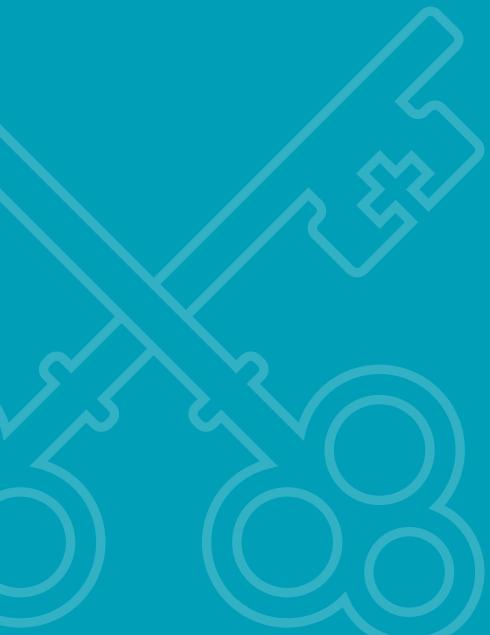


# PASTORAL ORIENTATIONS ON CLIMATE DISPLACED PEOPLE





**PASTORAL ORIENTATIONS  
ON CLIMATE DISPLACED PEOPLE**

**MIGRANTS & REFUGEES SECTION**

**DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING INTEGRAL  
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**



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# PREFACE

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The *Pastoral Orientations on Climate Displaced People* is a booklet full of relevant facts, interpretations, policies and proposals ... but at the very beginning, I suggest we adapt Hamlet's famous "to be or not to be" and affirm: "*To see or not to see, that is the question!*" Where it starts is with each one's seeing, yes, mine and yours.

We are engulfed by news and images of whole peoples uprooted by cataclysmic changes in our climate, forced to migrate. But what effect these stories have on us, and how we respond – whether they cause fleeting responses or trigger something deeper in us; whether it seems remote or whether we feel it close to home – depends on our taking the trouble *to see* the suffering that each story entails in order "to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening ... into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it" (*Laudato si' 19*).

When people are driven out because their local environment has become uninhabitable, it might look like a process of nature, something inevitable. Yet the deteriorating climate is very often the result of poor choices and destructive activity, of selfishness and neglect, that set humankind at odds with creation, our common home.

Unlike the pandemic, which came on us suddenly, without warning, almost everywhere, and impacting everyone at once, the climate crisis has been unfolding since the Industrial Revolution. For a long time it developed so slowly that it remained imperceptible except to a very few clairvoyants. Even now it is uneven in its impact: climate change happens everywhere, but the greatest pain is felt by those who have contributed the least to it.

Yet like the COVID-19 crisis, the huge and increasing numbers displaced by climate crises are fast becoming a great emergency of our age, visible almost nightly on our screens, and demanding global responses.

I think here of God speaking through the prophet Isaiah, with some words updated: *Come, let us talk this over. If you are ready to listen, we can still have a great future. But if you refuse to listen and to act, you will*

*be devoured by the heat and the pollution, by droughts here and rising waters there (cf Isaiah 1:18-20).*

When we look, what do we see? Many are being devoured in conditions that make it impossible to survive. Forced to abandon fields and shorelines, homes and villages, people flee in haste carrying just a few souvenirs and treasures, scraps of their culture and heritage. They set out in hope, meaning to restart their lives in a place of safety. But where they mostly end up are dangerously overcrowded slums or makeshift settlements, waiting on fate.

Those driven from their homes by the climate crisis need to be welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated. They want to start over. To create a new future for their children, they need to be allowed to do so, and to be helped. Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating are all verbs of helpful action. Let us remove, one by one, those boulders that block the way of the displaced, what represses and sidelines them, prevents them from working and going to school, whatever renders them invisible and denies their dignity.

The *Pastoral Orientations on Climate Displaced People* calls on us to broaden the way we look at this drama of our time. It urges us to see the tragedy of prolonged uprootedness that causes our brothers and sisters to cry out, year after year, "We can't go back, and we can't begin anew." It invites us to become aware of the indifference of societies and governments to this tragedy. It asks us to see, and to care. It invites the Church and others to act together, and spells out how we might do so.

This is the work the Lord asks now of us, and there is great joy in it. We are not going to get out of crises like climate or COVID-19 by hunkering down in individualism but only by "being many together", by encounter and dialogue and cooperation. Which is why I am so pleased that these *Pastoral Orientations on Climate Displaced People* have been produced, within the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, jointly by the Migrants and Refugees Section and by the Integral Ecology Sector. This connecting up is in itself a sign of the way forward.

*To see or not to see* is the question that leads us to the answer in action together. These pages show us what is needed and, with God's help, what to do.

*Franciscus*

# ACRONYMS

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CA: John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, Vatican City 1991

CCD: Climate Crisis and Displacement

CDP: Climate Displaced People

CIV: Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*, Vatican City 2009

CV: Francis, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*, Vatican City 2019

EG: Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Vatican City 2013

EMCC: Pontifical Council for the Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Erga migrantes caritas Christi*, Vatican City 2004

FT: Francis, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, Vatican City 2020

IDPs: Internally Displaced People

LS: Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, Vatican City 2015

M&R: Migrants & Refugees Section of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

POIDP: Migrants & Refugees Section, *Pastoral Orientations on Internally Displaced Persons*, Vatican City 2020

POCDP: Migrants & Refugees Section, *Pastoral Orientations on Climate Displaced People*, Vatican City 2021

QA: Francis, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Querida Amazonia*, Vatican City 2020

## ACRONYMS

RCS: Pontifical Council "Cor Unum" and Pontifical Council for the Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Refugees: a Challenge to Solidarity*, Vatican City 1992

VG: Francis, Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium*, Vatican City 2017

WCR: Pontifical Council 'Cor Unum' and Pontifical Council for the Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Welcoming Christ in Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons*, Vatican City 2013

# GLOSSARY

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**Catholic Church** in this document means and includes the official Church leadership, the Bishops and Bishops' Conferences, priests, religious sisters and brothers, leadership officers and staff heads of Catholic-inspired humanitarian and migration-focused charitable organizations, and each member of the Catholic Church.

**Climate crisis** is a term increasingly used to convey a greater sense of emergency about the current phase of climate change caused by human activities and the urgency to respond to it in order to avoid disastrous consequences.

**Climate Displaced People (CDP)** are individuals or groups of persons who are forced to move out of their habitual place of residence on account of acute climate crisis. Displacement can take place either due to *rapid-onset triggers*, mainly extreme weather phenomena like floods, storms, droughts and wildfires; or *slow-onset processes*, like desertification, depletion of natural resources, water scarcity, rising temperatures, and sea-level rise. In the case of natural hazards like extreme weather events, it might be possible for displaced victims to return. Displacement, however, will be permanent for most in the case of severe natural disasters and in the face of long-term processes like sea-level rise. Displacement can take place either internally or across an international border.

**Climate resilience** is the capacity to prepare for, adapt, and respond to phenomena and trends related to climate. Enhancing climate resilience entails understanding how the climate crisis will produce new risks, and adopt measures to better cope with these risks.

**Displacement** is the situation in which people are forced to leave the place where they normally live and move to a different place, either within the national borders or abroad.

# INTRODUCTION

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In recent years, the international community has acknowledged the magnitude of the climate crisis and has made significant efforts to address its impact through various agreements. The Catholic Church recognises and appreciates these efforts to build legal frameworks, to collect data and to conduct rigorous analyses on the consequences of the climate crisis, as well as the engagement of many civil society actors - in particular young people - in responding to this challenge.

The climate crisis has a "human face". It is already a reality for a multitude of people worldwide, in particular for those most vulnerable. The Catholic Church has a motherly care for all those who have been displaced by its effects. This particular situation of vulnerability is the *raison d'être* of the present document.

The magisterium of the Catholic Church has already considered the plight of internally displaced people, together with other categories of migrants, and has produced reflections and instructions concerning their pastoral care, reflected in particular in the Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*. The *Pastoral Orientations on Climate Displaced People* (POCDP) focus exclusively on climate displaced people (CDP), highlighting the new challenges posed by the present global scenario and suggesting adequate pastoral responses. The main purpose of these orientations is to provide a series of key considerations that may be useful to Bishops' Conferences, local churches, religious congregations, Catholic organizations, Catholic pastoral agents and all Catholic faithful in pastoral planning and programme development for the effective assistance of CDP.

The POCDP are deeply grounded in the Church's reflection and teaching and in its practical experience responding to the needs of CDP, both displaced within the borders of their countries of origin or outside. CDP are migrants, and this document draws guidance from those magisterial documents, particularly on migrants, which may also apply to CDP. The POCDP also draws from the longstanding practical experience of many Catholic organizations working in the field and from the observations of representatives of Bishops' Conferences. While approved by

the Holy Father, the POCDP do not presume to exhaust the Church's teaching on climate crisis and displacement.

The POCDP highlights ten challenges pertaining to climate change displacement and its victims. These challenges, together with the suggested Catholic Church responses, constitute markers for a roadmap in pastoral planning for CDP, and, with this document, they extend the Pope's pastoral concern to CDP. This document also has a section that addresses cooperation and teamwork, which are the foundation of successful projects and are key to effective and efficient service delivery for CDP.

## 1. ACKNOWLEDGING THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND DISPLACEMENT NEXUS

# 1. ACKNOWLEDGING THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND DISPLACEMENT NEXUS

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*[The sailors] took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep. Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight. [...] The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold (Acts, 27: 27-29, 28: 1-2).*

Fierce storms, violent hurricanes and disastrous cyclones continue to rage. In fact, they have become more frequent and intense as the climate crisis worsens. We see growing numbers of people displaced on account of the crippling impacts of the climate crisis and other manifestations of the ecological crisis. The lives and homes of so many of our brothers and sisters around the world are effectively shipwrecked. Many of them are forced to flee their homelands in search of safety and security.

As Christians, we believe that the darkest nights can be lit up with love and care. The Maltese offered an exceptionally kind welcome to St Paul and his shipwrecked companions. The homeless found a home as they were welcomed with open arms, fed and sheltered. A fire was lit – a ‘hearth’ – creating a family atmosphere of warmth against the cold of indifference.

## THE CLIMATE CRISIS

One of the factors that make planet Earth a unique home for life is its distinctive climate system. However, after more than 10,000 years of relative stability—the full span of human civilization—our home planet’s

## 1. ACKNOWLEDGING THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND DISPLACEMENT NEXUS

climate is rapidly changing on account of human activities.

The Earth's average temperature has risen by about 1.1 degrees Celsius since pre-industrial times, causing "profound alterations to human and natural systems, including increases in droughts, floods, and some other types of extreme weather; sea-level rise; and biodiversity loss."<sup>1</sup> The current rate of warming is faster than at any time in the past 65 million years.

We are already in a climate crisis, one that is fast accelerating. In November 2019, 11,000 scientists came together to declare "a climate emergency",<sup>2</sup> a concern echoed by Pope Francis in his *Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation* on 1 September 2020 when he stated that "we are in the midst of a climate emergency" and that "we are running out of time."<sup>3</sup>

## THE "HUMAN" FACE OF THE CRISIS

The climate crisis is not an abstract future threat. A temperature rise of just above 1°C from the industrial era is already causing immense suffering to millions of our brothers and sisters around the world, not to speak of damage to ecosystems and the rest of the biome.

As Pope Francis rightly recognized "there is an evident link between environmental instability, food insecurity and migratory movements."<sup>4</sup> The climate crisis also threatens fundamental human rights like the right to life, adequate food and water supply, adequate housing (or shelter), and health.

It is the poor and vulnerable communities around the world who are disproportionately affected by the ecological and climate crises. They are the innocent ones, having contributed least to causing the prob-

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<sup>1</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty*, Geneva 2018, Chapter 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. BioScience 70/1, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Francis, *Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation*, Vatican City 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Francis, *Address to Participants in the 41st General Conference of the FAO*, Vatican City 2019.

## 1. ACKNOWLEDGING THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND DISPLACEMENT NEXUS

lem in the first place. This is a profoundly moral issue, one that calls for eco-justice. After all, the earth was destined to be a common home where everyone has the right to live and flourish. Here the prophetic words of Saint John Paul II echoed by Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti* are very pertinent: "God gave the earth to the whole human race for the sustenance of all its members, without excluding or favouring anyone."<sup>5</sup>

The depletion of the basic natural resources that the earth provides, and water in particular, can cause temporary or permanent displacement of families and communities. "Access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights."<sup>6</sup> Water scarcity is a problem in many parts of the world but "especially affects Africa where large sectors of the population have no access to safe drinking water or experience droughts which impede agricultural production. Some countries have areas rich in water while others endure drastic scarcity."<sup>7</sup>

The crisis has disproportionate impacts on vulnerable groups like children, women, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and persons living in rural areas. Some of the geographical 'hotspots' that will be mostly affected by the climate crisis are densely populated deltaic regions like the Ganges (Bangladesh, in particular), Mekong and Nile, the countries in the Sahel region in northern Africa, the small Island States, Central American countries particularly vulnerable to hurricanes, and coastal and low-lying regions around the world.

## CLIMATE CRISIS LEADING TO DISPLACEMENT

The climate crisis can lead to displacement when homes become uninhabitable or livelihoods are lost. Displacement can take place either due to *rapid-onset triggers*, mainly extreme weather phenomena like floods, storms, droughts and wildfires; or *slow-onset processes*, like desertification, depletion of natural resources, water scarcity, rising temperatures, and sea-level rise. We also need to keep in mind that displacement may

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<sup>5</sup> CA, 31.

<sup>6</sup> LS, 30.

<sup>7</sup> LS, 28.

## 1. ACKNOWLEDGING THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND DISPLACEMENT NEXUS

have multiple causes.

The climate crisis is already driving and exacerbating movements of people due to short-term and long-term natural disasters. In the course of 2019 alone, more than 33 million people were newly displaced, bringing the total number to almost 51 million, the highest number ever recorded; and of these, 8.5 million as a result of conflict and violence and 24.9 million due to natural disasters.<sup>8</sup> In the first half of 2020, 14.6 million new displacements were recorded; 9.8 million as a result of disasters and 4.8 million associated with conflict and violence.<sup>9</sup> It is estimated that over 253.7 million people were displaced by natural disasters from 2008 to 2018<sup>10</sup>, with such disasters displacing three to 10 times more people than armed conflict worldwide, depending on the region in question.

Climate crisis is also a cause of conflict around the world, which can be yet another driver for displacement. The nexus is real even though not always direct. In some situations, climate crisis leads to the depletion of natural resources which in turn can spark conflicts between communities and nations for the possession of scarce resources. Climate change can be seen as a threat multiplier, intensifying existing conflicts where resources are scarce. As Pope Francis warns in *Laudato Si'*, "it is foreseeable that, once certain resources have been depleted, the scene will be set for new wars, albeit under the guise of noble claims".<sup>11</sup>

Sadly, lop-sided forms of development can also contribute to increases in poverty and displacement. As Saint Paul VI warned nearly half a century ago, "man is suddenly becoming aware that by an ill-considered exploitation of nature he risks destroying it and becoming in his turn the victim of this degradation."<sup>12</sup> Our distorted economic models themselves contribute in this regard. "Some economic rules have proved effective for growth, but not for integral human development."<sup>13</sup> Wealth has increased, but together with inequality, with the result that "new

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID) 2020*, Geneva 2020. The IDMC is a leading source of information and analysis with its annual GRID <https://www.internal-displacement.org> The IDMC is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council [www.nrc.no](http://www.nrc.no)

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Ibidem.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Ibidem.

<sup>11</sup> LS, 57.

<sup>12</sup> Saint Paul VI, Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens*, Vatican City 1971

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Saint Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio*, Vatican City 1967: AAS 59 (1967), 264.

## 1. ACKNOWLEDGING THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND DISPLACEMENT NEXUS

forms of poverty are emerging."<sup>14</sup>

In the case of natural hazards like extreme weather events, it might be possible for displaced victims to return. Displacement, however, will be permanent for most in the case of severe natural disasters and in the face of long-term processes like sea-level rise.

The sea level will continue to rise as our climate warms, threatening cities and agricultural and grazing land around the world. Globally about 145 million people live within a meter above the current sea level, and almost two-thirds of the world's cities with populations of over five million are located in areas at risk of sea-level rise. Almost 40 per cent of the world's population live within 100 km of a coast.<sup>15</sup>

In the midst of these complex realities, the most vulnerable might not be even able to relocate no matter what the circumstances are, due to poverty or other reasons. It is crucial to respond to immobile populations or those unable to move far distances.

## DISPLACEMENT DUE TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

Unchecked warming raises the spectre of massive human displacement. With a 1.5°C warming, the global sea level will rise by up to 0.77 meters by 2100.<sup>16</sup> The rise would be much greater under higher warming scenarios. At the world's current trajectory of 3-4°C warming by 2100, it is increasingly likely that large parts of the Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets will collapse, causing a rapid rise in sea-level.<sup>17</sup>

It is feared that this anticipated sea level rise will cause unprecedented global displacement and migration. Some areas like low-lying islands and atolls will be rendered completely uninhabitable. "Even under the most optimistic scenarios, it is estimated that by 2060 some 316 million to 411 million people globally will be vulnerable to storm surges and

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<sup>14</sup> FT, 21.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Ocean Conference, *Factsheet People and Oceans*, 2017, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Ocean-fact-sheet-package.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Special Report on 1.5°C (2018), Chapter 3.

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem.

coastal flooding."<sup>18</sup>

Projecting the number of people who could be displaced in the future is challenging, given the multiple drivers for migration and the difficulty of disentangling motives behind human movement. According to a 2018 World Bank Report<sup>19</sup> focused on sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America, from 31 million to as many as 143 million people (about 2.8% of the global population) may need to migrate within their own countries by 2050 due to the climate crisis. According to the same report, 50% of the population in South Asia will reside in areas that are projected to become moderate to severe hotspots for climate-related disasters by 2050.

## RESPONDING TO CLIMATE-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT

Displacement of significant numbers of people brings with it a myriad of social, political, and humanitarian issues, especially when the receiving destinations lack the resources and capability to manage large-scale displacements.<sup>20</sup>

International protection for climate-induced displacement is limited, piecemeal, and not always legally binding. In particular, CDP are not always defined as a category requiring protection and are not explicitly recognized by the 1951 Refugee Convention. Therefore, a protection gap often exists for CDP both when they are displaced within national borders and across international borders. However, no matter their legal status, all States are obligated to protect their fundamental human rights. In addition, all CDP deserve proper care and assistance, in agreement with existing international law and humanitarian standards.

The Catholic Church already assists those affected, and will continue doing so in the future. The landmark *Report of the Intergovernmental Panel*

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<sup>18</sup> B. Neumann et al., *Future Coastal Population Growth and Exposure to Sea-Level Rise and Coastal Flooding: A Global Assessment*, PloS One 10, no. 3, March 2015.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. World Bank, *Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration*, World Bank Group, 2018.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Suárez-Orozco, M. (ed.), *Humanitarianism and Mass Migration: Confronting the World Crisis*, 1st ed., University of California Press, 2019.

## 1. ACKNOWLEDGING THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND DISPLACEMENT NEXUS

on *Climate Change* in 2018 warned that the world must work towards accomplishing "rapid and far-reaching" low-carbon transitions in land, energy, industry, buildings, transport, and cities to limit global warming within the crucial threshold of 1.5°C. We need to intensify our collective efforts to move towards promoting renewable energy, green energy, re-forestation, sustainable agriculture, and a circular economy while at the same time halting deforestation and ecosystem degradation, and with a special emphasis on nature-based solutions. We need projects in developing countries inspired by protection of the environment; we need alternatives for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Catholic Church is concerned by these challenges and the impact of the climate crisis on the dignity of human beings. Together with governments, other Christian denominations, other faith traditions and people of good-will, the Church aims to respond to these challenges. As Pope Benedict XVI asked in 2010: "Can we disregard the growing phenomenon of "environmental refugees", people who are forced by the degradation of their natural habitat to forsake it – and often their possessions as well – in order to face the dangers and uncertainties of forced displacement?"<sup>21</sup>

Responding to the challenge of CCD is today at the heart of being a credible and witnessing Church, a caring and inclusive ecclesial community.

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<sup>21</sup> Benedict XVI, *Message for the World Day of Peace*, Vatican City 2009.

## 2. PROMOTING AWARENESS AND OUTREACH

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*One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see (John 9:25).*

Raising awareness will open the eyes of people to the realities of the impact of the climate crisis on human existence. Blindness about these issues is widespread and its causes are mainly: a) plain ignorance; b) indifference and selfishness vis-à-vis phenomena that endanger the common good; c) the purposeful denial of reality to protect vested interests; d) misunderstanding.

God gives the means to see, but human beings must be willing to journey from blindness to awareness.

### CHALLENGE

Many prevalent attitudes stand in the way of effectively facing up to the challenges of CCD: we note denial, general indifference, nonchalant resignation as well as misplaced over-confidence in technical solutions. We should continue to avoid the false polarisation between care for creation on the one hand and development and the economy on the other.

*In this perspective, I would like to reassert my urgent appeal “for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all....] Regrettably, many efforts to seek concrete solutions to the environmental crisis have proved*

*ineffective [...] for various reasons whichI can range from denial of the problem to indifference, nonchalant resignation or blind confidence in technical solutions.<sup>22</sup>*

## RESPONSE

The Catholic Church is called to promote integral ecological conversion in relation to CCD, in full respect for both the environment and human development.

*There is a growing sense of the need for a renewed and sound relationship between humanity and creation, and the conviction that only an authentic and integral vision of humanity will permit us to take better care of our planet for the benefit of present and future generations. [...] "There is no ecology without an adequate anthropology" (LS, 118).<sup>23</sup>*

This can be done through strategic and long-term planning that entails actions such as the following:

- Information campaigns highlighting the seriousness of CCD, focusing on the "human face" of the crisis, and the need to act with urgency.

*A sound and sustainable ecology, one capable of bringing about change, will not develop unless people are changed, unless they are encouraged to opt for another style of life, one less greedy and more serene, more respectful and less anxious, more fraternal.<sup>24</sup>*

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<sup>22</sup> LS, 14.

<sup>23</sup> Francis, *Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation*, Vatican City 2018.

<sup>24</sup> QA, 58.

- Raising Church and community awareness about how our modern lifestyle of conspicuous consumption contributes to the climate crisis, and fostering a sense of responsibility leading to change in or adaptation of lifestyle.

*The way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself, and vice versa. This invites contemporary society to a serious review of its life-style, which, in many parts of the world, is prone to hedonism and consumerism, regardless of their harmful consequences. [...] What is needed is an effective shift in mentality which can lead to the adoption of new life-styles.<sup>25</sup>*

- Developing education programmes targeting Catholic parishes and schools in particular, aimed at developing responsible attitudes about personal behaviour and lifestyle.

*The best ecology always has an educational dimension that can encourage the development of new habits in individuals and groups.<sup>26</sup>*

- Improving coordination between Church agencies (both locally and internationally) and acknowledging climate change as a cause of migration.
- Disseminating essential Church documents, including the central teachings of *Laudato Si'*: a) sustainable and person-centred economy; b) unity and sanctity of all Creation; c) humankind's obligation of responsible stewardship in the care of our common home.
- Sharing best practices of integral ecological conversion to give concrete witness of the Church's engagement and increasing their visibility. Using case studies from around the globe to help people understand how the struggle can affect human lives and access to livelihoods.

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<sup>25</sup> CIV, 51.

<sup>26</sup> QA, 58.

## 2. PROMOTING AWARENESS AND OUTREACH

- Promoting concrete initiatives targeting the elimination of systemic and institutional dysfunctionalities in the global economy that impact CCD.

*A real and lasting peace will only be possible on the basis of a global ethic of solidarity and cooperation in the service of a future shaped by interdependence and shared responsibility in the whole human family.<sup>27</sup>*

- Promoting ecumenical and interreligious dialogue and networks to coordinate these efforts.

*An open attitude of dialogue, fully recognizing the multiplicity of interlocutors: the indigenous peoples, the river dwellers, peasants and afro-descendants, the other Christian Churches and religious denominations, organizations of civil society, popular social movements, the State, finally all people of good will who try to defend life, the integrity of creation, peace and the common good.<sup>28</sup>*

- Establishing a more extensive and consistent strategy of communications that makes full use of social and digital media.

*The ever-increasing number of interconnections and communications in today's world makes us powerfully aware of the unity and common destiny of the nations.<sup>29</sup>*

- Involving young people as protagonists in these efforts and encouraging Christian attitudes and lifestyle that put emphasis not only on the future, but also on the eternal, i.e. the kind of environmental

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<sup>27</sup> FT, 127.

<sup>28</sup> Synod Of Bishops Special Assembly for the Pan-Amazonian Region, *The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology*, Vatican City 2019, 23.

<sup>29</sup> Francis, *Message for the 2014 World Day of Peace*, Vatican City 2013.

conditions people will leave for their children and grandchildren as well as treating creation as a gift from God.

***We must not place the burden on the next generations to take on the problems caused by the previous ones. Instead, we should give them the opportunity to remember our generation as the one that renewed and acted on [...] the fundamental need to collaborate in order to preserve and cultivate our common home. May we offer the next generation concrete reasons to hope and work for a good and dignified future!<sup>30</sup>***

- Drawing from local populations, indigenous communities and other human resources, in light of Catholic Social Teaching, in the search for solutions rooted in an integral ecology.

***This calls for listening to local persons and peoples, recognizing and respecting them as valid dialogue partners. They preserve a direct link to the land, they know its times and ways, and so they know the catastrophic effects produced, in the name of development, by many projects.<sup>31</sup>***

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**30** Francis, *Message to the Participants in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change*, Vatican City 2019.

**31** Francis, *Address to Authorities, Civil Society and the Diplomatic Corps in Lima*, Peru 2018.

## 3. PROVIDING ALTERNATIVES TO DISPLACEMENT

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*That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to befall the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine (Genesis 41:36).*

Viable alternatives to displacement are possible when governments, leaders, institutions and organizations are attentive and truly take into consideration the best interests and concerns of their people, particularly the most vulnerable. The 'lean years' are always a possibility, but God can enlighten us with the wisdom to find creative and sustainable ways to alleviate the suffering and alternatives to the trauma of displacement.

### CHALLENGE

Most of the time, displacement arises from a lack of alternative livelihoods. People sometimes move because they are convinced that survival is - or will be soon - impossible in their place of origin, including during climate crises.

### RESPONSE

The Catholic Church is called to enhance the resilience of people affected by the climate crisis and to assist in the search for alternatives to displacement that uphold the right to life, which includes the possibility

of living a dignified life, in peace and security.<sup>32</sup> No one should be forced to flee from his or her homeland.

***There is no worse form of alienation than to feel uprooted, belonging to no one. A land will be fruitful, and its people bear fruit and give birth to the future, only to the extent that it can foster a sense of belonging among its members, create bonds of integration between generations and different communities, and avoid all that makes us insensitive to others and leads to further alienation.***<sup>33</sup>

Developing such 'climate resilience' and adaptation requires multi-faceted approaches and the engagement of all stakeholders. The Catholic Church can assist through actions such as the following:

- Disseminating timely, sound and reliable information on the climate crisis and related risks concerning specific territories and their residents. Ensuring the use of traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge, to complement scientific knowledge, in disaster risk assessment and in developing and implementing policies, strategies and plans tailored to specific sectors, localities and contexts, and taking a cross-sectoral approach.

***For it is not a case of implementing welfare programmes from the top down, but rather of undertaking a journey together.***<sup>34</sup>

- Promoting adaptation *in situ* to avoid displacement, by encouraging maintenance or reconnection with relevant traditional or indigenous ways of relating to land, nature, and living sustainably on the earth.

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<sup>32</sup> Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

<sup>33</sup> Francis, *Address to Authorities, Civil Society and the Diplomatic Corps in Tallinn*, Estonia 2018.

<sup>34</sup> FT, 129.

### 3. PROVIDING ALTERNATIVES TO DISPLACEMENT

***It grieves us to see the lands of indigenous peoples expropriated and their cultures trampled on by predatory schemes and by new forms of colonialism, fuelled by the culture of waste and consumerism.<sup>35</sup>***

- Facilitating creative and ecology-friendly development programmes aimed at supporting people at risk of displacement, and protecting and strengthening alternative livelihoods, such as agro-ecology, community conservation, education, eco-tourism, and the sustainable use of land and water.

***Alternatives can be sought for sustainable herding and agriculture, sources of energy that do not pollute, dignified means of employment that do not entail the destruction of the natural environment and of cultures.<sup>36</sup>***

- Promoting meaningful, ethical and sustainable investment in infrastructure, safe housing and livelihood diversification to enhance the resilience and adaptive capacity of people at risk of displacement.

***Being united in defence of hope means promoting and developing an integral ecology as an alternative to an outdated model of development [that] continues to produce human, societal and environmental decline.<sup>37</sup>***

- Establishing relationships of solidarity and safety nets able to ensure social protection to people at risk of displacement.
- Developing inclusive empowerment of people at risk of displacement, paying special attention to youth and the most vulnerable.

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<sup>35</sup> CCEE, FABC, FCBCO, COMECE, SECAM, 2018 *Joint Statement on Climate Justice by Bishops Conferences*, Rome 2018.

<sup>36</sup> QA, 17.

<sup>37</sup> Francis, *Address to Authorities, Civil Society and the Diplomatic Corps in Lima*, Peru 2018.

*While countries experiencing this flow of migrants and countries to which they travel are affected by this, so too are the governments and Churches of the migrants' countries of origin, which, with the departure of so many young people, witness the impoverishment of their own future.<sup>38</sup>*

- Promoting and helping to coordinate planned and voluntary migration systems for at-risk populations so that relocation can be effectively managed over a period of time.
- Working to ensure, to the extent possible, that individuals can continue to remain in their homes leading lives with dignity by mitigating the push factors such as conflicts and natural devastations caused by the climate crisis.

*Ideally, unnecessary migration ought to be avoided; this entails creating in countries of origin the conditions needed for a dignified life and integral development. Yet until substantial progress is made in achieving this goal, we are obliged to respect the right of all individuals to find a place that meets their basic needs and those of their families, and where they can find personal fulfilment.<sup>39</sup>*

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<sup>38</sup> Francis, *Address to the Bishops of the Mediterranean*, Bari 2020.

<sup>39</sup> FT, 129.

## 4. PREPARING PEOPLE FOR DISPLACEMENT

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*Make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch (Genesis 6:14).*

Those for whom displacement is not a voluntary decision must face this reality with courage and faith, counting on God's accompaniment and support without falling into a fatalistic acceptance of the hopelessness of the journey. God, through the graciousness of the Church and many good people, offers the possibility to prepare oneself to deal with the challenge of displacement.

### CHALLENGE

When displacement is effectively the only option, decisions on when, where and how to move are often either motivated by emergency or based on dubious information or incorrect perceptions. Moreover, most people compelled to move are rarely prepared to face the difficulties of displacement, whether it be the journey of flight, finding shelter and then adapting to their changed situation in a new location.

### RESPONSE

Where climate displacement is a possibility, the Catholic Church is called to engage proactively in preparing people for displacement by providing sound and certified information. This can assist their migration decisions before departure, and enhance preparedness through personal and community empowerment. Actions such as the following, resulting from

cooperation among faith-based organizations, civil society organizations, governments and international agencies, will be of relevance:

- Mapping territories particularly affected by CCD and identifying at-risk populations, taking advantage of available tools such as the 'Inform Risk Index'<sup>40</sup>
- Conducting social and resource mapping of the host community as well as that of the displaced population.
- Helping to identify and prepare settlement or relocation sites in anticipation of displacement, corresponding to particular disaster-vulnerable communities. Introducing planned and voluntary relocation exercises as well as increased consultation and involvement of all categories of people, to ensure that everyone - in particular those with disabilities and the elderly - is included in decisions affecting their lives.
- Mapping the organizations engaged with CCD and the services offered by them in terms of information provision and empowerment in view of displacement.
- Advocating for streamlined climate finance processes to prioritize the poorest communities, and empowering local communities to access funding as quickly as possible, with appropriate transparency and accountability measures.
- Supporting local authorities in the effective dissemination of relevant and reliable information concerning displacement – including any safeguarding programmes – to all at-risk populations.
- Advocating for the development of programmes that foster people's coping mechanisms and survival skills to ready them for displacement and adaptation in the new location.
- Establishing solidarity networks between communities of origin and communities of arrival, promoting a collaborative connection

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<sup>40</sup> INFORM is a collaboration of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Risk, Early Warning and Preparedness and the European Commission. Cf. <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index>.

#### 4. PREPARING PEOPLE FOR DISPLACEMENT

in all phases of displacement and ensuring sufficient pastoral support to those communities on arrival.

*The Church of origin is, therefore, urged to keep in touch with her members who, for any reason whatsoever, move elsewhere, while the receiving Church needs to assume her responsibilities for them who have now become her members. Both local Churches are called to maintain their specific pastoral responsibilities in a spirit of active and practically-expressed communion.<sup>41</sup>*

- Creating capacity building programs aimed at preparing people for long term integration into new communities when return is unlikely to be a viable option.

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<sup>41</sup> WCR, 93.

## 5. FOSTERING INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION

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*And of every living thing, of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female (Genesis 6:19).*

A common home that welcomes and sustains "every living thing" is the unique gift of God's plentiful creation.<sup>42</sup> To work for creation and a world that continues to embrace life in all its beautiful expressions and forms, without exclusion, is to become co-creators, to continue the mission of the God of life in abundance for all human beings and all "living things."

### CHALLENGE

Large and ungoverned migration flows can overwhelm receiving societies and cause tension and conflict. Often unprepared and lacking the necessary skills and resources, local societies need concrete support, but also encouragement and education if they are to face the challenges presented by migration. Moreover, the range of responses within host communities – including indifference, fear, intolerance and xenophobia – if left unaddressed, may jeopardise efforts towards welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating CDP.

### RESPONSE

The Catholic Church is called to engage society and to prepare and encourage people to be welcoming, ready and eager to extend their

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<sup>42</sup> Cf LS, 1.

## 5. FOSTERING INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION

solidarity to CDP, providing these migrants with shelter and conditions for survival, protecting their rights and dignity, promoting their integral human development, and facilitating social, labour and cultural integration processes.

This can be done through actions such as the following:

- Networking with governments in the promotion and realization of awareness campaigns; the organization of safe accommodation; access to social care including medical services; legal assistance; and capacity building programmes.

*It is not enough ... to open one's doors ... and allow them to enter; one must also make it easier for them to become a real part of the society which receives them. Solidarity must become a daily experience of assistance, sharing and participation.<sup>43</sup>*

- Developing awareness campaigns on CCD that include and engage with the host community at all levels so as to build a conducive environment for welcoming CDP, through, for example, the publication of children's books on CCD and utilising social media.
- Organizing safe accommodation structures and programmes for CDP, with special attention to unaccompanied minors and to the inclusion of vulnerable people in local communities.
- Developing skills-upgrading programmes and providing assistance in finding employment so that CDP and other people in similar, vulnerable situations are better able to integrate in local communities.
- Investing in employment-generating projects, with a special attention to agriculture (e.g. small-scale and community farming), and promoting innovative entrepreneurship so as to enhance the possibilities of employment of CDP.

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<sup>43</sup> John Paul II, *Speech to the participants in the Third World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees*, Vatican City 1991, 3.

*The primacy of agricultural development [...] means ensuring effective resilience, reinforcing in a specific way the ability of the populations to confront crises – natural or man-made – paying attention to the different needs.<sup>44</sup>*

- Empowering CDP to navigate basic social functions successfully through capacity building programmes such as language tutoring, cultural education, courses on active citizenship, and providing spaces for mutual listening and cultural exchange, while engaging locally available resources (people/groups) as much as possible to provide such programs.
- Preparing host communities, through capacity building activities that raise awareness and facilitate smooth integration processes, to encourage the inclusion of CDP and include the vulnerable among the local population.

*I reiterate the need to foster a culture of encounter in every way possible – by increasing opportunities for inter-cultural exchange, documenting and disseminating best practices of integration, and developing programmes to prepare local communities for integration processes.<sup>45</sup>*

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**44** Francis, *Address to Participants in the 39th Session of F.A.O.*, Vatican City 2015.

**45** Francis, *Message for the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees*, Vatican City 2017.

## 6. EXERCISING A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON POLICY-MAKING

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*Wisdom is better than might; yet the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heeded (Ecclesiastes 9:16).*

Wisdom is first of all a gift from the Holy Spirit, a gift that is not just given to the intelligent and the learned, but also to the marginalized and the "discarded". Access to power, abundance of resources, great energy and even considerable skills could become useless if they are not directed by wisdom. Any plan, policy or strategy that does not recognize the wisdom that comes from the "poor" ignores the Spirit's wisdom present in them and will most likely fail.

### CHALLENGE

Policies and programmes concerning CCD are often inadequate, short-sighted and influenced by economic concerns. Human intervention, in many cases, can damage the environment as can deregulation based on free market principles. People at risk, including CDP, are rarely included in consultations. As a result, the interests of the few generally prevail over safeguarding the common good.

*Many of those who possess more resources and economic or political power seem mostly to be concerned with masking the problems or concealing their symptoms, simply making efforts to reduce some of the negative impacts of climate change. However, many of these symptoms indicate that such effects will con-*

*tinue to worsen if we continue with current models of production and consumption.<sup>46</sup>*

## RESPONSE

The Catholic Church is called to ensure that the views of the vulnerable, like CDP, are heard and taken into account. Fruitful dialogue with governments and decision makers is important in inspiring good policy outcomes concerning CCD, and should be done in accordance with the principles of Catholic social teaching.

*There is an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced by, for example, substituting for fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy. Worldwide there is minimal access to clean and renewable energy. There is still a need to develop adequate storage technologies.<sup>47</sup>*

This can be done through effective advocacy actions such as the following:

- Engaging in a real 'ecological conversion', with strong commitment and action in caring for the common home and its most vulnerable, including by drawing on those aspects of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement that are relevant and in agreement with Catholic Social Teaching.

*They [young people] remind us of the urgent need for an ecological conversion, which "must be understood in an integral way, as a transformation of how we re-*

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<sup>46</sup> LS, 26.

<sup>47</sup> LS, 26.

## 6. EXERCISING A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON POLICY-MAKING

*late to our sisters and brothers, to other living beings, to creation in all its rich variety and to the Creator who is the origin and source of all life.”<sup>48</sup>*

- Ensuring that all people, both locals and newcomers such as CDP, have equal and sustained access to basic public services<sup>49</sup> and are provided with proper documentation. They must be able to participate in the formulation of policies that affect them.

*We need to stop thinking in terms of “interventions” to save the environment in favour of policies developed and debated by all interested parties. The participation of the latter also entails being fully informed about such projects and their different risks and possibilities; this includes not just preliminary decisions but also various follow-up activities and continued monitoring.<sup>50</sup>*

- Alerting governments and humanitarian organizations about the so-called “invisible populations” who, having faced multiple instances of dislocation due to circumstances beyond their control, are particularly vulnerable.

*Government leaders must do everything possible to ensure that all can have the minimum spiritual and material means needed to live in dignity and to create and support a family, which is the primary cell of any social development. In practical terms, this absolute minimum has three names: lodging, labour, and land; and one spiritual name: spiritual freedom, which includes religious freedom, the right to education and all other civil rights.<sup>51</sup>*

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<sup>48</sup> Francis, *Address to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See*, Vatican City 2020.

<sup>49</sup> Cf United Nations, *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*, 2018, 31.

<sup>50</sup> LS, 183.

<sup>51</sup> Francis, *Address to the Members of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization*, New York 2015.

- Advocating for the recognition and protection of those displaced by climate change, including by upholding their human rights and providing humanitarian assistance, in accordance with international law.

***There are on-going discussions in order to delegate responsibilities to agencies concerning migration policies for the consequences of climate-induced migration and internally displaced persons because of natural calamities. They obviously need the protection of the international community.<sup>52</sup>***

- Sharing human stories, testimonies and data about the reality of climate change and its impact on human existence and the natural world in order to sensitise policy-makers and facilitate effective and far-reaching measures.

***Welcome involves attentive listening and mutual sharing of life stories. It requires an openness of heart, a willingness to make one's life visible to others, and a generous sharing of time and resources.<sup>53</sup>***

- Urging policy-makers to adopt existing tools intended to strengthen the resilience of CDP and the communities that host them (for example, this may include certain principles found in the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction<sup>54</sup>) and ideally to go further.
- Advocating for governments to consider joining those existing internationally agreed initiatives, frameworks and actions that are in accordance with Catholic social teaching, and to implement the same in their national and regional frameworks.

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**52** WCR, Presentation.

**53** WCR, 83.

**54** The Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction is a tool elaborated by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks. Cf. UNDRR, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

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***The obligations to respect the rights and duties originating from international legal instruments with their standards contribute towards the dignity of those on the move, asylum seekers and refugees. They are to be provided with due process, fair trial, and basic rights necessary for them to live a free, dignified and self-reliant life and to be able to build this new life in another society.<sup>55</sup>***

- Advocating for the development of policies and programmes that assist relocation and resettlement of CDP, providing them with dignified living conditions, including housing.
- Encouraging safe, regular and orderly migration for at-risk people.
- Adopting a forward-looking approach that takes into consideration measures to prevent developing countries from experiencing situations of combined land degradation and food insecurity that lead to large-scale migration and the development of mega-cities.
- Encouraging and collaborating with governments to create holistic education systems that enable all children, including CDP children, to realize and appreciate fully their common humanity, thereby contributing to peaceful and sustainable national development.
- Promoting consultation with indigenous people and local populations prior to the development of projects which may have a negative impact on the environment and lead to displacement.

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<sup>55</sup> WCR, Presentation.

## 7. EXTENDING PASTORAL CARE

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*The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God (Leviticus 19: 34).*

God's love and mercy are boundless. They do not stop at borders and do not distinguish between citizens and strangers because God cares for the whole human family and the whole of creation. Extending pastoral care entails being faithful and steadfast witnesses of this limitless grace.

### CHALLENGE

Confronted with ethnic, cultural, linguistic and ritual differences and special vulnerabilities, local Churches often struggle to develop a specific ministry aimed at caring for CDP and to include the Catholics among them in local parishes.

### RESPONSE

The Catholic Church is called to welcome, protect, promote and integrate CDP, developing a special focus on pastoral care capable of responding to the different needs of Catholics as well of those of other religions and beliefs.

*It is important that catechesis and preaching speak more directly and clearly about the social meaning of existence, the fraternal dimension of spirituality, our*

## 7. EXTENDING PASTORAL CARE

***conviction of the inalienable dignity of each person, and our reasons for loving and accepting all our brothers and sisters.<sup>56</sup>***

This can be done through actions such as the following:

- Creating pastoral ministries and engaging pastoral agents where CCD is likely or already happening. Alternatively, if resources are not available, strengthen existing migrant ministries and chaplaincies.
- Whenever possible, establishing an office for the coordination of ministry to CDP within the Bishops' Conference, or at the diocesan level where warranted by grave conditions.
- Wherever governments have the resources to assist CDP, consider collaborating and proposing joint projects. The contribution of the Church is to offer the "human face" of the climate crisis to experts, in order to help them better understand the reality at the grass-roots level and respect human dignity.

***All of us have a responsibility for the wounded, those of our own people and all the peoples of the earth. Let us care for the needs of every man and woman, young and old, with the same fraternal spirit of care and closeness that marked the Good Samaritan.<sup>57</sup>***

- Developing pastoral programs which integrate humanitarian assistance, education for reconciliation, effective protection of rights and dignity, prayer and liturgy, and spiritual and psychological support.

***Hope, courage, love and creativity are necessary so that lives can be restored. However, priority must be given to a concerted effort not only to provide these people with logistic and humanitarian assistance but, even more,***

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<sup>56</sup> FT, 86.

<sup>57</sup> FT, 79.

*with specific moral and spiritual support. The aspects of spirituality and formation are to be considered as an integral part of an “authentic culture of welcome”<sup>58</sup>*

- Including Catholic CDP in pastoral programmes in local parishes, offering spiritual care that respects and values them as brothers and sisters with their own cherished languages, traditions, customs and rites, while introducing them to the traditions, customs and rites of the host community.

*The forced displacement of indigenous, peasant, afro-descendant and riverside families, pressured to leave or suffocated by the lack of opportunities, demands a joint pastoral response in the urban slums. Accordingly missionary teams will be needed to accompany them, coordinating parishes and other institutions in the Church and beyond, to offer welcome and celebrate inculturated liturgies in the languages of migrants; promoting opportunities for cultural exchanges; enhancing integration in the community and in the city; and encouraging them to take the initiative in this work.<sup>59</sup>*

- Empowering and effectively including Catholic CDP in the implementation of pastoral programmes addressing their needs

*It is also important to work for mutual knowledge, making use of all opportunities offered by ordinary pastoral work also to involve immigrants in the life of the parishes.<sup>60</sup>*

- Promoting ecumenical and interreligious initiatives catering to the material and spiritual needs of all CDP.

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<sup>58</sup> WCR, 85.

<sup>59</sup> Synod Of Bishops, Special Assembly For The Pan-amazonian Region, *The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology*, Vatican City 2019, 29.

<sup>60</sup> EMCC, 50.

## 7. EXTENDING PASTORAL CARE

*Common action and cooperation with the different Churches and ecclesial communities as well as joint efforts with those who profess other religions, could give rise to the preparation of increasingly urgent appeals in favour of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons.<sup>61</sup>*

- Involving youth in pastoral work on CCD through the development of creative materials, including for catechism.

*[Young people] have much to offer, thanks to their enthusiasm and commitment. To say nothing of their thirst for truth, which constantly reminds us of the fact that hope is not utopian and that peace is always a good that can be attained. We have seen this in the way many young people have become active in calling the attention of political leaders to the issue of climate change.<sup>62</sup>*

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<sup>61</sup> WCR, 110.

<sup>62</sup> Francis, *Address to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See*, Vatican City 2020.

## 8. COOPERATING IN STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ACTION

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*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling (Ephesians 4:4).*

While always acknowledging that a plurality of ideas and plans of action is to be treasured, it is essential to pursue the common good together: a human family created by God as one body. The Church family must never forget that it is the Holy Spirit "who brings forth a rich variety of gifts, while at the same time creating a unity which is never uniformity but a multifaceted and inviting harmony".<sup>63</sup>

### CHALLENGE

CCD poses new and complex challenges, the response to which is the task of all the different religious, social and political actors. Unilateral and uncoordinated actions are likely to jeopardise the speed and effectiveness of responses.

### RESPONSE

The Catholic Church is called to promote cooperation among all Catholic actors in strategic planning and action concerning CCD; to partner with other faith-based groups and civil society organizations that share the same vision and mission; and to engage in multi-stakeholder collaboration, so as to promote an integrated and human-cen-

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<sup>63</sup> EG, 117.

## 8. COOPERATING IN STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ACTION

tred approach to climate displacement. This can be done through actions such as the following:

***A global consensus is essential for confronting the deeper problems, which cannot be resolved by unilateral actions on the part of individual countries. Such a consensus could lead, for example, to planning a sustainable and diversified agriculture, developing renewable and less polluting forms of energy, encouraging a more efficient use of energy, promoting a better management of marine and forest resources, and ensuring universal access to drinking water.<sup>64</sup>***

- Establishing active networks among all Catholic actors engaged in CCD, coordinated by Bishops' Conferences at the national and regional levels, in order to exchange positive experiences, learnings, tools and information.

***Then for the better coordination of all pastoral activity in favour of immigrants, Episcopal Conferences should entrust it to a special Commission, with the appointment of a National Director to animate the corresponding diocesan commissions.<sup>65</sup>***

- Promoting effective cooperation in strategic planning and action with other faith-based and civil society organizations, at the national and regional levels, so as to avoid duplication and waste of resources.

***Cooperation among the various Christian Churches and the various non- Christian religions in this charitable work will lead to new advances in the search for and the implementation of a deeper unity of the human family.<sup>66</sup>***

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<sup>64</sup> LS, 164.

<sup>65</sup> EMCC, 70.

<sup>66</sup> RCS, 34.

- Facilitating collaborative dialogue among faith-based organizations, civil society organizations, government representatives and international agencies, so as to promote national and regional co-operation and joint contingency-planning in anticipation of, during or in the aftermath of disaster driven by climate crisis.

***This cooperation has shown how we can “achieve important outcomes, which make it simultaneously possible to safeguard creation, to promote integral human development and to care for the common good, in a spirit of responsible solidarity and with profound positive repercussions for present and future generations”.***<sup>67</sup>

- Investing in knowledge sharing, visibility and replication of best practices and communication aimed at proposing innovative thinking and models for action.
- Fostering collaborative advocacy with other faith-based and civil society organizations.

***The phenomenon of global warming [...] demands a collective response capable of placing the common good over particular interests. [...] There is a need for political leaders to work diligently to reestablish a culture of dialogue for the sake of the common good, to reinforce democratic institutions and promote respect for the rule of law, as a means of countering anti-democratic, populist and extremist tendencies.***<sup>68</sup>

- Fostering active engagement from the international community through technical support and financial assistance to the weakest nations experiencing climate displacement.

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**67** Francis, *Address to the Participants in the XXXI Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol*, Vatican City 2019.

**68** Francis, *Address to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See*, Vatican City 2020.

## 8. COOPERATING IN STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ACTION

*For poor countries, the priorities must be to eliminate extreme poverty and to promote the social development of their people. [...] They are likewise bound to develop less polluting forms of energy production, but to do so they require the help of countries which have experienced great growth at the cost of the ongoing pollution of the planet.<sup>69</sup>*

- Promoting, in collaboration with all stakeholders, the development of an early warning response system in order to monitor in real time the displacement of people and activate responses at the national or regional level.

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<sup>69</sup> LS, 172.

## 9. PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

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*To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4: 12).*

The talents and gifts received from God are not to be hidden and squandered out of fear, laziness, indifference or greed. They need to be enhanced and fine-tuned so that we become well-equipped to continue the ministry entrusted to us: to build together the one and wonderfully diverse body of Christ, to be brothers and sisters in the common home created by God.

### CHALLENGE

The scope and complexity of the response to the challenges posed by CCD demand professional knowledge and expertise on the issue. Pastoral coordinators and agents cannot simply improvise, as this could lead to failure of initiatives.

### RESPONSE

The Catholic Church is called to organize and offer professional training in integral ecology to pastoral agents and other practitioners who share the same vision and mission. This kind of training needs to be wide in its scope, and adapted for the diverse needs of a large constituency from the displaced to Bishops. This can be done through actions such as the following:

- Organizing and offering formal and informal education on CCD and integral ecology, always keeping in mind the implications of human dignity and of human ecology, with a clear theological perspective.

***The right to education – also for girls (excluded in certain places) – [...] is ensured first and foremost by respecting and reinforcing the primary right of the family to educate its children, as well as the right of churches and social groups to support and assist families in the education of their children. Education conceived in this way is the basis for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and for reclaiming the environment.<sup>70</sup>***

- Producing resource materials (books, films, etc.) for youth and children that incorporate CCD themes.

***This can be accomplished in a demanding but highly productive effort to rethink and update the aims and integration of the different disciplines and the teaching imparted in ecclesiastical studies within this specific framework and intentionality. Today, in fact, “what is called for is an evangelization capable of shedding light on these new ways of relating to God, to others and to the world around us, and inspiring essential values. It must reach the places where new narratives and paradigms are being formed” (EG, 74).<sup>71</sup>***

- Including elements of integral ecology and of ecological conversion in all courses on Catholic social teaching: in seminaries, lay formation curricula, catechists' formation courses, religion and Christian ethics classes.

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<sup>70</sup> Francis, *Address to the Members of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization*, New York 2015.

<sup>71</sup> VG, 4.

*This vast and pressing task requires, on the cultural level of academic training and scientific study, a broad and generous effort at a radical paradigm shift, or rather – dare I say – at “a bold cultural revolution” (LS, 114).<sup>72</sup>*

- Improving the local Church's capacity to collect and monitor relevant data on CCD at the national and regional levels.
- Updating, on a regular basis, assessments on CCD and future scenarios and sharing them among partners, so as to contribute to tailoring strategic planning and action.
- Enhancing knowledge about relevant agreements such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP); the UN Convention to Combat Desertification; the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-30; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure and on the Right to adequate Food.

# 10. FOSTERING ACADEMIC RESEARCH ON CCD

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*An intelligent mind acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge (Proverbs 18:15).*

A wise and truly intelligent person acquires knowledge through the painstaking and patient work of researching certain issues, like displacement, that represent crucial challenges that Christians are called to engage with in our world. The quest for knowledge is not just for knowledge's sake, but serves to understand reality properly in order to act intelligently and according to God's loving will for all human beings.

## CHALLENGE

Several Catholic academic institutions have already carried out scientific research on CCD, but studies on the CCD nexus and future scenarios are rare.

*Ecclesiastical studies cannot be limited to passing on knowledge, professional competence and experience to the men and women of our time who desire to grow as Christians, but must also take up the urgent task of developing intellectual tools that can serve as paradigms for action and thought, useful for preaching in a world marked by ethical and religious pluralism.<sup>73</sup>*

## RESPONSE

The Catholic Church is called to enhance scientific research on CCD, and to invite Catholic academic institutions and scholars to engage proactively in this field of study. This can be done through actions such as the following:

- Supporting the development of academic programmes addressing CCD, based on collaboration among Catholic academic institutions and scholars.

*This ministry clearly requires adequate formation for all those who intend, or are mandated, to carry it out. It is, therefore, necessary that, from the outset, in the seminaries, “spiritual, theological, juridical and pastoral formation [...] be geared towards the problems raised by the pastoral care of people on the move.”<sup>74</sup>*

- Establishing global and/or regional observatories for constant monitoring, collection and encoding of data and updated assessment on CCD.
- Promoting collaborative research related to CCD, for instance on the human dimension of CCD, agricultural and rural development, urban development, poverty alleviation, special vulnerability of women and children, nutrition and food security, social protection mechanisms for displaced people, or resilience and adaptation.

*There is an urgent need for “networking” between those institutions worldwide that cultivate and promote ecclesiastical studies, in order to set up suitable channels of cooperation also with academic institutions in the different countries and with those inspired by different cultural and religious traditions.<sup>75</sup>*

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<sup>74</sup> WCR, 101.

<sup>75</sup> VG, 4.

## 10. FOSTERING ACADEMIC RESEARCH ON CCD

- Documenting best practices of climate resilience, assistance during displacement, and social inclusion; and developing recommendations for risk assessment, climate adaptation strategies and contingency plans.

***Specialized centres of research need to be established in order to study the epochal issues affecting humanity today and to offer appropriate and realistic paths for their resolution.<sup>76</sup>***

- Promoting wider academic understanding, inclusive of the spiritual perspective and consistent with Catholic social teaching.

***To do so calls not only for profound theological knowledge, but also the ability to conceive, design and achieve ways of presenting the Christian religion capable of a profound engagement with different cultural systems. All this calls for increased quality in scientific research and a gradual improvement in the level of theological studies and related sciences.<sup>77</sup>***

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**76** VG, 4.

**77** VG, 5.

# CONCLUSION

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We sincerely hope that the readers of this booklet will be drawn to deepen their awareness of the climate crisis, its causes, its development, its consequences and the prospects for attenuating and properly managing it, especially when considering CCD.

***Can we disregard the growing phenomenon of “environmental refugees”, people who are forced by the degradation of their natural habitat to forsake it – and often their possessions as well – in order to face the dangers and uncertainties of forced displacement?<sup>78</sup>***

The question answers itself: “No, we cannot!” And therefore this booklet is eminently pastoral, as the first word of its title states, and eminently practical, as the titles of its ten sections make clear.

“Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded”<sup>79</sup> among which are, in this case, the sufferings of those whom the climate crisis forces to flee.

Thankful for the awareness which, by the grace of God, is growing amongst the inhabitants of the globe, the Church will continue to highlight the plight of those displaced by the climate crisis and seek to increase awareness of their distress, and encourage us to do something effective about it.

POCDP aims for us to “start from below and, case by case, act at the most concrete and local levels, and then expand to the farthest reaches of our countries and our world”<sup>80</sup> to welcome, protect, promote and inte-

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**78** Benedict XVI, *Message for the World Day of Peace*, Vatican City 2009.

**79** LS, 13.

**80** FT, 78.

## CONCLUSION

grate those whom the climate crisis has robbed, injured and abandoned – much like the poor fellow for whom the Good Samaritan showed such great care and concern.

# HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

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The M&R Section hopes that local churches and Catholic organizations will find the POCDP useful in addressing the issue of CDP and the concrete needs of our affected brothers and sisters. When evaluating programmes or planning new ones, when raising awareness or doing advocacy, please feel very free to focus on the responses detailed in the POCDP which seem especially relevant in your area, and add others based on the social teaching of the Church. More specifically, the Section suggests the following:

1. To use the POCDP in information and awareness campaigns and to guide local efforts to welcome, protect, promote and integrate CDP.
2. To share this booklet with Catholic NGOs and civil society groups in your country -- especially those concerned with CDP and other vulnerable people on the move -- inviting them to join in common action and advocacy.
3. To work with government officials responsible for CDP and to enter into dialogue with them on the basis of these POCDP.

The M&R Section is keen to collect the experiences of CDPs and of those involved in accompanying them. The intention is to give particular visibility to positive experiences, fruitful initiatives and good practices. The M&R Section is also interested in receiving feedback about how the POCDP are taken up pastorally, ecumenically, inter-religiously and by organizations of civil society; and about academic, business and government responses. Please send such news to [info@migrants-refugees.va](mailto:info@migrants-refugees.va)

To access the files of this booklet or its documents, or for updates and reflections, please visit the M&R website: [migrants-refugees.va](http://migrants-refugees.va)

In the name of all CDP and of those who generously and selflessly accompany them, may God bless every effort of justice and every work of mercy to "gather the outcasts of Israel; the dispersed of Judah [...] from the four corners of the earth" (Isaiah 11:12).







MIGRANTS  
REFUGEES

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