whom CMS relies considerably, especially in the IHSS programme, are more difficult to monitor. The Executive Manager informed me that CMS has a duty statement which everyone signs and by which they agree to abide by the objects of the programme. While there is “no disciplinary come-back”, if adverse reports are received

---

896 Ibid., 20.
897 Interview with Nigel Calver.
898 Ibid. Siobhan Foley reinforced what Nigel had said about the exit interview.
then the volunteers are not assigned to another family. In another interview it was revealed that the volunteers undergo a “sort of screening process so if you did have someone who wasn’t appropriate then you wouldn’t accept them.”

Nevertheless, Pollard stresses the imperative for Church-based agencies to rediscover their Christian vision and redefine their mission in terms of a concept of Christian service, one which places an emphasis on the preferential option for the poor. Similarly, Duncan MacLaren speaks of the need for Catholic agencies “to examine [their] work in the area of social mission in the light of what Catholic identity means.” He argues that the Catholic Church identity has two principal dimensions; one being a community of the baptised, the other as an institution that exists to serve both that community and all humanity. With the latter the issue relates to the nature of the work of Catholic social welfare services; “a work of transformation that is at the heart of the [Church’s] social mission” which “is rooted in the doctrine of the incarnation.” In this regard, the title of Gerald Arbuckle’s book is particularly relevant – *Crafting Catholic Identity in Postmodern Australia*.

In practice what this signifies for a Catholic pastoral service is that it needs to assist both its Catholic as well as its non-Catholic personnel to understand the Christian ethos on which the service is based as well as its Catholic heritage and the Catholic social justice

---

899 Ibid.
900 Interview with Siobhan Foley.
903 Idem.
904 (Deakin, ACT: Catholic Health Care Australia, 2007).
principles which underpin it.\footnote{This was strongly emphasized to me by Amanda Wheeler in my interview with her. She added that this has been a crucial aspect of her role as Mission Director.} It is noticeable that, with migrant/refugee pastoral care bodies which have grown out of a particular religious charism, for example, the ERCM, the MRC of St Vincent de Paul, Aranmore’s IEC, and previously with the MHHC, the atmosphere in which their pastoral work is carried out is more clearly and intentionally influenced both by Scriptural values and a Gospel-based Catholic social justice ethos which grows out of their particular charisms. To take two examples, Aranmore’s IEC holds workshops on Catholicism for non-Catholic teachers as well as students\footnote{Interview with Greg Lowe.} and the training for pastoral work within the ERCM includes endeavours to expose its personnel to Scripture and its reflection in Catholic social justice as well as to the charism of Edmund Rice.

However, such is no longer the case with the CMS. What training the personnel are given relates more to cultural sensitivity and boundary issues. Thus each staff member who comes into the Services’ programmes and who works directly with refugees is required to go through two specific training programmes – “Cross-cultural Awareness” and “Boundaries Training”\footnote{Information from interview with Nigel Calver. This training also applies to volunteers and includes “Lifeskills Training”, interview with Volker Schafer.}. However, there is no longer any training in the Christian heritage of CMS or Catholic social justice. When asked about Gospel-based Catholic social justice principles and the degree to which they informed their vision and outreach to migrant and refugees, the majority of CMS’ personnel interviewed were not aware of
them except in a very general humanitarian context.\textsuperscript{908} Such is exemplified by the following statement from the Executive Manager:

I think the way I look at it is that it’s not so much the organization saying, well, these are the values of the Church but that these are the values of humanity and they coincide with the values of the Church and that’s why I say they work in parallel. Certainly, one of the things that really struck me about Centrecare and one of the reasons I really wanted to work here is that the ethos of the organization was to provide dignity to people and that something that I’m very passionate about. … And when I came here I then found out that that’s based on the philosophies of the Catholic Church. It was never to me, O.K., well this is the Church and these are its philosophies, so I want to work here. … [Y]ou don’t need that stronger religious-based belief behind it to have the willingness and compassion to believe that someone else is part of your world and you’re part of their’s.\textsuperscript{909}

An interesting distinction between Scriptural and Catholic social justice values was made very forcibly by the only religious sister who is among the CMS’ personnel when she was asked if a Catholic ethos still underpinned the work of the Services.

As regards [ethos] there’s never been a question that people coming in the door must be Catholic. NEVER! NEVER! It may have been in the clerical mind but, as long as I’ve been here, it’s never been a place for Catholics only and we have staff here from every religion. … It might have been a question at the start but that has gone since I came and, I think, long before I came. … So how Catholic is it? If Jesus walked in the door, and Jesus is the one I’ll go by, Jesus would say “This is my Father’s work that these people are doing.” … It’s absolutely amazingly Gospel work. But to talk about Catholicity is another thing. They’re not Catholics. … I think mission is how you treat each other. And that’s the Catholic mission to me and what the reign of God is and Jesus. And people self-select. They only come here because they [the personnel] care about human lives.

Paradoxically, she concluded: “Catholic social justice is very much alive here.”\textsuperscript{910} With regard to her assertion that the pastoral care carried out by CMS is “amazingly Gospel work” it is appropriate to comment that none of the nine interviewees had problems with

\textsuperscript{908} This is in strong contrast to the situation of the ERCM with regard to its emphasis on extending the awareness of Catholic social justice principles to not only its personnel but also the wider community.

\textsuperscript{909} Interview with Nigel Calver. Such a view was confirmed by interviews with other personnel, for example, with Volker Schafer. This is in interesting contradistinction to the practice at ERCM where Induction Days in which participants are informed of the Centre’s history, mission, vision and core values are held even for volunteers. \textit{Handbook}, Section 12, 51-2.

\textsuperscript{910} Interview with Sr Flo Sullivan RSM. In her statement Sr Flo when she speaks of “people coming in the door” is referring to both clientele and personnel.
the inclusion in the mission statement of the Scriptural text – “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” which dates from the formation of the CMS as the CMC. This is no doubt because this text can be understood in a non-Christocentric manner and fits in with broad secular humanistic values.

The question of overtly upholding a Catholic identity is also very contentious for CMS, given that many of its clientele are non-Catholic and non-Christian. So divisive is the matter that there is debate over whether or “Catholic” should even appear in the title of CMS. The Director of Centrecare indicated that the word “Catholic” on the door of the CMS’ premises was causing problems in an environment in which a significant proportion of its refugee clientele are from Islamic countries.

They see “Catholic”, aren’t sure whether they should be there or not, are a bit uneasy about whether or not this organisation is going to treat them well or there’s going to be expectations of them that they might not be able to meet or whether or not they know fully what this is all about. All this creates a bit of uneasiness for them. And recently there was suggestion: “Could we keep Catholic and put Centrecare somewhere near it” so that those people who might feel reluctant to engage with us may be reassured by the fact that it is a Centrecare service. … The issue is whether or not the services are here for the whole community, not just for parts of it, and, if they are here for the whole community, what are we here to maximize? – our accessibility in the community and to help people feel comfortable in accessing services, or are we here … to try and create a sense of separation and divisiveness in relation to the community in which we are operating. I think that creates an interesting dilemma for Catholic organisations generally. Our view is that we would rather retain the name “Centrecare” as far as we can to retain that openness in relationship with the broader community while, at the same time, to be very clear about the basis for our service to the community and the values which motivate it in terms of what it is attempting to achieve and what it is achieving.  

Interview with Tony Pietropiccolo.
However, he pointed out that, even though a deliberate decision had been made in 1983 to amalgamate the three then main Church social welfare agencies under the heading of “Centrecare” “to try and minimize the impediments that the word ‘Catholic’ may create in the broader community for their services”, Centrecare does not disassociate itself from the word ‘Catholic’ or its Catholic roots for which it is well-known in the community. Moreover, as the Executive Manager of CMS remarked, ‘Catholic’ is a crucial part of the CMS heritage.

I guess we maintain the name ‘Catholic’ in our current title because it is the operating title and that was part of the agreement with the previous Board of the CMC. They wanted to keep that association to the Archdiocese and … keep up the tradition that had been built up through the CMC.

Nevertheless, Centrecare’s Director was equivocal about a specific Catholic ethos rooted in Gospel-inspired Catholic social justice principles.

For us it’s more about the spirit that drives us and its roots in the Gospel and its teachings in relation to others and acceptance of human beings for what they are, to meet them where they’re at and to help them to maximize on their potential. It’s that spirit which drives us as an organisation. We don’t see ourselves as being evangelizers but we hope that people’s experiences of our interactions with them will be such that they would feel respected and treated in a caring way by the time they leave our service. So when they know, and there’s no reason that they should not, that we’re a Catholic organisation at least they will say: “Well, that was a really positive and good experience for us.”

He distinguished between what he described as “the Church’s position” with “the focus being primarily on the Church’s work” and Centrecare’s focus which “is primarily on the clients’ need, the personal needs of the people coming to us.” In a situation where not only are many of the clientele non-Catholic but also many of the staff

\[912\] Namely, the Catholic Immigration Office, the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau and Catholic Marriage Guidance.

\[913\] Interview with Nigel Calver. These points are confirmed by the letter sent to other Archdiocesan bodies by the last Director of the Catholic Migrant Centre, Melissa Del Borrello, in which she announced the merging of the Centre with Centrecare.

the challenge for [Centrecare’s CMS] is how do we communicate [our Catholic ethos], both saying “Yes, this is Catholic social teaching” and, at the same time, not creating the impression that it’s only Catholic social teaching so that people don’t think ‘Hang on. That’s also my teaching’ and feel they have to do something different to engage with the Catholic aspect of it. So it’s always that interplay between a Church position and, then, the position of the community or the person who’s before you.915

In this regard it would seem that the personnel of CMS are more comfortable with an ethos that arises out of broad Christian Scriptural values which can be related to the values and/or religious allegiances of their Christian and non-Christian clientele rather than an ethos which grows out of an explicit Catholic identity.

Such a position is in contradiction to MacLaren’s argument that the social justice ministry of the Church “must be conducted in such a way that it contributes to four social significant objectives – the protection of human dignity, the promotion of human rights, the unity of the human family [and] the provision of a sense of meaning to every area of activity.”916 Such ministry, as Centrecare’s Director and Sr Flo’s comments emphasize, is not exclusive to the Catholic Church but it is related to a particular theological framework which is articulated in Catholic social justice teaching. Therefore, while Catholic Church agencies need to cooperate with other community bodies, they need an awareness of such a framework as “it is integral to their very being and permeates all that they do and are.”917

Nevertheless, it is vital to remember that, with the exception of the Multicultural Apostolate, the migrant/refugee pastoral care bodies in the Archdiocese of Perth are not worshipping communities. As Denham Grierson argues, there are two ways of seeing the

915 Ibid.
916 MacLaren, Towards a More Just World, 10.
917 Idem.
Church in relationship to church-based agencies. One is as an institution in which decisions are made about welfare agencies. The second is as a theological concept and an ideal type which guides agencies in their attempts to discern the inner essence of what is being attempted.\textsuperscript{918} This latter has to be done in what Trevor Hogan notes is a conflict of discourses – a Christian verses other community discourse. Church-agencies need to become more professionalized organizations to operate accountably in a public environment.\textsuperscript{919}

**Ongoing Issues for the Future**

As the foregoing section has demonstrated, one of the important issues for the future of the five migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies of the Archdiocese, especially the service providers, is to continue to carry on a theologically-based conversation about their mission and ethos as church-based agencies. Such a conversation needs to arise out of a Catholic social justice tradition and be carried out in the contexts of their obligations to the wider community and their funding sources. It also needs to take into account the degree to which their clientele and personnel are Catholic, other Christian or non-Christian.

Networking with community organizations as well as government bodies is crucial especially for migrant/refugee service providers, like the ERCM and CMS. Thus, while it is essential that we retain that connection with the [Catholic] Migrant Refugee Office, the archdiocesan bodies and other Catholic migrant/refugee services, ... being able to create connections to non-government service providers is important. We would

\textsuperscript{918} Denham Grierson, “Catalyst or in Control? – a Response” in Daddow, *Church Agency or Christian Response?*, 16.

\textsuperscript{919} Trevor Hogan – “Impressions and Comments – a Response” in *ibid.*, 21.
actually improve on those and make them stronger to create a much more sustainable service. ... it’s about knowing where we can get the services [the refugees] need, whether it’s the Edmund Rice Centre, the Australian Refugee Council, Multicultural Services or the Metropolitan Migrant Centre.

The Centrecare Director’s point is buttressed by the support given to the ERCM by community bodies in its northern suburbs locality and also by the acknowledgement by the IEC Manager of the cooperation between the Youth Settlement Programme operated by CMS under youth worker, Michelle Ruedez, and the IEC. Only through such cooperation and interaction with the wider as well as the Catholic community in Perth can the Archdiocesan migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies meet the major challenge of continuing to respond with sensitivity, compassion and inspired pro-action to the varied needs and demands placed upon them by their ever changing clientele and to see Christ in every stranger who enters their portals.

Not only are the needs of clients influenced by their changing ethnicity and their religious affiliations but changing situations within the host economy also affect especially their material needs. Especially for those agencies which are service providers, attention to material needs such as appropriate housing and education is an important aspect of their pastoral activity.

One of the particular ongoing challenges for the formal service providers is that of the provision of adequate affordable housing for refugees, especially those from African cultures where the tradition is to have very large families.

---

920 Interview with Tony Pietropiccolo.
921 See discussion on the theology of pastoral care in Ch. 1, 22-5.
922 Relevant also to this point is that the refugees from Africa generally tend to be a fairly youthful group. So, for example, the ABS, 1367.5 – “Western Australian Statistical Indicators, September, 2007” in its feature article “Cultural Diversity in Western Australia”, reports that whereas in 2006 Western Australian residents born in Italy had a median age of 65 years, more recent arrivals generally had lower median ages. Thus Western Australian residents born in Sudan, 78% of whom had arrived after 2001, had one of the lowest median ages of 22 years.
With the escalation of rental prices as well as scarcity of suitable rental properties in Perth in recent years, agencies involved in refugee settlement have found it a very real challenge to find adequate and affordable housing for their clients. CMS Executive Manager stressed the dilemma in relation to the IHSS tender.

[The IHSS tender is] supposed to be 450 refugees plus people who propose eligible refugees to come into the country. That figure can fluctuate as much as about 100 people a year. So we’re looking at as much as 600 or 700 individual clients, families or individuals, a year. But … when you apply to the government you say this is what we are going to provide, this is how much we are going to charge you for it. [The agency who receives the tender] is the one who provides, not necessarily the cheapest price, but the best price for the services they say they can provide. The disadvantage of that is once you have won the tender it’s a contract for a certain period of time and you are locked in to providing it as it was laid down. Now the classic example of how that sort of backfires is the dramatic change in the … rent market from 2006. … When the tender was written, which was probably a year before it started, … nobody could have predicted that that was going to happen. … it’s all fine if what you say you’re going to do you can but if you find that you can’t do what you say you’re going to do you have to live with the consequences. We’re dealing with a different market and the conditions of the tender change.923

His comments were reinforced by the CMS report for 2006-2007.

Of particular note this year was the extreme difficulty in finding accommodation for new arrivals. Perth’s poor vacancy rate in the rental market meant that rentals for refugees were difficult to access. This resulted in Centrecare having to substantially subsidise the resettlement program [sic.] by having to house people in motels or lodges for extensive periods of time.924

Only the financial strength of Centrecare as an umbrella agency has enabled the CMS to cope with the housing issue for its refugee clientele.

[Centrecare] made a commitment that we would do that job. So we continue with it irrespective of the cost but we wouldn’t have been able to do that if we were not a strong organization financially and had we not over the years developed the sort of structures and systems and organizational strength to be able, one, to get the money from government, and two, be able to top up the shortfalls. But there’s a limit to how long you can do that.925

923 Interview with Nigel Calver.
925 Interview with Tony Pietropiccolo.
Related to the issue of housing is another ongoing material problem of linking refugee children and adults into English education facilities. Not only is this one of the tender’s requirements but, as caseworker, Christina Ward, stressed, “one of the first things that parents say is ‘When do my children start school?’.” The Executive Manager pointed out that

three or four years ago the cheap rental areas were certain pockets where the government schools [which provided English intensive centres] were placed but then the rental market changed and shifted more south, south-east and inland, but because the schools were established [the Education Department] couldn’t move them.

Consequently, not only is there this disparity and a shortage of appropriate facilities (and teachers), but children often have to travel long distances.

The majority of them get up at 6 o’clock, they leave for school at 7, they get there at 8.30 and they get home at 5 but they go every single day because it’s very important for them to get their education and their English.

Similar problems have occurred with the provision of adult education in English through the Adult Migration Education Service and the few TAFEs which have intensive English facilities. There is also a gender issue with provision of adult English education. Attempts to provide adult English classes for the women are difficult because of small number of day care places. Yet, migrant/refugee women who are full-time home carers really need to learn English because, otherwise, they become very isolated. Some alleviation of the problem is provided by CMS volunteers who visit clients’ homes.

---

926 Interview with Christina Ward.
927 Interview with Nigel Calver.
928 Interview with Christina Ward.
929 Again, this is related to the larger families of African refugees with a larger proportion these being pre-school age children.
A major and ongoing issue for migrant/refugee bodies within the Archdiocese is in the field of psychological pastoral care, what one might loosely term the “spiritual” needs of their clientele which do not fall under the category of religious belief and faith. In this regard, Christina stressed that each immigrant family or individual is unique in terms of the amount of support they require.\textsuperscript{930} However, in the case of refugees,

[t]hey come in and they have no life skills; they have no English; they have no education; some of them are illiterate numerically, also in their own language, and its more difficult because they … have had all the spirit knocked out of them.\textsuperscript{931}

As a result of their experiences in their own countries and in refugee camps, refugees are deeply traumatized. Moreover, their difficulties in integrating into a foreign society and culture add to their trauma; a trauma which has been exacerbated for unofficial on-shore refugees by their detention experience. One of the trauma counsellors at CMS stated in reference to the new refugees from Africa:

Everything is different and they don’t really understand certain Western concepts that we take for granted. So, for instance, even talking about counselling, they don’t even know the meaning of it as we know it. So, the type of counselling is very culturally sensitive. The primary objective of our approach is to be able to fit in with … some kind of understanding because our role basically is to help them reach over from the past into new conditions … [of enabling them to] re-locate the past to where it belongs; to the past. Once they are able to do this they will be able to go on [but] they will never be able to forget about it … that would not be a good idea because it would be something like taking away from them because they went through these experiences; it did happen and now they are in a new situation.\textsuperscript{932}

Reference in the above quotation is made to refugees “never [being] able to forget [the past]” even if they put it behind them. This is clearly illustrated by the experience of one of Aranmore’s Afghani students who proceeded from the IEC to mainstream schooling

\textsuperscript{930} Interview with Christina Ward.  
\textsuperscript{931} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{932} Interview with Mirek Kanik.
and who is now studying at university. Aided by his family, he had managed to escape from the Taliban in 2001 and arrived in Australia as an informal on-shore “child” refugee without family or relatives. After a period in detention he was given a TPV and arrangements made for him to attend the Aranmore IEC. However, in his final year of mainstream school he “nearly went off the rails” as a result of deep-seated trauma and concern about his family still in Afghanistan. Apparently he was “quite good at Art” and “did an amazing four-panel painting which talked about the Taliban and his trauma.” Even so he still needed further counselling “to get him back on track”.933

Unfortunately, CMS can only provide torture and trauma counselling for its refugee counselling for a very short period of time, (only eight sessions), after which clients need to be referred to ASetTTs934 if they need longer-term counselling. However, refugees’ experiences which lie at the root of their trauma mean that violence is endemic to their lives. As the case referred to in the above paragraph indicates, the long-term repercussions of this cause major problems of adjustment for refugees, especially the youth. Aranmore’s IEC Manager stressed that one of the important tasks of the Centre’s teachers is to help the refugee youth to unlearn the “culture of violence” to which they have been subject in the refugee camps where they have been resident for many years and which manifests itself in the playground and in the classroom as well as in their home

---

933 Details related in my interview with Principal Jim Elliott. For reasons of privacy the name of the student is not cited.
934 ASetTTs is the acronym for the Perth-based non-profit, non-government organization, the Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors, which provides free treatment and support to mainly new arrivals to Australia, adults and children, who have been tortured and traumatized by violent conflicts. Its services are available to all survivors of torture and trauma whatever the length of their residence in Australia. See www.asetts.org.au.
environments – “we’ve got two students who were born [in refugee camps], so they’ve been there for thirteen years.”

Consequently, socialization is as much a crucial aspect of refugee youth pastoral care as it is for adult refugees. Such is manifested, not just in the IEC, but also in the youth programmes of the ERCM and CMS. In the case of the latter, their youth workers “work with young people between the ages of twelve and twenty-two” with the “main focus [being] on social participation and getting them involved in the community”. As well as “one-on-one casework”, CMS youth programmes also involve educational and leadership camps “where we invite thirty young people of different nationalities to come on camp with us and we engage in social participation activities.” The programmes also provide holiday and after-school activities, information sessions and workshops at IECs in government schools.

Similarly, the ERCM’s Youth Refugee and Multicultural Sport and Recreation Programmes aim to introduce young refugees (c. ten to eighteen years) to a variety of leisure and sporting facilities in the local area and to “provide them with knowledge and skills to access these facilities and enable them to develop friendships and support networks.” These programmes are also “designed to build positive and harmonious relationships with Australian-born youth and adults.”

According to the ERCM’s Director, one of the major issues in the northern suburbs is the

---

935 Interview with Greg Lowe.
936 Interview with Michelle Ruedez, Youth Worker and Team Leader with Catholic Migrant Services, 6 February, 2007.
937 The Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Handbook, Section 2, 2.9 and 2.11. 2.10 also speaks about the Indigenous Children’s Programmes.
level of violence between African and indigenous youth and the urgent need for reconciliation between the two groups.\textsuperscript{938}

The specific needs and problems of refugee youth provide one crucial example of ongoing challenges provided by particular groups within the broader category of migrants and refugees. Other groups which have been singled out for attention, both by Church documentation\textsuperscript{939} and by the Archdiocesan migrant and refugee pastoral care bodies are women and the aged.

With regard to women, the need for psychological as well as material support is essential. This is well demonstrated by the “Women Together” Programme of the ERCM\textsuperscript{940} and is manifest in comments from two female clients of the MHHC. Azar, an Iranian asylum seeker, testified to the material assistance that she and her family had received from Srs Mary and Maureen in finding and furnishing a house and, subsequently, appropriate schools for her children, as well as helping with other needs.\textsuperscript{941} In like vein, Najiba, also an Afghani asylum seeker, commented that Sr Maureen’s psychological assistance had “helped [her] at a time that I needed help.”\textsuperscript{942} As Azar remarked, helping the women and developing a close bond with their children were other aspects of the hospitality which the two Mercy sisters extended to their women clientele.\textsuperscript{943} With regard to migrant as well as refugee women, as had already been mentioned, the difficulties of learning

\textsuperscript{938} Interview with Br Steve Bowman. This comment was reinforced in my interview with IEC’s Greg Lowe.
\textsuperscript{939} For example, \textit{Graced by Migration}. See 31-32, strategies E5 and E6, for the aged and 32, strategies E7 to E9 for women.
\textsuperscript{940} See Ch. 6, 207.
\textsuperscript{941} Interview with Azar Rafiee.
\textsuperscript{942} Interview with Najiba Nabizada.
\textsuperscript{943} Interview with Azar Rafiee.
English and acculturating to the new society while caring for small pre-school children is an ongoing problem.

The third particular group requiring specific assistance comprises older migrants whose number is growing and widening in ethnicity, even though at present it is mainly composed of European migrants who came to Australia as displaced persons in the aftermath of World War II. Many of these latter are now in aged care facilities. This group is the focus of CMS’ Community Visitors’ Scheme. Through this scheme volunteers from the ethnic communities in Perth are linked up linguistically with the elderly migrants. As the Coordinator of this service pointed out,

It’s often the case that they don’t speak much English. … So it’s very rewarding for me to find a volunteer and to see their face light up when they have someone to speak their own language, when suddenly they can get all these issues off their chest and talk about their lives. … The bulk [of what these volunteers do] is listening, speaking, reminiscing … . Occasionally they might … help with the banking, but generally it’s sitting down, having a cup of tea and talking with them … emotional and social support. It’s very important for them to talk about their lives … to talk about the past.  

A final ongoing challenge for Church-based and other migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies is that of encouraging acceptance of and sensitivity to the growing and diverse refugee population by both the state’s bureaucracy and the wider Western Australian society. With regard to the former, one of the CMS IHSS workers pointed out the need to educate bureaucracies of other community and government agencies in greater sensitivity in relation to the number of refugee women who have been raped while in refugee camps or in their countries of origin so that inappropriate questions such as

---

944 Interview with Volker Shafer.
‘Whose are the children? Where’s the father of the children?’ are not asked.\footnote{945} Similarly, a MA pastoral worker with the African communities in Perth stressed the need for government social workers particularly to have a better understanding of the cultural mores of African societies and also of the trauma experienced by African refugees, especially those coming out of refugee camps.\footnote{946}

That xenophobia and prejudice, often born of fear, is present in the wider community is evident from an article in a local community newspaper in the northern suburbs of Perth which cites the response of the director of the ERCM to the proposal by the Federal Immigration Department to limit the number of African refugees coming into Australia in 2007 because of their perceived behaviour and lack of integration, particularly the youth.

The ERC says the Africans it deals with are hard-working, keen to find employment, become educated, and work hard to integrate and settle. … The ERC director said the African refugees who attended the centre were good examples of hard workers who were keen to settle in Australia. [He] was concerned Mr Andrews’ [the then Federal Immigration Minister] decision and comments could spark racial abuse towards African-Australians.

‘It doesn’t help when people in powerful positions make sweeping generalisations about groups and use particular groups as political scapegoats. Many people in our society are ignorant of the plight of refugees and take negative messages in the media as the truth, when on most occasions it is not accurate, and sensationalised to win ratings and sell newspapers.’ He was concerned the public could stereotype African refugees, express racist views and opinions even if they had never met an African person.\footnote{947}

Whereas present-day Perth Archdiocesan migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies generally do not engage in advocacy statements\footnote{948}, leaving this to the ACBC or ACMRO, they do facilitate opportunities for a more positive multicultural outlook on the

\footnote{945}{Interview with Christina Ward.}
\footnote{946}{Interview with Sr Margaret Culhane.}
\footnote{947}{\textit{Stirling Times}, (23 October, 2007), 6. The paper followed up this account with a short biography, “Family fitting in”, of a Sudanese woman, her children and her elderly mother, all clientele of the ERCM.}
\footnote{948}{This advocacy was a feature of earlier bodies such as the CMC.}
part of Australian citizens and the opportunity to meet with recent migrant and refugees. Such is very evident both in the work of the ERCM and the MRC of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. One particular example of this was the “Talking Books” initiative of the Mirrabooka Public Library for Multicultural Week, 2007, through which “borrowers” could speak with representatives of marginalized elements in the Perth community. Two of these “talking books” were African refugee clients of the ERCM which had helped facilitate the occasion.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored issues which have and continue to affect the work of the Perth Archdiocesan migrant and refugee pastoral care agencies, for example, the changing ethnic, social and religious profile of migrants and refugees, changes in the sources of funding and in the composition of personnel. Above all, it has examined the contentious question – what does ‘Catholic’ mean for the identity and ethos of these bodies? Challenges for the future have also been noted, in so far as they can be foreseen.

All of the above, together with the differences between the different bodies, emphasizes the need for reflection on various theological implications for pastoral care to migrants and refugees as it is exercised by contemporary church-based agencies in our present-day society. This is something which will be taken up in the concluding chapter and placed in the context of a dialogue between empirical practice, Scripture and Church documentation.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This thesis has explored why the Church’s outreach to migrants and refugees, as part of its social doctrine, is “a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel” and how it is conceived of by both the universal and the Australian Church. It has also examined how this outreach is both carried out and perceived by the personnel of the migrant/refugee pastoral care bodies in the Archdiocese of Perth. Scripture provides the context in which such Christian outreach should be situated. Church documentation at both universal and national levels demonstrates how the Church comprehends migrants and refugees, their needs and their potential contribution to the Church. Finally, the exploration of six agencies within the Archdiocese of Perth which provide or have provided pastoral care to migrants and refugees gives valuable insight into the praxis of pastoral care towards migrants and refugees and the issues, problems and concerns inherent in that praxis at a grassroots level. Overall, this thesis demonstrates most clearly what the Australian bishops already realize, namely, that migration, migrants and refugees are very special pastoral issues for the Church.

950 See Ch. 5.
To round off the thesis two matters need to be pursued in this conclusion. First, following up on the definition of pastoral care given in Chapter One an exploration of the concept of the ‘openness of the face of the other’ will be carried out and it will be argued that this needs to be a two-way process. Secondly, a critical dialogue will be engaged in. This dialogue will be between how the Church, at official levels, understands migrant and refugee care and what happens in practice through Archdiocesan agencies dedicated to the pastoral care of migrants and refugees. Its emphasis, in the tradition of practical theology, will be on what ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ can learn from one another.

‘Openness to the face of the other’ – a two-way process

Welcome is a crucial aspect of migrant/ refugee pastoral care. At a deep ontological level the Church’s concern for an authentic compassionate awareness of the migrant/refugee and their situation raises the issue of the nature of ‘welcome’. As has been indicated in the discussion of both Church documentation and agency praxis, this welcoming encapsulates both hospitality and compassionate attention to migrant/refugee physical, psychological and spiritual needs. Even more importantly, it involves openness to the face of “the other”. As Jean Vanier points out,

To welcome is … to open the doors of our heart and become more vulnerable. It is a spirit, an inner gratitude. It means accepting the other into ourselves, even if this means insecurity. It is to be concerned for others, attentive towards them, and to help them find their place in the community or in life itself.  

---

951 See Ch. 1, 22-5.
He concludes that the receiving community “should welcome people because it wants to serve them and to help them find their freedom.” Glenn Morrison goes further: “We are called to a openness in which those at the margins of society have priority.”

This is a call which is relevant not just to Christians but to all citizens. It is essentially a two-way process involving those well integrated into society and community and those on the margins of them.

When we welcome people, we open the door of our heart to them and give them space within it. …Welcoming people means bringing them right into the community. And they, for their part, have to accept and respect the community’s goals, spirit, tradition and rules. … The welcome a community offers visitors [should be] an extension of the welcome its members offer each other.

Most significantly, the openness needed to the incorporate the stranger, as those who work with migrants and refugees must come to realize, is one of conversion; a conversion process which takes them beyond themselves into the realm of subjective consciousness rather than objective self-interestedness. For Christians exercising migrant/refugee pastoral care such care and hospitality involve not just “the other” but also “the Other” in the sense that, for them, migrants and refugees should be a representation of the Divine which takes them beyond the narrow limits of their own lives.

The face of the Other, namely the orphan, widow and stranger, is beyond our intentional consciousness … the word of God cries out for them in the realm otherwise than the ‘interest’ of our self-interested lives.

Even for carers who have other or no religious allegiance a conception of the migrant or refugee as representing something greater than themselves is relevant.

---

953 Ibid., 212.
7 This is made clear in Chs 4 and 5.
957 Morrison, “Living at the Margins”, no page number cited.
Openness to suffering of “the Other” is integral to the pastoral care of especially refugees. Consequently, as Vanier stresses\textsuperscript{958}, carers must become vulnerable as the stranger being made welcome is vulnerable. Such openness is an openness which is active rather than passive.

Being exposed to the Other is ... traumatic ... because not only are their wounds exposed to us, but it is as if their wounds become our own haemorrhage. Hence, we bleed ... for the suffering Other. This signifies that we have been encountered with his or her hunger, oppression and destitution.\textsuperscript{959}

Pastoral care of migrants and refugees also involves taking ethical responsibility for the stranger and seeing in the face of the stranger the face of the Transcendent.\textsuperscript{960} The rewards for such subjective openness is considerable. Thus, the community “can stay alive when new people arrive and commit themselves to it.”\textsuperscript{961} Its members generally, and those caring for migrants and refugees in particular, are able to appreciate that strangers are “a grace”, a gift from God to the community. Such sentiments are very much the raison d ’être of the Australian Bishops’ appropriately titled document, Graced by Migration of 2007.

Migrant/refugee pastoral care, therefore, involves transformation, not just for the recipients of pastoral care and welcome, but also for the providers. Hence, Elaine Graham stresses the need for pastoral care to have a bias towards alterity, diversity and

\textsuperscript{958} Vanier, “Welcome”, Community and Growth, 257.
\textsuperscript{959} Morrison, “Living at the Margins”. This is a point made both by the universal Church, see Ch. 4, 133-4, and the Australian Bishops in their document, Graced by Migration, 9. See Ch. 5, 178.
\textsuperscript{960} In making this assertion I am influenced by Terry A. Veling’s article, “In the Name of Who? Levinas and the Other Side of Theology”, Pacifica, 12, (3, October 1999), 275 ff.
\textsuperscript{961} Vanier, “Welcome”, Community and Growth, 202-204. Later, he expounds on the concept of the stranger as a gift from God and notes that “although they [strangers] are disturbing, they also help the community to be constantly alert to ways of becoming more loving, better at listening and at finding the small things which bring peace.”, 211.
inclusivity; to go “beyond the situated and concrete towards an encounter with the Other.”\textsuperscript{962} In this regard refugees particularly symbolize for the Church Christ’s body broken for his people as well as our broken nature as the people of God on earth; a brokenness which is in need of redemption. Thus pastoral care to migrants and refugees, carried out in the spirit of transformation, is a redemptive practice which reaches beyond conscious experience, knowledge or activity if those providing pastoral care are to truly encounter the faces of the “Other” as represented by their clientele. It is a pastoral care which goes beyond hospitality and paternalistic service; a care in which the carers themselves become strangers, migrants with migrants, refugees with refugees.\textsuperscript{963} At a practical level this involves carers in not just welcoming the migrant and the refugee but in understanding the mechanisms of the refugee situation.\textsuperscript{964}

Another way of considering the “Otherness” and the reciprocal transformational quality of genuine pastoral care, especially to refugees, is to reflect upon Luke Bretherton’s concept of the “hallowing of bare life.”\textsuperscript{965} As he stresses, such a concept takes pastoral care to refugees beyond being simply a humanitarian concern. The “hallowing of bare life” has its basis in Hebrew Scripture and is intrinsic to the command to hallow the name of God.\textsuperscript{966} It relates closely to Nouwen’s claim that pastoral care is a faithful and loving

\textsuperscript{962} Elaine Graham, “Practical Theology as Transforming Practice”, \textit{The Blackwell Reader}, 111-112.
\textsuperscript{963} Here I have adapted the words of Gioacchino Campese CS, “Walk Humbly with Your God! Notes on a Spirituality for Missionaries with Migrants” in Direzione Generale dei Missionari Scalabriniani, \textit{teologia e mobilità umana in dialogo – Antologia}, Parte I (Roma: Direzione Generale dei Missionari Scalabriniani, 1998), 51.
\textsuperscript{964} This point is made cogently by the PCPCMIP in \textit{Refugees}, 11. See quotation in Ch. 4, 134.
\textsuperscript{965} This concept he expounds in his article, “The Duty of Care to Refugees, Christian Cosmopolitanism, and the Hallowing of Bare Life”, \textit{Studies in Christian Ethics}, 19, 1,(2006), 39-61.
\textsuperscript{966} Ex 20: 1-7;
witness to God’s covenant with humanity.\textsuperscript{967} In the case of refugees, “bare life” is summoned “from exclusion by [the personnel of Church agencies] abiding with the refugees as persons able to express themselves [from] within and act upon a common world”.\textsuperscript{968} Integral to the concept is the recognition that the refugees are “creatures of God called by God to participate as persons in divine communion.”\textsuperscript{969} Thus they symbolize gift, judgement, calling into question our complacency, and promise, allowing for “the inbreaking of the Kingdom of God.”\textsuperscript{970} By allowing new forms of solidarity to emerge through the hallowing of the bare life of the refugees and by accommodating the Otherness of the Other, mutual transformation within church and society can occur.

As is evident from the foregoing, pastoral care of migrants and refugees as well as others on the margins is a quintessentially relational practice. It is a practice which, as Metz points out, can bring into the open “the silent sufferings of the inconsolable pain of the past”\textsuperscript{971}, providing those doing the caring are sensitive to the lived past and the present as well as to experience which goes beyond the verbal or the written. Chris Schlauch’s hypothesis that human beings relate to themselves, others and their environment in a tripartite series of activities is vitally relevant to the praxis of migrant/refuge pastoral care. Thus they experience or register information, understand or reflect upon that information, and act or execute meaningful behaviour; processes which are concurrent and interactive.\textsuperscript{972} Such a realization reinforces Nouwen’s portrayal of memory as

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{967} Henri Nouwen, Creative Ministry: Beyond professionalism in teaching, preaching, counselling, organizing and celebration (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 64.
\item \textsuperscript{968} Bretherton, “The Duty of Care to Refugees”, 55.
\item \textsuperscript{969} Idem.
\item \textsuperscript{970} Idem.
\item \textsuperscript{971} J. B. Metz, 128.
\item \textsuperscript{972} Chris Schlauch, “Suffering, Healing and Reconstructing Experience”, Blackwell Reader, 214.
\end{itemize}
central to the human sense of being. As Schlauch indicates, such processes involve construction and reconstruction on the part of the carer if the care is to be transformative for both parties, especially the cared for.

Through pastoral theologizing as reconstructing experience, the person seeking care may be transformed in two distinct but related ways. Substantively, she or her acquires an expanded and increasingly accurate and meaningful repertoire of categories through which to apprehend and articulate features and dimensions of reality … . Methodologically, she or he acquires a way of being, an attitude, disposed to practice [sic.] disciplined, critical attention to her or his own and another’s experiencing, to be engaged and engage others in pastoral theologizing. Having come to know ‘in one’s bones’ how healing unfolds in this relationship and process, that person can ‘go and do likewise’, can witness in action as in word, can love and serve others, by enabling her or his reconstructing.

Schlauch uses the phrase “pastoral theologizing”. However, I would prefer to refer to it as “pastoral praxis”; a wording which relates to the view of praxis as social and relational as well as reflective and active; praxis as “a process of “being in becoming” which displays an affinity between praxis and the “inbreaking” of God’s kingdom into our world. Such pastoral care praxis is salvational not just for the cared-for but also for the carers and the whole Church and society.

A Dialogue Between Church Views on Migrant/Refugee Pastoral Care and Praxis in the Archdiocese of Perth

Inherent in the theology and praxis of practical theology is the concept of dialogue; a dialogue where there can occur a critical encounter between theo-logic, in the form of what is believed, and theo-activity, in the form of what is actually being practised as well

---

974 Schlauch, 220.
975 Lane, Foundations for a Social Theology, 126 ff.
976 Idem.
as reflected upon.\textsuperscript{977} It can also be a dialogue between a Church community or agency and those outside. Such dialogue provides an opportunity, as Martin Forward points out, “to interpret how God’s grace in Christ reaches out beyond the limited confines of the church” into the wider world.\textsuperscript{978} This consideration is especially pertinent to any dialogue between what has been written within the Church about pastoral care to migrants and refugees and a situation in which, as this thesis has shown, Church agencies working directly with migrants and refugees are endeavouring to respond to a complex reality which encompasses not just Church but also wider community issues and government priorities. These latter include a situation in which many of the Church agencies are heavily reliant on non-Church funding and goodwill. They also relate to a social environment in which many citizens in the community are ambiguous, some even actively hostile, to the influx of refugees, especially those of non-European origin. Finally, the agencies are operating with personnel and clientele who include a considerable proportion of people with either no Catholic or no or other religious allegiances in a society where many people are estranged from Christianity or else are adherents to other faiths.

Above all, any dialogue must be intellectually and rigorously critical in its approach to all aspects of the multidimensional dialectical process; a process which, as Fowler diagrammatically explains includes attention to practical theology, Scripture and tradition, present situations and challenges and ecclesial praxis and, most crucially, the

\textsuperscript{977} This is often referred to as a dialogue between orthodoxy as enunciated in Scripture and Church tradition and orthopraxis.
\textsuperscript{978} Martin Forward, “Cultures, Religious Faiths and Race”, \textit{The Blackwell Reader}, 148-256.
relationships between them.\textsuperscript{979} It also needs to engage in “critical conversation”\textsuperscript{980}; a conversation which, to be “mutually enriching, intellectually critical and practically transforming”\textsuperscript{981}, must involve dialogue between the practical theologian’s own ideas, beliefs, feelings and perceptions, the beliefs, assumptions and perceptions provided by the Catholic tradition and the contemporary empirical situation being considered which is interpreted through the lens of those involved in it.

Consequently such dialogue does not only mean a discussion of differences. It also involves perceiving similarities of outlook and points of convergence. In this latter context, a passion for social justice can be seen to be clearly at the root of Church documentation on migrants and refugees as well as the praxis, both conscious and unconscious, of the Archdiocesan agencies. This passion for social justice in relation to migrants and refugees and their integration into their acquired community has as its basis human dignity, i.e. the view of the migrant or refugee as a human being, a creature made, in the words of Catholic social justice, “in the image and likeness of God”; someone who has general rights which should be common to everyone in the community. Here Raimond Gaita’s claim is pertinent: “that justice must be founded on a recognition of our common humanity and the understanding that every human life is precious”.\textsuperscript{982}

\textsuperscript{979} Fowler, \textit{Faith Development and Pastoral Care}, 21 ff.
\textsuperscript{982} Cited in Caz Coleman, “Between the Department of Immigration and a hard place”, \textit{Eureka Street}, (6 February, 2009), \url{http://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article/aspx?acid=10788}. 
Because of their particular circumstances as migrants or refugees, such people are seen by both Church tradition and agency praxis as also having specific rights and needs. Similarly, the wider church, government and community are perceived as owing strong duties and obligations to them, irrespective of how they entered the country. In addition, migrants and refugees are not viewed in either Church documentation or agency pastoral praxis as existing in isolation. Rather the migrant or refugee exists in community with his/her fellow human beings and needs to be seen as an integral part of that community.

Such a passion for social justice with regard to migrants and refugees is relevant irrespective of whether or not the provider of migrant/refugee pastoral care is seeped in the doctrine of Catholic social justice. As was discovered in interviewing of personnel of the various agencies, there was considerable variation in the degree to which such personnel were aware of the specific tenets of Catholic social justice or whether their views on social justice originated in general humanitarian values based on a loose Christian or other religious foundations. Nevertheless, even where those personnel had little or no awareness of Catholic social justice, when various elements of it were pointed out to them, they had no difficulty in relating to them. This would suggest that for Catholic Church agencies, irrespective of the religious allegiances of their personnel, a grounding in Catholic social justice and its relevance to the wider culturally and religiously pluralistic community, such as is carried out, for example, through the

---

983 See Ch. 4, 123-133 especially.
984 This was particularly the case with those personnel I interviewed in CMS.
“multifaith” weekends of the ERCM, would enhance and deepen the more general justice awareness of agency personnel.

A second point of agreement lies in both recent Church documentation, especially at the Australian national level, and agency praxis’ recognition of the necessity of perceiving Australian Church and society as multicultural entities, made up of diverse ethnicities which need to be viewed as integral to both Church and societal functioning. In more recent years it is generally the Australian Bishops and their representative bodies, most particularly the ACMRO, which carry out political advocacy on behalf of migrants and refugees, regularly highlighting what the national Church perceives as inequities and injustices being perpetuated at government levels towards migrants and refugees. In this the Australian Church follows the lead of Rome, at the levels of papal teaching and the pontifical councils, especially the PCPCMIP. Such advocacy also has an educative dimension at the global and national levels of Church and society.

The Archdiocesan agencies, too, place a strong emphasis on the educative aspects of their pastoral care duties in relation to the local community’s perception and reception of migrants and refugees. So, for example, the St Vincent de Paul MRC hosts its annual picnics while the ERCM strongly encourages parishes and groups in the wider community to show hospitality to migrant and refugee newcomers. The MA also plays an indirect advocacy role in encouraging within mainstream parishes an appreciation of the different ethnic ways of “being Church” as well as endeavouring to maintain within

985 This is very evident at the level of Australian conciliar writing.
986 Ch. 5, 163-73.
987 See Ch. 6, 202
988 Ibid., 208-9.
the ethnic communities their distinctive Catholic practices and a pride in these, especially among the Australian-born generations of migrants and refugees. Finally, Aranmore Catholic College actively celebrates the multicultural composition of its student population through Harmony Week and other activities.

Such direct and indirect advocacy activities indicate a third meeting point between Church documentation and the praxis of Archdiocesan agencies, namely, the realization of the contribution which migrants and refugees, once they are integrated into their new homelands and their immediate material, spiritual and psychological needs are attended to, can make to the wider church and society. In this regard, the argument made by Hugh Gallagher that “the horizons of inculturation” need to be widened and viewed reciprocally is a pertinent one.

Migrants and refugees provide opportunities for existing members of the receiving community to welcome them and show them genuine hospitality as valued guests and future citizens. This is clearly appreciated by the agencies and individuals providing pastoral care. However, what is perhaps less overtly recognized by the agencies and their personnel is that migrants and refugees, through their sufferings, their needs and their

---

989 Ch. 7, 220-2. However, it is clear from the comments on the following page, 223, that territorial parishes and their priests need to do much more in incorporating different ways of worship into their liturgical lives as part of welcoming the migrants and refugees.

990 See Ch. 6, 212-3.

991 This is enunciated most clearly in the document, *Graced by Migration*, which, both in its title and in its contents, sees the migrant and the refugee as a theological grace to the Australian Church. See in particular the quotations from the document cited in Ch. 5, 177. An earlier statement on the “Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees” also acknowledged the ways in which the Church “has been strengthened in many ways by the arrival of migrants” while Archbishop Mark Coleridge in a paper to the National Migrant Chaplains Conference in October, 2007, 1, stressed the need for “preparing leaders from migrant communities.”

992 See Ch. 3, 125.
representation of the divine “Other”, allow those caring for them to be challenged in their own superficial complacency and artificial self-sufficiency. This is the case even when migrants and refugees first arrive in their new society. For Christians, and for Church-based migrant/refugee agencies, this is especially relevant.\(^{993}\) It underlines what Cardinal Hamao emphasizes – that the Church needs to be a family for migrants and refugees, especially those without their own biological families.\(^{994}\) For the latter particularly, it emphasizes the need for a continuing reappraisal of vision, mission and identity.

This need for ongoing reappraisal of vision, mission and identity raises what appears to be a major and critical point of difference which emerges in a dialogue between Church documentation and Archdiocesan agency praxis, namely, the vexed matter of Catholic identity and the degree to which an identifiably Catholic ethos permeates migrant and refugee pastoral care carried out under the aegis of the Church. Church documentation with regard to issues concerning migrants and refugees is heavily permeated with Scriptural justifications as well as Catholic doctrine, especially Catholic social justice teaching and appears to be based predominantly on the assumption that all bodies and their personnel are either Catholic or Christian while many of their clientele are still actively Catholic in religious allegiance.\(^{995}\)

\(^{993}\) The immediate past Vicar for Migrations in the Archdiocese of Perth, Fr Anthony Paganoni CS, noted the importance of seeing immigrants “as the face of Christ” in a paper he gave to the “One in Christ Jesus” Conference, 2005. See full quotation from his text in Ch. 5, 177.

\(^{994}\) See Ch. 4, 132. This statement harks back to Jesus’ reply in Matt 13:49 – “… pointing to His disciples, He said, ‘Here is my mother and my brothers!’”.

\(^{995}\) The main exception in this regard is the Instruction, Erga migrantes.
However, as empirical studies for this thesis have demonstrated, there is considerable variation between the degree to which the agencies studied perceive themselves as Catholic and, even, what the word means for them. Even though “Catholic” is preserved in its title, the least overtly Catholic in relation to identification, ethos, composition of work force and clientele, and education of its personnel and volunteers is CMS. At the other end of the scale, the most Catholic is the MA composed of chaplains specifically designated for work with migrants as well as other related clergy and religious who have as their main mission the preservation of the Catholic faith as it has been inculturated among their Catholic multicultural clientele and the incorporation of that multi-inculturation into the mainstream Australian Church. Ranged in between are the other agencies included for consideration in this research.

In the case of these agencies the word “Catholic” in reference to ethos and identity does not mean so much belief in specific dogmas as embodiment of a culture within the agency which is identifiably “Catholic”. This culture includes a belief in, adherence to and action upon Catholic social justice principles and a mission and vision which have at their centre a firm belief in Jesus Christ as the inspiration and criteria for the pastoral care carried out by the agency. Particularly where the agency is based on a specific religious charism, Catholic identity and ethos are very much interpreted in terms of that charism and there is a strong emphasis on regular reflection and discussion on the

996 See Ch. 7, 235 ff.
997 As indicated, the agency which was found to be the least overtly Catholic in both identity and ethos was CMS. Yet it can be argued, as two of its staff did, that it is still bearing a very strong Gospel based and Catholic social justice witness in relation to the services it provides for migrants and refugees, even if that witness is carried out unconsciously by its personnel. See Ch. 7,241.
998 For example, the ERCM, the MHHC and the MRC of St Vincent de Paul. Similarly, the IEC of Aranmore Catholic College not only has its roots in religious charisms but is also part of a Catholic education system which requires the training of its students in Catholic religious belief and practice.
spiritual roots of the agency, often not just in a Catholic or Christian context but also in the context of other religious faiths. However, maintenance of a consciously Catholic or Christian ethos is much more difficult when many of the personnel are neither of a Christian religious adherence nor encouraged to reflect on their position and pastoral care in relation to an ethos.  

I referred in the previous chapter to Trevor Hogan’s argument regarding the conflict of discourses – a Christian versus other community discourse – for Church-based agencies. This is also crucial to the issue of Catholic identity and ethos yet, strangely, its relevance to the diversity or dilemma of Catholic identity and ethos for migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies appears to be little recognized in Australian Church documentation. As various writings on issues of identity and ethos for Church-based agencies stress and my research demonstrates, such identity and ethos cannot remain static. Moreover it cannot be assumed. It needs to be continually evolving in relation to the vision of its mission and how that mission is carried out by each particular agency. In addition agency leaders need to uphold and maintain it. Such upholding and maintenance is vital where the social and often more sectarian imperative is not necessarily the Christian or Catholic social justice imperative. Recognition also needs to be given to the consideration that what might be the ethically responsible course to follow may be economically irresponsible or impossible in terms of funding and 

---

999 This is very evident with CMS.
1000 Trevor Hogan, “Impressions and Comments – a Response” in Daddow, *Church Agency or Christian Response?*, 21
1001 This is the case for both writings originating in Australia, for example, Newton Daddow (ed.), *Church Agency or Christian Response?* and Gerald A. Arbuckle, *Crafting Catholic Identity in Postmodern Australia*, and those emerging from other countries, see Ch. 7, 236, footnote 65. It was also evident not only in my interviews with migrant/refugee agency personnel within the Archdiocese of Perth but also in an interview with the then Mission Director of Mercy Care, Amanda Wheeler.
Consequently, one of the priorities for all Church-based agencies involved in migrant/refugee pastoral care is one of ongoing reassessment of their ethos, mission and vision in these wider societal, political and economic contexts in which the agencies are operating. In this they need the assistance of their national Church bodies which can extend their localized perceptions with awareness of the national and global situations.

There would also appear to be a gap between the awareness of the Australian Council of Bishops and its related bodies of everyday practical concerns and problems concerning migrant and refugee pastoral care and that of agencies at the Archdiocesan level. This is perhaps more of a difference of perception rather than a lacuna. Thus *Graced by Migration*, in its appendices particularly, recognizes issues concerning pastoral care towards migrant and refugee women, youth and the elderly, and provides fifty-one valuable recommendations to implement a national vision of migrant/refugee pastoral care. Similarly, the 2007 National Conference for Migrant Chaplains heard papers calling for the urgent need for more consideration of pastoral care for the immigrant aged in the Catholic environment and with in rural and provincial dioceses. However, the practical implications of other factors affecting especially the service provider agencies need more direct consideration. For example, with the changing ethnic composition of especially refugee clientele, much pressure is placed on agencies in relation to issues of

---

1002 See Ch. 7, 233.
1003 In this regard the ACMRO Secretary’s call to Vicars for Migration around Australia for papers on the particular situations and problems of migrant/refugee pastoral care in their regions in preparation for the forthcoming national conference is heartening.
1004 *Graced by Migration*, see Appendix Three for a list of its recommended strategies.
1005 The first paper was presented by Carl Melvery, KCSG and Pat Pedulla while the second was presented by the Most Rev. Joseph Grech, DD.
communication, given the increasing diversity of languages represented by their clientele, and also of the provision of suitable but also affordable housing for the much larger families of particularly African refugees who in recent years have been entering WA in increasing numbers. 1006

In this context the call of the “One in Christ Jesus” national conference of 2005 for “a more vibrant [and coordinated] approach toward the pastoral care of migrants and refugees” is an aim which is crucially important, but one still to be achieved beyond the level of national gatherings of migrant chaplains and a few other people. Thus, even though the directors of Australian Catholic migrant centres do meet regularly under the aegis of the ACMRO 1007, these only represent a minority of the agencies providing migrant/refugee pastoral care in any one major centre like the Perth Archdiocese. Even within the Archdiocese itself, while there is evidence of some interaction, particularly between the service providers, for example, CMS, the ERCM, the St Vincent de Paul MRC and the Aranmore Catholic College IEC, it would seem that this interaction is something which could be fruitfully built upon with more discussion of concerns as well as coordination of strategies that take more account of specific regional as well as national issues and problems.

At the national conferences organized by the ACMRO, where the concerns of migrant and refugee chaplains have been expressed, very little has been said about societal

1006 See Ch. 7, especially 246 ff.
1007 Such meetings were referred to in Ch. 6, 192, and were brought to my attention by the Director of Centrecare under whose auspices Catholic Migrant Services now operates as well as by the website of ACMRO.
expectations and political/economic changes which impinge on the work of agencies at
diocesan levels. These include issues already discussed at length in the preceding two
chapters: the changing religious and cultural composition of their clientele, the need for
specific professional qualifications and expertise in their personnel, the ongoing pressures
of competing for contracts and tenders from government bodies and the need to reconcile
their demands with the perceptions of vision and mission within the agencies themselves,
and, finally, implications for adequate new migrant and refugee care arising from changes
and the current downturn in the Australian economy. Such considerations reinforce Don
Browning’s argument that practical theology needs to be

\[\text{fully public and able to enter into a mutually critical dialogue or correlation with other}
\\text{secular [as well as] religious criteria of transformation to be found in the richly}
\\text{pluralistic world in which we find ourselves today.}^{1008}\]

Overall, migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies of the Catholic Church in Australia need
to be viewed not only as part of the Church’s outreach to society but also as microcosms
of wider community issues and concerns.

Attention has already been paid to the increasing plurality of religions in both Western
Australia and Australia in general and the growing proportion of non-Christian religious
adherence within Australian society. This phenomenon is manifest in the clientele and,
to a lesser extent, the personnel, of migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies within the
Archdiocese of Perth. It is an issue that provides the agencies with important pastoral
care challenges and which needs to be given more specific attention from Rome as well
as from the ACBC and the ACMRO. Certainly, the theme of “building bridges” has been
stressed at recent Australian migrant chaplain conferences, but it is evident from my

\[1008 \text{ Don S. Browning, “Introduction” to Practical Theology, 6.}\]
research that more practical guidance could be given to agencies struggling with the dilemma of bearing Christian witness to their increasingly multi-religious clientele while also recognizing the integrity of the clienteles’ own religious adherence when it is non-Catholic and, most significantly, non-Christian.

Such a dilemma is reflected in what Bishop Manning emphasized at the National Migrants Chaplains’ Conference – the need for the Church’s faithful to have “a true encounter with a human person” in their inter-faith dialogue with Muslims.\textsuperscript{1009} This is an issue of crucial importance to migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies of the Australian Church which are witnessing a growing number of clients of Muslim origin who seek their assistance yet are suspicious of possible proselytisation.\textsuperscript{1010} In the face of this situation, the direct recognition of \textit{Erga migrantes} in 2004 about the need for inter-religious dialogue between “the increasing number of migrants belonging to other religions, particularly Muslims, in traditionally Catholic countries, and vice versa” is refreshing, as are the ‘Multifaith’ Weekends hosted by the ERCM. Similarly, the document’s emphasis on “the promotion of pastoral action that is both faithful to tradition and open to new developments” is important.\textsuperscript{1011}

Early pages of \textit{Erga migrantes} deal very capably with the challenges presented by such phenomenon and place them in scholarly Scriptural and historical contexts.\textsuperscript{1012} Part II also stresses the indispensability of “inculturation” in relation to “this fluidity of cultures

\textsuperscript{1009} Bishop Kevin Manning, “Interfaith Dialogue – new understandings, skills and strategies”, National Migrant Chaplains’ Conference, 2007, 2
\textsuperscript{1010} See Ch. 7, 242.
\textsuperscript{1011} \textit{Erga migrantes}, Presentation.
\textsuperscript{1012} \textit{Ibid.}, Introduction and Part I
as well as the importance of welcome and solidarity” while Part III speaks of the urgent need for the formation, in the light of the diversity of religious allegiances of contemporary migrants and refugees, of “workers in a pastoral care of communion”, especially national chaplains, presbyters and religious as well as “laity, lay associations and ecclesial movements.” However, apart from a general stress on the importance of “Christian witness”, direction on “pastoral structures” is more directed toward issues relevant to the territorial and “ethnic-linguistic” parishes rather than to migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies of the Church.  

Moreover, there appears to be more concern with evangelization rather than pastoral care and the shoring up of the Catholic faith in relation to religious instruction in schools and marriage between Catholics and non-Christian migrants. This is, in spite of a stress on “the principle of reciprocity” and “mutual respect” and “justice in the relationships between Christians and persons of other religions.” Agencies may well query how they are to maintain “a dialogue and missionary spirit in pastoral care” with their non-Christian clientele while at the same time engaging in evangelization which is respectful of their cultural and religious integrity and their human dignity.

Conclusion

In an endeavour to bring together the disparate aspects of this thesis, dealt with in preceding chapters, this concluding chapter has explored aspects of ‘openness to the other’ as a two-way process as well as entering into a constructive dialogue between Church teaching, community expectations and constraints and reflective praxis as carried

\[1013 \text{ Ibid., #91-#95.} \]
\[1014 \text{ Ibid., #61-#64.} \]
\[1015 \text{ Ibid., #100.} \]
out by six migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies which are or which have operated in the Archdiocese of Perth. Not only does the thesis represent a “work-in-progress” in relation to the complex issue of the Church’s outreach to migrants and refugees but it also reinforces the importance of ongoing dialogue leading to renewed practical wisdom, both in Church teaching and Church praxis, in the people of God’s relationships with one another, especially with the stranger in their midst. Deliberate use has been made of the methodology of practical theology to explore how the Church, at international and national levels, views and, within the localized situation of the Archdiocese of Perth, exercises pastoral care toward migrants and refugees. In this way, the research has allowed “both experience and theology [to] come alive in a new way” and permitted the participants to see the issues, themselves and others from different angles.  

More significantly, this thesis has striven to be incarnate, i.e. to critically develop the relationship between the theology and the empirical practice of “the people of God”, between those who minister and those who are ministered to, and between the Church as a living faith community and the wider world. Above all, it is part of an ongoing process which endeavours to bring about God’s kingdom “on earth as it is in heaven.” Thus its purpose has been consciously transformative, allowing those engaged in work with migrants and refugees to acquire both a more profound grasp of the complex dimensions of the reality of migrant/refugee pastoral care as well as that involved in their relationship to the transcendent Other.

---

1016 Pattison, “Some Straw for Bricks”, *The Blackwell Reader*, 139-140.
1017 From the title of Veling’s *Practical Theology: “On Earth as It Is in Heaven”*. 
In the process various practical recommendations have been suggested out of which it is envisaged that both a new orthodoxy and a fresh orthopraxis can emerge. The first of these involves the recognition of Church migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies as “networks of independent relationships” whose personnel, clientele and activities encompass a highly complex interaction between the Church, government and the wider community. Thus, such agencies, especially those which are classified as service-providers and recipients of government contracts and tenders, are in a constant state of “being-challenged-in-the-world”.

The second recommendation flows naturally from this first one and relates to the implications of “being-challenged-in-the-world” for the vision, mission, ethos and identity of Church migrant-refugee pastoral care agencies. If both the clientele, especially those who are refugees, and the personnel, both staff and volunteers, are to be transformed by their work of hospitality, healing and reformation then there needs to be more reflective discernment and dialogue devoted to the nature of the Church’s outreach to the migrant and refugee. Again, more attention to agencies’ presumed Catholic ethos and identity is urgently required with regard to the growing percentage of other Christian and, most significantly, non-Christian clientele and personnel and what implications this has for the nature and quality of the agencies’ outreach.

These two foregoing recommendations give rise logically to a third recommendation – more constructive and nourishing dialogue, not only between the Church and its migrant/refugee pastoral care agencies, but also between the agencies themselves and the
wider community. The Church’s rich social justice tradition has much to offer to migrant/refugee pastoral care as does reflection on the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. However, such reflection needs to be carried out in conjunction with the insights of other faith traditions and humanitarian perceptions. Only then can both the theo-logic of the Church and the praxis of the agencies be truly in the process of “being in becoming” as well as assisting in the “inbreaking” of God’s kingdom into our world.

\[\text{This has been clearly manifested in Chs 2 to 4.}\]
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

The Second Vatican Council


The Holy See


The International Theological Commission:


Synod Documents

Encyclicals


______.  *Centesimus Annus* (*One Hundred Years*), 1991.
[www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_01051991_centesimusannus_en.htm](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_01051991_centesimusannus_en.htm)

[www.vatican.va/.../hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/.../hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html)

Apostolic Exhortations


**Apostolic Letters**

Pius XII. *Exsul Familia, the Apostolic Letter, establishing the Pontifical Commission for the Spiritual and Pastoral Care of Migratory and Itinerant People*, translated by Giulio Tessorolo. PSSC, STD, in *Exsul Familia: The Church’s Magna Charta for Migrants*. Staten Island, NY: St Charles Seminary, 1962


__________. *Novo Millenio Ineunte (At the Beginning of the New Millenium)*, 2001. www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millenio

**Papal Messages**


**Sacred Congregation for Bishops**


**The Pontifical Council for Culture**

The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the Congregation for the Evangelization of People


The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace


The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples


Unless otherwise indicated, the references cited below were all consulted on the above website.


*Pontificum Consilium De Spirituali Migrantium Atque Itinerantium Cura* (from the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus*, 1987).


Starting Afresh from Christ: Towards a Renewed Pastoral Care for Migrants and Refugees, Proceedings (in English and Spanish) of the Fifth World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees, held in Rome, 18-22 November, 2003. www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/pom2003_93/rc_pc


Bishops’ Conferences

Overseas


### Australia


Media releases

- “Plight of all in immigration detention must be considered”. 10 February, 2005.
- “Catholic Church welcomes Minister’s reconsideration of East Timor asylum cases”, 20 May, 2005.
- “Catholic Bishops write to Prime Minister urging him to reconsider changes to asylum processing laws”, 17 May, 2006.
- “Citizenship must be taken seriously, but not placed out of reach”, 13 December, 2006.

The Australian Catholic Bishops’ Commission for Pastoral Life

*Graced by Migration: Implementing a National Vision in Pastoral Care for a Multicultural Australian Church*, 2007.

The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council
[www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)

Background Papers

Murphy, Kerry. “Are We Welcoming the Stranger?”, August, 2001.

Position Papers
www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/positionpapers


Asylum Seekers in Australia, August, 1999.


Social Justice Sunday Statement for 2007, Who is My Neighbour? Australia’s role as a global citizen.

The Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office
www.acmro.catholic.org.au
Where a specific source has not been indicated for the sources below, they are to be found at the above webmail address.

“ACMRO Contacts”.
www.acmro.catholic.org.au/contacts.htm

“The Role of ACMRO”.
www.acmro.catholic.org.au/role.htm

www.acmro.catholic.org.au/newsletter

“Questions and Issues for Discussion”, proposed by the Bishops’ Committee for Migrants and Refugees, and based on the Bishops’ Statement on Refugees and Asylum Seekers, 2002.


Submission on Australia’s Humanitarian Program for 2009-10.

Position Papers


Media releases


“Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office welcomes increase in humanitarian numbers”, n.d. cited.


National Conferences organized by the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office

“Welcome Stranger”, National Forum on Refugees, convened by the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Committee for Migrant Affairs and the Australian Council of Churches’ Refugee and Migrant Services, Sydney, 19-21 June, 1992 (typescript held in the Archdiocese of Perth Catholic Archives, Stack 1, Box 402).


www.acmro.catholic.org.au/whatsnew.htm

**Other Australian Catholic Agencies**

**Caritas Australia**

www.ozspirit.info/2008/180.html

**Catholic Earthcare Australia**

“Climate Change”.
www.catholicearthcareoz.net

**Catholic Bishops’ Pastoral Project Office**

“National Catholic Census Project – Census characteristics of Catholic by State and Territory, 2001”.

www.ppo.catholic.org.au

www.ppo.catholic.org.au
Catholic Social Services Australia

http://catholicsocialservices.org.au/print/100

Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education

Deported to Danger – a Study of Australia’s Treatment of 40 Rejected Asylum Seekers, in cooperation with the School of Education of the Australian Catholic University, (September, 2004).

The United Nations

http://www.unlchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng/eng.htm

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.
www.un.org/Overview/rights.html

1951 Refugee Convention.
www.UNHCR.org/1951RefugeeConvention

1967 Protocol
www2.ohchr.org/English/law/protocolrefugees.htm

www.asylumlaw.org/docs/international/Africa.PDF

Cartagena Declaration, 1984.
www.asylumlaw.org/docs/international/CentralAmerica.PDF

United Nations Humanitarian Commission for Human Rights


**Australian Federal Bureau of Statistics**

2914.055.002 – 2006 *Census of Population and Housing: Media Releases and Fact Sheets*, 2006, Media Fact Sheet - “Census shows non-Christian religions continue to grow at a faster rate”.

www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/7d12b0f6763v78svs257061001cc588/

3416.0 – *Perspectives on Migrants*, 2007 – “Birthplace and Religion”.

www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/3416.0Main%20Features22007?ope

1367.5 – *Western Australian Statistical Indicators*, (September, 2007), “Cultural Diversity in Western Australia”.

www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/1367.5Feature%20Article2Sep

1301-0 – *Year Book Australia*, 2008.

“Country of Birth”.

www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/bb8db737e2af84b8ca2571780015701e/

“Cultural Diversity”.

www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/bb8db737e2af84b8ca2571780015701e/

**Australian Federal Department of Immigration and Citizenship**

*Fact Sheet 60 – Australia’s Refugee and Humanitarian Programme*, (2007-8).

www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/60refugee.htm
Western Australian Government

Office of Multicultural Interests

*Cultural Diversity in Western Australia – a Demographic Profile.*

*Western Australian Diversity Statistics.*

*Western Australia.*

Centrelink

*The Journey,* 17 (Spring, 2008).

The Refugee Council of Australia


Archdiocese of Perth Agencies and Bodies

Aranmore Catholic College
www.aranmore.wa.edu.au

*2006 Annual,* compiled, edited and produced by Corrie Bourne and the Annual Committee.

*2007 Annual,* compiled, edited and produced by Corrie Bourne and the Annual Committee.

*2008 Annual,* compiled, edited and produced by Corrie Bourne and the Annual Committee.
In the Middle of Angels – Personal journeys of young refugees to Australia, a documentary video made by Aranmore Catholic College, 28 minutes, launched on Harmony Day, 21 March, 2002.

Catholic Migrant Services (previously the Catholic Migrant Centre)


Catholic Migrant Centre Correspondence, 1990-1993, held in the Archdiocese of Perth Catholic Archives, Stack 1, Box 403, Files 6-9.


Centrecare Annual Reports, 2005-2008.

Former Child Migrants Brochure, no date cited.

Edmund Rice Centre, Mirrabooka
ercm.org.au


Minutes and Reports


Advisory Committee Minutes, April and July, 2007.

Coordinator’s Reports, December, 2006 and April, 2007.

Correspondence

“Community Grants Programme – Local Priorities for Western Australia, c. 1997-1998” from the Department of Multiculturalism and Immigration Affairs, includes letter from DIMIA to Br S. Bowman (Coordinator) confirming application for funding of a new Northern Suburbs project, 14th March 1997 and letter from DIMIA to Br S. Bowman indicating that the 1997/1998 Community Relations Grants Programme application has been successful, 6 July, 1998.
Letter from Br S. Bowman to the Provincial Leader, Holy Spirit Province, 21 September, 1999.

**Reviews**


**Service Agreement**

Service Agreement between DIMIA and the Trustees of Christian Brothers WA Inc. – Edmund Rice Centre WA in relation to the provision of community settlement services to migrants under the Community Settlement Services Scheme, 26th September 2003, to commence 1 October, 2003.

**Strategic Plan**


**Submissions**


**The Multicultural Apostolate**

Email: blasco@perthcatholic.org.au

**Correspondence**


**Minutes**

**Position Paper**

Pittarello, Adrian CS. “Migrant Chaplains and Their Canonical Status”, commissioned by and prepared for the Australian Bishops’ Committee for Migrant Affairs, March, 1994.

**Reports**


**Perth Pastoral Data Project**


Email: padperth@highgate-perthcatholic.org.au

“WA Diocese: Census 2006”.

**St Vincent de Paul WA Migrant and Refugee Committee**

[www.vinnies.org.au](http://www.vinnies.org.au)


__________. *Draft – Submission to the Joint Standing Committee’s inquiry into Detention Practices*, no date cited.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Books


__________. *A dream, a journey and some shoes (a study about migrants and the challenges their presence bring to the local Catholic church which is in Perth).* Perth: no publisher cited, 1989.


**Articles**


DIMIA. “Blindness no barrier for Western Australian grant worker”, *People Everywhere*, (19th October 2006), 5.


**Theses, Reports and Other Unpublished Sources**


__________. “Environmental Scan: Catholic Charities and the Non-Profit Sector”. Detroit Mss, 1-28, presented to author by the writer, n.d. cited.

__________. “Evangelizing Culture: Is It Possible?”. Presented at the Slattery Lecture of the University of Notre Dame Australia, Fremantle, (2005), paper presented to the author by the writer.

The CBERS Network, 2, (November 2006).


Noseda, Mary. “Belonging: The Case of Immigrants and the Australian Catholic Church”. Thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, School and Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Australian Catholic University, Fitzroy, Victoria, (2004).


Scaramella, Maria,. “The Situation of Filipino Brides in Northern Areas of Western Australia”. Typescript held in the Catholic Archives of the Archdiocese of Perth, Stack 1, Box 402.

Searle, Gerald. “Multicultural Education in Catholic Schools in Western Australia, (July, 1988)” Typescript held in the Catholic Archives of the Archdiocese of Perth, Stack 1, Box 402.


Torresan, Fr Dino CS. “A Global Vision of Two Years’ Activities in the Perth Archdiocese”. Typescript held in the Catholic Archives of the Archdiocese of Perth, Stack 1, Box 402.

Interviews and Discussions

Interviews (in date order)


Michelle Ruedez, Youth Programme Coordinator. Catholic Migrant Services, 6 February, 2007.


Rev. Fr Albert Saminedi SDB, Migrant Chaplain to the African Community. 16 May, 2007.


Nigel Calver, Executive Manager. Catholic Migrant Services, 7 January, 2008.

Dr Tony Curry, Chairperson. Advisory Committee, Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka, 22 January, 2008.

Sr Margaret Culhane, Pastoral Worker with the African Community. 29 January, 2008.

Gerald Searle, former Director of the Catholic Migrant Centre. 29 January, 2008.

Tony Pietropiccolo, Director. Centrecare. 15 April, 2008.

**Discussions (in date order)**

Rev. Fr Antonio Paganoni, previous Vicar for Migrant Affairs in the Archdiocese of Perth. 20 April, 2006.


Br Geoff Seaman CB, Chairperson. Migrant and Refugee Committee, St Vincent de Paul Society WA. 25 March 2009.