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Circular Letter to Episcopal Conferences

Church and Human Mobility

Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

26 May 1978

The Pastoral Care of Emigrants [678]

In the context of modern travel, the ancient phenomenon of emigration continues to occupy a quite important place. The numbers involved remain at a high level, its spread concerns every continent in various ways, and the result is a marked influence upon the changing pattern of life.¹

Even though they are profoundly changed with respect to the past, the social and pastoral problems emigration are still with us and still serious, and they constitute a keen spur to the Church conscience. [679]

Numerous initiatives are under way, and many people and institutions have generously lent their apostolic energies to this vast field. The Pontifical Commission, well aware of the difficulties and no less aware of the opportunities for good, proposes modestly to offer a series of guidelines and some warm encouragement, drawing on the rich store of experiences gathered in every part of the world. [680]

I. Typical features of the phenomenon [681]

A correct pastoral vision should dwell on the typical features of the phenomenon, and take due account of its peculiarities.

One particular aspect is immediately noticeable, and that is the frequency in some countries of internal migrations, which often enough take on characteristics analogous to migrations abroad, creating special problems of a pastoral nature. [682]

1. A multiplicity of causes ... [683]

It is difficult to outline briefly the characteristics of migration, because it appears in such different guises. Variety could even be said to be the common denominator.

There are, however, certain factors which recur, and which when carefully considered, offer the possibility of evaluating the essentials, an evaluation from which a practical pastoral effort could not disassociate itself. [684]

We turn first of all to the level of causes. It is true that the evolution of international relationships has created an interdependence, above all an economic interdependence, which offers new occasions for people to move about. [685]

Notwithstanding this, the subjective compulsion to emigrate remains. The preponderant motive for this is the need for work as the alternative to unemployment or under-employment, or to a somewhat lesser extent, the need for a better-paid job, suitable to the needs of the emigrant and his family.

The compulsion to emigrate frequently springs from the need to get away regimes which repress the fundamental rights of man: emigration for ideological reasons; which carries with it very serious risks and goes hand in hand with the search for freedom. [686]

One matter of fact which comes out more and more in experts' and pastors' reflections should not be passed over, and that is that migration is generally speaking the product of an unequal distribution of resources on a worldwide scale. For this reason, emigration countries are preponderantly the poorest, or somehow incapable of guaranteeing their own populations sufficient sources of life and work, whereas the immigration countries, are well-off and the scene of strong concentrations of industry. [687]

In this way the poor countries become reservoirs of cheap manual labour; should there be a recession, they are the first victims. [688]

2. *...and of consequences* [689]

If the act of emigrating allows its more or less willing protagonist to obtain for himself at least the means of subsistence, he nevertheless has to pay a very high price for it in human terms. The discomforts and problems of the enforced move cannot be passed over in silence: some are personal and some are inherent in the life of a family, affected fatally by a sense of precariousness and by bruising and negative chance events, especially with regard to bringing up and educating the children.²

The impact of a society different from the one of origin is a source of serious difficulties, and one which runs the inevitable risk of coinciding with an uprooting which becomes all the more felt as contacts slacken with the country of departure. Furthermore, this impact is easily translated into a collision, especially if the migrant is not provided with an adequate preparation and if he finds in the new country, instead of a warm welcome, indifference, open or veiled hostility, mistrust, outright exploitation of his productive capacity, nationalistic outbursts and demonstrations of rejection. [690]

In such a context, the ordinary problems of life are sharpened and new ones rear their heads: language, professional training, the adaptation to different usages and customs, uncertainty about prospects for the future. [691]

Nor should one forget that the variety of legal situations often imposed on foreign immigrants creates disparities not only between them and the local population, but also between themselves. The features of the framework created by immigration, therefore, which are already multiple as to their causes, become yet more complex: migrants with their family and migrants separated from their family, temporary - for [692]

a greater or lesser time - migrants and definitive migrants, young people seeking their first job and young people looking for cultural or professional advancement, workers given over in large part to menial tasks abandoned by the locals, and professional men or employees of the multinational corporations, children born in their own land and subsequently emigrated, children born abroad and resident there without their families having clear ideas about and opportunities for deciding on the future, women and old people who are undergoing on their own or with their relatives the experience of migration, etc. We might add that inhuman situations have not altogether disappeared. Serious discrimination, even in the field of the human person's elementary rights, persists, and some progress achieved at a legal level has not yet put an end to uncertainties lower down. Nor can one ignore the phenomenon of the so-called 'clandestine' or 'illegal' workers, who are noticeably on the increase, and who are deprived of any kind of guarantee.

3. *Relative stability*

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In any case – and this is extremely important in its pastoral effects – immigration creates a relationship with the country of arrival which is more stable than mobile. It is at least a relative stability, since, with the exception of those cases where it takes place daily and only for work (considerable distances or across a frontier), immigration requires a residence, with all that follows from that. If sometimes, because of the rules in force or because those concerned so wish it, the stay is brief; other times it lasts for a whole lifetime and for numerous generations.

4. *Ethnic groups*

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This last instance of non-returning migrations gives rise to the constitution of ethnic groups which keep up their own traditions abroad, in a kind of idealised union with the country of origin.

Belonging to an ethnic group is of great sociological value. The ethnic group, far from constituting a ghetto, contributes diversity to the surrounding society. Fitting into the general structure and continuing to preserve its own identity, the ethnic group can be - and history shows that this happens in many nations – a pillar of the social structure.

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5. *Giving the original ethnic and cultural inheritance its due*

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The fidelity of people, families and groups to the roots from which they stem is an admirable and moving privilege. It is worth stressing that this, in our line of thinking, takes on a prime value as a fundamental and irrevocable right, even though it is necessary that the exercise of it should be directed towards achieving a greater harmony.

More than other phenomena, and the tendency towards stability makes it all the more obvious, migration represents a challenge to otherness and being different. Reciprocal respect and reciprocally giving other men and other peoples their due, precisely inasmuch as they are and recognise themselves to be different, is the essential prerequisite for living together calmly and fruitfully. Could it be otherwise

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in the society of the Church? Here the well-known and compelling demands of brotherhood and universality make themselves felt,³ which would remain empty words if they were not translated into real attitudes. It is therefore necessary to recognise immigrants' innate right to the preservation and development of their ethnic, linguistic and cultural inheritance.⁴

II. The Church's pastoral outlook

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1. Territorial responsibility...

In the Church there neither are nor can be any strangers or guests.⁵ All the baptised are members of the one People of God, and those who have not had the grace of Baptism or who have in one way or another forgotten it must still be considered pastorally within the perspective of this mysterious reality. So while the Church draws its members from this continent and that, no difference of any kind can be allowed to create tremors. Migration puts this elementary principle to the test in a singular fashion.

Immigrants who come into contact with a particular Church and settle down in it, even for a short time, are, from the Church's point of view, at home. By the very fact that they are in this part of the pilgrim Church of God on earth, they cannot but receive the instruments and benefits of salvation, which the Church is committed to dispense. The arrival Church, therefore, is the principal holder of pastoral responsibility⁶ towards immigrants, and it is to her in the first place that the Council's stern summons is applicable.⁷

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A variety of pastoral structures - personal parish, mission with the care of souls, mixed mission, simple mission, vicariate—⁸ is foreseen by present regulations, in order to give the opportunity of matching the institution to the actual needs. The faculty of choosing the means considered most suitable strengthens the duty of providing efficient pastoral care which is really adequate to migrants' needs.

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2. ...and beyond

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But the peculiar nature of migration demands that this, while remaining the primary responsibility, should be supported in other ways which pastoral wisdom and experience have contrived to suggest and already put to the test. These are instruments which may be called extra-territorial, required by the needs of an overall pastoral strategy, and on which the phenomenon of emigration has a special claim, and which are expressed in terms of supra-parochial and supra-diocesan coordination.

As the pioneers, such as the Servant of God Mgr. Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, quickly realised, a particular role belongs to the reciprocal collaboration between the arrival Church and the departure Church, both of which are directly involved by the fact of migration. It is a role of paramount importance, in which the principle of co-responsibility is translated into practical terms.⁹

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3. Christian welcome

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The human and Christian attitude towards migrants is expressed in the first place by a warm welcome,¹⁰ which is the keystone to overcoming the inevitable difficulties, preventing misunderstandings and solving problems. Pastorally conceived, then, a warm welcome finds a new meaning in the fact that as the body of the brethren grows, new demands are made, indeed, but above all the boundaries of charity are broadened.

4. Protection and development of the faith

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A warm welcome is also an indispensable element in the prevention of negative influences upon faith, bringing it to maturity and making it so that evangelization spreads through migratory movement.

It can certainly happen that immigration stimulates religious maturity. Generally speaking, however, leaving one's own country and lifelong habits causes serious upsets, which the lack of adaptation to the new environment makes keener. The abandonment of religious practice, especially if a strong interior commitment is lacking, can be the first step, to which the sequel is being assailed by doubts, a weakening of spiritual drive, and a lessening of the sense of morality. "Emigration", notes Pope Paul VI, "causes religious and moral crises so serious and so widespread, and brings with it such suffering and doleful consequences, that the pastoral ministry of the Church cannot affect disinterest towards it".¹¹

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The dangers are greater in pluralistic situations, where the variety of religious denominations and the active presence of proselytism generate confusion and disorientation capable of ending up in the abandonment of one's cradle faith.

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Nor should the serious inroads made by theoretical and practical materialism, and by the ever more widespread Marxist thought and practice, be forgotten. These present themselves in seductive form as a new religion, and find adepts in those who are less disposed to draw away from their fascination, the easy outcome of a cleverly conducted campaign by pressure groups.

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A realistic vision of the repercussions of emigration upon faith leads to reflection upon practical ways in which the experience of migration can become a useful opportunity for maintaining, regaining and developing faith. So it is that migrants, vividly presented with their baptismal responsibilities, become, even in our day, apostles of the Gospel by their witness,¹² and emigration is turned into a favourable opportunity for enlarging the Kingdom of God.

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5. Before departure

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If the arrival Church should welcome immigrants and offer them brotherly service, the departure Church, in its turn, cannot escape its task of preparing them for the experience which awaits them.¹³

It should, then, be superfluous to remind ourselves that, whatever may be the degree of evangelization of those members of the faithful who emigrate, the Church of

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origin cannot forget about them. She should find fitting means to keep up contact, something which is even more necessary if their return is foreseen.

6. Chaplains or Missionaries of the same language and mentality as the emigrants [711]

It is indispensable that every ethnic group should be served by priests of the same language and culture or, where this is impossible, by people in charge of their pastoral care who are adequately acquainted with the same language and culture.¹⁴

Upon the community of origin falls the duty of making available priests who are genuinely capable of fulfilling this delicate office, and of looking after their immediate preparation,¹⁵ afterwards keeping up diligent brotherly contact with them. The community should be mindful that the continuing juridical link with them requires translation into the bond of charity and the willingness to take back such a priest when once, in agreement with his superiors, he asks to come back, recognising his service rendered among the migrants as if it had been performed in his own diocese.¹⁶ [712]

Independently of his juridical position, the chaplain or missionary to an immigrant Church is to be on a par with the local clergy as regards duties and rights, as well as in the way he is treated economically.¹⁷ [713]

What we are concerned with here is a fundamental guarantee both of the coordination of specific pastoral care within the overall pastoral strategy, and of the necessary personal care of the priest himself. [714]

The chaplain's 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 the others. [715]

From this viewpoint the chaplain appears as a human bridge between two cultures and two mentalities. Being a human bridge posits a full awareness in the chaplain that his is a true missionary ministry, which includes a willingness to take part permanently, or at least with a certain stability, in the experience of migration, "in the same way that Christ by his incarnation committed himself to the particular social and cultural circumstances of the men among whom he lived".¹⁸ [716]

In this way due value is given to the authentic charism which ought to animate the priest who dedicates himself to migrants, a charism, furthermore, which needs to be always rediscovering itself in the continual cleaving to the changeable reality of migration. [717]

In its turn, the quality of this is described not only by the spiritual inheritance of thought, tradition, culture and religion which the emigrants bring with them, but also by the no less appreciable inheritance of the society in which they arrive. It is above all from this latter aspect that there springs the need for a certain stability on the part of the missionary, who cannot do otherwise than feel himself obliged to acquire what amounts to a psychological, linguistic, cultural, social and religious [718]

identification with the environment in which he works. Only in this way can pastoral activity unfold into an authentic pluralism of choices, systems and working method which, grafted into the local Church, will contribute to making the communities conscious of the value and requirements of a specific apostolate to migrants.

7. Religious Institutes [719]

Gifts of nature and grace, availability, permanent giving of self, practical understanding of the human, social and religious realities in the field of emigration: these are naturally expected of the missionary members of those religious institutes “which have as their own specific end the apostolate on behalf of migrants”.¹⁹

By virtue of their founders’ charism, these institutes take their part in the universal saving activity of the Church, in order to bring their own contribution to the working-out of that divine plan which spreads the faith through the mysterious providence of the phenomenon of emigration and unifies the human family in Christ. [720]

But the apostolate to emigrants is open without distinction to all religious and secular institutes. All are called upon and urged to contribute to it,²⁰ taking on work and making members available.²¹ [721]

8. Women Religious [722]

The role of the women’s institutes, both secular and religious, is particularly noteworthy.²² Their entry into the pastoral care of migrants has grown steadily, and has already created a respectable tradition. Their charism finds many opportunities for expression in particularly delicate areas of the migrant world, such as the catechesis of the young, help for aged people, looking after children, directing specialised social institutions, etc.

9. The National Director [723]

The carrying out of the directives issued by the Episcopal Commission or Promotor, an enactment of the Episcopal Conference, is the task of the National Director, who may also be the secretary to the Episcopal Commission.²³

The office of National Director carries great responsibility. Though his role is executive, his activity is concerned with the coordination of diocesan efforts, the promotion of consciousness in the various Churches of the pastoral care of migrants, the choice and preparation of chaplains to send to those of the faithful who have emigrated abroad, and with arranging for the pastoral care of those who are immigrants his own country. [724]

It is necessary, therefore, that he should possess the specific attitudes and experience required by this delicate office. [725]

In the choice of National Director consultations among the chaplains themselves [726] can be useful, provided that they are done in such a way as not to hamper the proper liberty and responsibility of the Commission or Episcopal Promotor in the nomination of a suitable person. A similar observation is applicable to the delegate for the missionaries as well.

10. The delegate for the chaplains [727]

Chaplains of the same group resident abroad, especially if it is a numerous one, feel the need to be united with one another, both for their priestly life, and for defining their apostolic activity exactly, as well as remaining in communion with their Church origin. Hence the person of the delegate, whose particular characteristic, as the name itself implies, is to be the delegate of the Episcopal Commission of the place - which should come to an understanding with the other Conference about the nomination - in relation with the chaplains. ²⁴

Even if he does not enjoy any jurisdiction, his role is of quite considerable [728] importance. The tasks which fall to him are neither few nor trivial, ²⁵ but they may be summarised as basically the need to ensure full harmony between the two Episcopal Conferences, a harmony which cannot be established once and for all, but needs to be continually increased, since it is the basic prerequisite for the suitable formulation and necessary development of pastoral activity.

11. The migrants' role in pastoral activity [729]

In accordance with the privileges and responsibilities of the lay members of the faithful recognised by the Council, ²⁶ emphasis is being laid upon the necessity for a patient and serious training which should lead migrants to the point where they are able to take on fully their own role in all Church matters, particularly those of a lay nature, where decisions may be taken which concern them: parish and pastoral councils movements and organizations of the lay apostolate, etc.

This can only be the result of an education, intent upon involving the migrants [730] themselves, according to their competency, in pastoral activity, as active members.

To this end, due value should be given to Catholic associations ²⁷ engaged with [731] emigration, and to the presence of qualified representatives in the various organizations, and especially in the International Catholic Organizations. ²⁸

12. Social workers [732]

A new and specific field of activity is social assistance, which is particularly necessary in the early stages of the experience of migration, but often in the later ones too.

In this field the Christian vocation, growing ever more conscious of itself, is finding [733] valuable opportunities of expression. Effective and well-prepared social workers can be valuable coworkers for chaplains in mission activities, as well as animators

of institutions of various kinds.

13. Migrants' Day

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Within the sphere of these reflections, Migrants' Day automatically finds a prominent place.

It was conceived as a propitious opportunity for urging upon Christian communities their responsibilities towards their migrant brethren and their duties of cooperating in solving their manifold problems.²⁹ [735]

The flexibility of the formula, while it favours a proper spirit of creativity in response to local conditions, gives strong encouragement and stimulus to the regular celebration of the Day, even in those Churches, especially those which experience immigration, which have not so far taken up the project or have not taken it up on a regular basis. [736]

III. Particular aspects

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1. The mother language...

Consistent with what has just been said about preserving and increasing the original spiritual inheritance, the importance must be stressed of using the migrants' mother language in the Liturgy, evangelization, catechesis and pastoral activities in general. The faith's great proclamation would find no-one to heed it if it were done in a language other than the one they can understand.

Certainly, it is necessary to keep a careful watch so that linguistic groups or communities do not become closed in on themselves in an isolation which would not be beneficial either for them or for those around, whom they can spontaneously and progressively join, at the same time preserving their own identity. But any attempt, direct or indirect, at forced assimilation, would be unacceptable. [738]

2. ... and the local language...

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The possession, at least rudimentary, of the local language is an elementary condition for joining, as is right, the community of the arrival Church. Public projects in this regard should be multiplied. But there is no getting away from the effectiveness of private initiatives, even on a small scale, directed at mothers and children, for example.

It is important, in fact, that a migrant, whatever may be tomorrow's outcome of his experience of migration – settling down abroad or returning home - should not live on the fringes of the society and culture by which he is surrounded, but should feel himself to be a participant, and effectively so. It is here that the role of migration comes into its own, as a factor for unity in the world, allowing different cultures to meet each other and living together calmly and productively. [740]

3. Migrants from agricultural areas

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The impact of urban civilization is much more severe for those who come from agricultural areas, all the more so if they are from the developing countries. For them, and with their collaboration, it is necessary to devise suitable methods to give them a training consistent with the new reality of their life, in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel and through the Gospel.

4. *The poorest and the illiterate* [742]

The duties of charity and justice find particular expression in solicitude for the poorest, among whom are the illiterate, who through no fault of their own have no access to sources of instruction. Local Churches cannot withdraw from their obligation to provide or share in the initiatives necessary to make them overcome the sad condition in which despite themselves they are to be found.

5. *Children* [743]

The plight of children taken abroad during their years of schooling is to find themselves divided between two languages and two cultures, that of their family and that of their surroundings, which represent respectively yesterday's world and today's world.

The formula of bi-culturalism must be properly exploited in every activity which concerns pastoral care. [744]

Schools, in particular, ought to allow proficiency to be gained in the mother language and culture, and at the same time fit children as far as in necessary to the condition of their peers in the country of immigration. [745]

From this point of view may be considered very valuable those school and educational projects which, following the line of Catholic tradition, are being carried through on behalf of the children of immigrants. These ought to be able to rely on broader and more generous support from local Churches. [746]

6. *Foreign students* [747]

The increased network of cultural exchanges on an international scale has notably augmented the number of young people, coming especially from the developing countries, who are seeking to perfect their cultural studies abroad: young people who are not going off in an irresponsible brain-drain, but who are facing serious discomforts for the development of the society they come from.

The loneliness which is a consequence of expatriation, the human and christian role which awaits them in their country at the end of their studies, and their own vulnerability, are equally elements which give its specific shape to pastoral action on their behalf. More than other students, in fact, they are the object of solicitation and different pressures; more easily do they risk becoming the victims of ideological currents. Furthermore, after getting to know a new world with a higher standard of living, they are sometimes tempted to give up their original culture and [748]

abandon any idea of repatriation. Only a kind of pastoral care which bears factors like this in mind can be in a position to answer to the spiritual needs of these youths, whose quality as strangers cannot be minimized.

7. Exiles and Refugees

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Above and beyond the discomforts of emigration, emigrants for ideological reasons experience the drama of being deprived of having the right to a country.³⁰ They work abroad to obtain the essential human freedoms for their countries. Their situation is a very special one and merits being considered not only with understanding but with marked admiration. The condition of exiles and refugees, whether it will be recognised legally or only de facto, is a strong stimulus to action on the part of the Church to give them the necessary guarantees of advancement as opportunity offers.

Pastoral care cannot abstract itself from specific forms which give due value to the hopes and yearnings which these our brethren have in their hearts; it must have a lively awareness of their special problems. [750]

Much more than for ordinary migrants, these cases reveal the overriding importance [751] of a warm welcome right from the beginning. In this respect, the value of contact in the refugee camps is worthy of note.

The difficulty, and often the impossibility, of maintaining a dialogue with the Churches from which they come makes it so that pastoral responsibility falls [752] entirely on the shoulders of the arrival Church. Delicate tasks fall to her, starting with the provision of priests of their own language and mentality, right through to the creation of pastoral structures and initiatives which are truly in accordance with the needs of these people and these groups, all the while studying the ways in which they can best find themselves at their ease.

8. Mixed marriages

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Meeting non-Catholic and non-Christian believers, for which travel in general offers manifold opportunities, takes on particular dimensions when it comes to emigration: in fact, it happens with such frequency as to be a constant feature of it.

Within the broad gamut of ecumenical relations, the problem of mixed marriages [754] has a special importance. The experience of migration demonstrates what a delicate problem we are dealing with, one in which it is necessary to match wisely the individual's freedom to marry with suitable precautions.³¹

The good of the marriage and the family demand full confirmity with the directives [755] and norms of the Church authorities, with a due understanding of particular situations and without reducing the need for authentic faith required by them. It would be opportune, in loyal collaboration with the leaders of other denominations, to study the best ways in which to maintain and advance in the faith husband, wife and children.³²

9. Non-believers

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Also numerous among migrants are non-believers, or at least those who, although professing ideals of service and altruistic dedication, abstract from the necessity of having recourse to transcendental concepts and God.

In dealing with them it is the necessity of witness which makes itself felt, a witness which, as occasion permits, translates itself into a concern for all the migrants' human problems, in participation in efforts intended to better the conditions of their lives, and in prophetic denunciation of those worldwide situations of injustice of which they may be victims, in strident contradiction to the Gospel. In this way the road is open to witnessing to Christian values, a witnessing prepared for openness, dialogue and comparisons with a view to becoming more aware of and orientated towards discovering the riches of the faith. [757]

10. Abnormal family situations

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It is by no means rare, especially in those countries which deny migrants the right to bring their families, that worsened family situations are created: cohabitation, illegitimate children, remarried divorcees, etc. A pastoral attention made up of extreme sensitivity and delicacy cannot but be accorded to those who live in such situations, from which they are often inextricable. Without abandonment either to lax permissiveness or to facile demagoguery, it will be necessary to study initiatives whose purpose, as well as providing possible human solutions for these problems, is to preserve and bring to maturity the faith.

11. Internal emigration

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Although not always producing the pastoral problems typical of migrations abroad, internal migrations, which have notably increased under the influence of urbanization and industrialization, require particularly attentive care from pastors of souls. There is no, ordinarily, a diversity of nationalities and languages involved here, nor do the difficulties bound up with expatriation occur. However, the effect of differences of mentality may make itself felt, with the risk of creating isolated groups in the fabric of the Church.

The departure community and the community of residence, then, have particular responsibilities towards these migrants, and are called upon to discharge them in close and generous collaboration. In particular, the Christian communities where they take up residence cannot but deploy all their resources in order to provide the means for a true Christian welcome. [760]

It is worth noting that internal emigration sometimes represents the prelude to emigration abroad, and the initial outlet for emigrants returning home. [761]

Global vision

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While the attempt is being made to face the variety of needs which emigration present in different circumstances due to its manifold features, the globality of the

phenomenon cannot be overlooked. The task of the individual Churches comes together in a more general task, which consists in making it so that the fact of migration, liberated from its persistent negative aspects, should become truly worthy of man, and should become ever more, for humanity and for the Church, a factor of unity and spiritual growth.

The Apostleship of the Sea

[763]

1. *The Maritime World*

It is an ever living reality that the *Apostolatus Maris*, like other pastoral and missionary undertakings of the Church, was born the sense of responsibility and apostolic concern of particular people and institutions. This fact clearly shows the value of the spontaneous pledge undertaken in this vast field.

In the wake of the initial enterprise much ground has been covered with a generous spirit of service, and suitable adjustments have been made in the evolution of the situation. [764]

The evolution is very notable at the present time. Because of technical progress, maritime life and profession have become more and more tied to the sea, and the time spent in port has been reduced to a minimum, while, with more and more Countries emerging into this kind of activity, the cosmopolitan character of the maritime world has been accentuated. This has resulted in a new incentive for evangelization. [765]

In order to understand sufficiently the pastoral work that must be carried out for the people of the sea, it is essential to keep in mind the fact that for the seaman, work on the sea or in connection with it, is his life. [766]

The unifying element is his belonging to the sea or to the great rivers. The protagonist is the man of the sea who is quite different from the man of the land. [767]

Bound to the rhythm that the sea imposes, separated from the world on dry land, without fixed roots, except those of his family, member of a very closed all male group, obliged also to carry out work which, on dry land, is very often entrusted to women, unstable and often closed, the seaman is bound to a very particular type of life. This kind of life varies from work on passenger ships (now used particularly for tourism) to cargo ships (often below deck and hardly ever seeing the sea) to small fishing boats, only a short distance from land and from home, to deep-sea fishing boats with frequent returns to land or in the field of industrial fishing with factory ships that remain isolated away at sea for many months. [768]

2. *A Particular Apostolate*

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The pastoral effort must take into account the indomitable peculiarity of the maritime world must adapt to the diversity of its situations.

However, it must be forgotten that, while respecting the typical characteristics of [770]

the maritime world, one must take care that it does not become an isolated entity.

In order to keep up with the changes and value the consequences with a healthy realism, an adequate and up-to-date knowledge is indispensable so the pastoral activities will have a real impact of such a changeable human reality. For this reason it seems useful to include in the pastoral equipment a study office that will act within the sphere of the disciplines concerned, both at a national and international level. [771]

3. A Co-ordinated Apostolate [772]

As far as the apostolate is concerned, it is a determinative factor that sailors and other sea travellers are destined to meet with numerous local Churches.

This leads to a need for a pastoral action that is unified in its essential orientation and, at the same time, varied in its forms. [773]

Thus a coordinated apostolate is necessary so that the responsibility of the Church towards seafarers is exercised concretely by the whole group of local Churches and by the Bishops themselves, in very close collaboration with chaplains and with help of lay people concerned in this work. This responsibility is towards all seafarers, even to those who come from foreign lands. Local enterprises lacking in organic links and carried out in dispersive manner, would not be capable of dealing with the real situation in the maritime world. [774]

In order to facilitate this coordination and to ensure an efficacious animation and adequate promotion, the Pontifical Commission¹ has made it its duty to keep in constant contact, above all with the Episcopal Commissions, the Bishop Promoters and the national directors of the Apostleship of the Sea. [775]

The work of the Episcopal Commission or Episcopal Promotor is very essential both for the stimulus and coordination it gives to local activities within the national range and for its contacts with the Holy See, and thus with the Universal Church. [776]

The responsibilities and duties due in general to the Episcopal Commissions and Promoters, are in this field, very ample and precise: the quest for chaplains and their possible assignment, in agreement with the Ordinaries concerned; diligence in following chaplains in their needs and problems. Of no less importance is the need to promote and propagate the sensitivity of Christian communities with regard to the pastoral needs of the maritime world and to the grave problems that pervade it, of which the human promotion of the seaman remains a fundamental element. [777]

Particular importance is attached to the figure of the national director who has the task of carrying out, in a practical way, the directives and programmes arranged by the Episcopal Commission or Promoter. For obvious reasons of ultra-territoriality, it is the duty of the National Director in agreement with the Ordinary concerned to assign shipboard chaplains, who receive faculties, which have not already been granted ex iure by the C.J.C., directly from the Holy See. Competence for both the appointment and assignment of port chaplains belongs to local ordinary, and the [778]

national director is expected to give him his full cooperation.

The responsibilities of the dioceses directly involved in the problems of the maritime apostolate can now be undertaken more easily by virtue of the faculties and privileges granted to the Bishops by the Holy Father Pope Paul VI by Motu Proprio “Patorale Munus”. [779]

With regards to the exercising of the priestly ministry, apart from the post of port chaplain and chaplain on board large transport ships should be considered. [780]

4. *Shipboard Community* [781]

Since the seafarer spends most of his time at sea, and because it is the sea that has the most influence on his soul, it is indispensable that whatever is undertaken as a work of evangelization, even ashore, should be open to this existential dimension. From this there arises the importance of orienting the seafaring life itself so as to favour the human and spiritual development of all. Thus one must endeavour to stimulate Christian seafarers to live up their human and Christian responsibilities and to sustain them in their efforts. Our concern must be to encourage them to be active in animating all aspects of life on board, in the organization of their work, as well as in their everyday life and their free time. Thus they will not forget their own role which is to create effective Christian communities within their group situation, deprived as it is of priests and sacramental life. In every possible way they must be helped to live their Christian existence in a community spirit. “In the absence of a priest, the lay people themselves can their colleagues to prayer”, Pope Paul VI pointed out in his speech to the XVth World Congress of the Apostolatus Maris. Chaplains will try to supply the most suitable material, so that this work may be abundantly nourished by the Word of God may be articulated and inserted into the whole life of the Church. In this perspective of service to the community on board which must be constantly nourished by the Sacred Word and sustained by the Sacrament of the Eucharist as well as in the exercise of christian virtues, and particularly of fraternal charity, the figure of the deacon assumes great importance.

5. *Sensitivity of Shoreside Communities* [782]

However, it is not a matter of promoting a Church of the sea. Rather, within the ecclesial communion, seafarers must be fully accepted for what they are, and must be able to feel at ease with all the members of the people of God.

To attain this, Christian communities on land must open out to them and must show their solidarity with these absent brothers. “The maritime laity”, the Holy Father reminds us, “has need of Christian communities”. [783]

The dedication of one Sunday in the liturgical year to the world of the sea, as has been amply demonstrated in some countries, seems to be an invaluable way of making local Churches more sensitive to their duty of fraternity towards seamen. [784]

In the same way those who are directly concerned in the pastoral care of maritime world will be encouraged not to consider their apostolic duty as a thing apart, cut [785]

off from all effective and deep ties with the overall pastoral programmes of the port, cannot, on the other hand, but influence the pastoral programme of the local Church.

In other words, the maritime apostolate is an active part of the overall pastoral mission; room cannot but be given to all the protagonists of the evangelization of the maritime world- priests, religious, laity- in all the structures in which it is worked out: presbyterial and pastoral, diocesan and district councils. [786]

6. *Positive Obligations of Christian Communities* [787]

Christian communities, once urged to their responsibilities towards these absentees, have precise duties towards them. Without a valid support from ashore, the evangelization of the maritime world could not easily come about. In particular, it is important to have a pastoral action for seamen when they are in port: priests and laity will be available during these times, which are times of greater isolation, to be with them, visiting them on their ships or in hospitals, and creating and animating centres of welcome.

Everything possible will be done to make the Stella Maris clubs or centres really expressive of Christian hospitality, able to offer all seamen moments of relaxation and sources of information and culture which are not normally available to them at sea. "In all these ways", the Holy Father points out, "the Church witnesses to the omnipresent love of the Lord, trying to answer, in the most generous way possible, the legitimate aspirations and the numerous needs of seamen". [788]

In short, it is necessary to create an entire network of friendship throughout the world, a friendship susceptible of promoting numerous enterprises that give them the certainty and the pleasure of being an integral part of the community of men and of the Church. With this aim, the Stella Maris clubs or centres do not only give a service, but, above all, they have the role of Christian and apostolic animation and formation. If seamen must live their Church in long periods of separation from the nourishing sources of Christian life, which the diocesan and parochial communities are, it must be in the Stella Maris centres that they find support and spiritual nourishment, as well as the true and continuous religious maturation that they need. [789]

Also the national and international organisms of the lay apostolate can, in their own sphere, help the maritime world in its need for evangelization, and procure for the seaman those pedagogical means, that he cannot always easily find at sea. [790]

7. *The Presence of the Church in Nautical Schools* [791]

However, the formation of the seaman begins before embarks. During the educational periods of preparation for seamen and officers, the presence of the Church ensures an integral educational action. This type of teaching should be such as to facilitate the transition to the new situation, or, at least, lessen the difficulties of impact. Thus the stimulus of the school towards personal faith, a living Christianity and to an apostolic responsibility shared with others, is of primary importance. Pure and simple religious teaching is not sufficient even if sometimes

one has to make do with this.

The loneliness felt by young men often becomes more acute during their first voyages, when they tend to feel isolated in an adult world. A particular care ensures that, in their dispersal, reciprocal links can be maintained and they may help each other to live the new experience in faithfulness. [792]

8. *Problems and Role of the Family* [793]

The life of the sea has a deep effect also on the life of the wives and children of seafarers: often there arise psychological, moral and spiritual problems that require delicate handling. The wives of seamen are helped to assume the greater responsibility that falls on them in guiding the home and in the education of their children, without diminishing the responsibility of the seafarer himself as father of a family. They need to be encouraged to help each other in their special situation, and in the face of all the consequences that result from it.

Likewise, the seaman's wife is called to exercise an influence on her husband so as to favour his insertion in ecclesial life and his integration in a complete Christian and apostolic life. The pedagogics used in the associations for seafarers' wives pay special attention to this mission. On the other hand, the efforts undertaken aim always at the family as a unit. [794]

9. *The Breadth of the Apostolic Horizon* [795]

Because of the international dimension of the maritime world, Christians, non-Christians and non-believers are sometimes side by side in the communal life on board. Christians must be open to meeting other Churches and other faiths, prepared for dialogue, and, consequently, instructed in the truths of the Catholic faith, so as not to fall into irenism, or, worse still, succumb to the temptation of relativism that expresses itself inevitably practical agnosticism. All this shapes the field of the specific catechesis.

One must add that a great deal depends on chaplains. In order to fulfil their mission, they must have an open and precise knowledge of the human and religious mentality of seamen. This is even more important than a good knowledge of the most common languages, although this is also necessary. [796]

A particular formation for this ministry often cannot be obtained on a diocesan level; it requires initiatives on a much larger scale. [797]

The maritime apostolate also offers numerous opportunities of increasing the ecumenical spirit: many things in the charitable and social sphere can be achieved without letting the identity of the different confessions suffer. And thus the ecumenical movement will go forward. Reciprocal help is demanded by the facts which can lead to friendly exchanges between those responsible for Christian communities and other religious communities, in complete faithfulness to purpose and methods. [798]

10. *Special Solicitude for the Poorest* [799]

Special care must be given to the very poor and to those human levels which make up what could be called the maritime proletariat.

On some ships, known as ships of convenience, which engage international labour, [800] mostly from countries lacking in a great immediate economic future, or which are simply overpopulated, the conditions of work and life are hazardous; the inconvenience of working hours, the difficulty of communications on board, the lack of social security and the uncertainty of employment help to create a climate of moral discomfort.

Moreover, in some countries, of maritime tradition, the possibility of local [801] recruitment of sailors has been reduced to such a point that it is necessary to resort to foreigners. Apart from the difficulties of life at sea, these men experience the same difficulties as emigrants, away for months, if not years, from their families and their countries.

There are also areas of misery, like those of small-time fishermen who carry out an [802] artisan type of fishing which is not very remunerative.

Here one must apply the constant lesson of experience, which teaches the fragility [803] of an evangelization that does not reach human reality in all its dimensions.

11. *Evangelization and the Maritime Profession* [804]

The salvation of Jesus Christ must, moreover, be brought to the maritime profession in itself. Those belonging to the maritime environment; crewing services, ship owners, those responsible for professional organizations, officials in every sector, those who govern and legislators, each has his own responsibility; Christians in conformity with the concrete postulates of the Gospel, and the others in conformity with natural morals and with the demands of justice and social harmony.

In particular it is necessary that the Church should be present in international [805] structures in which the human fortunes of the maritime world are decided.

12. *Spiritual Assistance to Fishermen* [806]

A very special pastoral care is required by the fishing world (which has four times as many people as the world of merchant seaman). This pastoral care must fit the various conditions of life in which these groups are found: whether working as has already been mentioned near the coasts only a short distance from their homes and families, or employed for many months at sea in deep-sea fishing, or attached to the factory ships of the great fleets in mid-ocean.

13. *Pastoral Care of Boatmen* [807]

The situation of those who, commandly called boatmen, navigate rivers and canals on board barges, is, in some way, like that of seamen, in so far as their job obliges

them to move constantly on water, with all the problems of seafaring. But their situation is also different, because their work is carried out in a more restricted and slower manner at a more human pace, and, above all, because it still very often takes place within the family circle.

This supposes the need for a special apostolate in line with the principles of the maritime one: here, too, with appropriate adaptation the needs of a joint pastoral effort recur. Certain problems must be faced and resolved adequately, such as that of the education of the children who, because of their studies, are prevented from living the itinerant life of their parents. [808]

14. *Solidarity with the Churches of Developing Countries* [809]

The entrance of developing countries in the fishing and maritime world poses great pastoral problems to those Churches which, unfortunately, have not enough men and resources to face the new situation.

Ecclesial solidarity demands that the Churches of well-off countries apart from economic aid, should act out their real missionary vocation, by making available priests and lay people who are adequately prepared in the maritime apostolate and ready to assume also the responsibility of collaborating fraternally in the preparation of future new incentives for the apostolate. [810]

APOSTOLATE OF CIVIL AVIATION [811]

1. *The Apostolic Horizon*

In dealing with groups of the faithful who need “a particular interest” because of the fact that “they cannot enjoy sufficiently the normal ordinary pastoral care of parish priests or are completely deprived of it”, the Council indicates expressly “those attached to air transport”.¹ In this way the decree on the pastoral office of bishops proposes the world of civil aviation to our zeal and apostolic reflection.

Because of the complexity of this world in which the aviation apostolate must work, and particularly because of its newness, it is not easy, today, to give a precise and exhaustive specification of the appropriate structures that need to be created. [812]

Some are already in use, and are indicated in these pages. Others have been left to the creative spirit, also at work, of zealous souls which are beginning to gather the fruits of their experiences. [813]

Born as a simple religious assistance in the larger airports, the apostolate of civil aviation is gradually assuming the character of a true and proper pastoral activity involving the various components of air line and airport life. [814]

2. *Those to whom the apostolate is directed* [815]

Those to be served are the people who are involved in aeronautics and who are connected with aviation. In practice, even if the list is incomplete, we may consider all those who populate airports, officials, clerks, technicians, clerks, workmen of every kind, those employed in various types of services; pilots, hostesses, flight assistants, engineers and stewards; passengers young people who are preparing for the aeronautical profession in special schools, and so on.

However, mindful that part of this personnel, that is, pilots and flight assistants, are obliged to be away from home for long periods because of their work, their families, like those of seamen, are included, indirectly, as recipients of this pastoral care. [816]

3. Within the framework of the “overall apostolate” [817]

The specific nature of the aviation apostolate does not make it a body that is separated or isolated from the general apostolate: it needs to be conceived and carried out within the framework of the ecclesial mission.

Here, too, there is a preliminary problem of sensitization. The people of God are called to discover and strengthen the occasions for evangelization that the aviation world presents. [818]

While the enormous increase in air traffic and the multiplication and development of airports means there is more and more movement in the new type of travel and life-style, they induce us to become more aware of its influence on religious mentality and practice, and so to respond to its pastoral needs. [819]

It would be superfluous to point out the direct responsibility of the Diocese in which the airport is situated. But quite often an airport is in the jurisdictional areas of two or more dioceses, and sometimes it serves an entire nation. In these cases, the problems that arise can be resolved through reciprocal understanding, in an eminently pastoral spirit, having in mind only the good of souls. [820]

In this way it is easier to take in the connection between the aviation apostolate and other particular forms, e.g.: the apostolate of tourism, the apostolate of the world of work, that of emigration; in a word, the apostolate of Christian welcome. [821]

4. *The Airport Chaplain* [822]

Thus the figure of the airport chaplain emerges as a delegate of the diocesan Church for the world of aviation and its users, whatever might be the juridical condition of the chaplaincy: territorial parish, vicariate, mission with the care of souls, etc.²

The reciprocal and ongoing link between the diocese and the chaplain is a preliminary element so that he may be able to carry out his duty. Whence he has the opportuneness of adequate representation in presbyterial and pastoral councils, and of having permanent relations with pastoral organs that relate to his work, such as those for the apostolate of tourism, of work, of emigration, etc. [823]

In an environment that is as complex as that of an airport, the exercise of the priestly ministry requires a serious formation, based on human and supernatural virtues. The chaplain deals with individuals and with the entire community of the airport, from the most modest worker to the director, to pass on to all the message of salvation and invite all to Christian practice, by striving to create bonds of reciprocal fraternity and to see to it that Christians live their own vocation with regard to evangelization. Generous experiences at the present time show the effectiveness of the presence of the priest and the need that he may, have, in such a delicate field of work, to avail himself of religious and lay collaborators. [824]

5. The Chapel [825]

A place of prayer and recollection inside the airport is to be desired or, if regulation do not permit this, within the immediate vicinity.

It should be situated in such a position as to allow easy access to all categories, both from the customs area and from the other areas. It is also important that its presence and location should be clearly indicated in several languages, and that the times of services should be advertised. If the place of prayer is extended to other confessions, Catholics should be assured of the possibility of adoring the Sacrament in a dignified part of the building. [826]

It would help the chaplain's mission if a room could be made available to him, near the chapel, where he could receive people individually or arrange group meetings. Rooms where people can withdraw for a moment of silence, or enjoy a library and religious magazines, are also very useful in the context of the apostolate, bearing in mind that many passengers have the time to spare and some would be inclined to use it this way. [827]

6. Collaboration among Chaplains [828]

Members of flight personnel, subject to continual movement, to repeated and, for long-range crews, relatively long absences, and obliged to periods of rest in foreign lands, need a more attentive care and an action carried out jointly and severally by chaplains throughout the world. For their part, chaplains need to help each other in their responsibility with the necessary wisdom and prudence and in complete agreement in their desire for the good of souls. In particular they must not ignore transient foreign aircrews.

7. Outside the Airport [829]

The airport is not the only place, nor is it always the most suitable, to have ideal rapport with flight personnel; in fact, aircrews only arrive there in time for departure, and hurry away as soon as their work is finished. Hence the opportuneness of extending relations with crews outside the airport, in their places of residence for nationals, and in rest centres or stay over places for others. From this we can see the importance of making contact with them right from the period of their training and during the times of refresher courses. Even if he does not undertake duties in the schools, the chaplain must try to see that the trainees are

well prepared for their future life and for the responsibilities that they must assume.

8. *Contacts with Crew Members' Families*

[830]

The situation of the wives and children of crew members cannot be neglected: the type of life imposed on the head of the family is not without its repercussions on the rhythm of family life and on all its members. Whether the chaplain intervenes directly or whether he has the collaboration of the parish priest, he has to face a delicate pastoral challenge that must take account of the concrete context in which the families live and of their conjugal and educational problems. In the same way, one cannot overlook the particular problems of single people, and among them, the problems of the younger ones, such as the hostesses.

9. *Reception of Passengers*

[831]

A certain spontaneous availability in the reception of passengers does not exclude a suitable organization, so that possible delays will not be the cause of disappointments and promising meetings will not be without results. If widely made known, the religious services in the airport can perform a very active role towards certain categories of passengers. Through liaison with public and private organisations of students and migrants, with travel agents and those who organize group trips, particularly for young people, and with the organizers of congresses or of pilgrimages, adequate services can be arranged much more easily.

On the other hand, in order to provide for the unexpected illnesses, social problems, various difficulties - it is advisable to have a certain organizing network of volunteers chosen from among the personnel and to have a modest secretariate which can collaborate with the chaplain or replace him in urgent cases, particularly outside the times of normal airport services. In order to see that they are faithful to their mission, the chaplain must keep in constant contact with the following: social services, infirmaries, and reception organizations. More constant links can be established with regular airport users (businessmen, officials, etc.), making it possible for them to use the time waiting for departure in useful conversations.

The presence of the chaplain and the peace of the chapel can offer a great deal too waiting passengers or to those in transit, as they are very often subject to nervousness and anxiety. Freed from their various apprehensions, they can then be more open to those inner reflections which are normally associated with the psychology of expectation. In this way, the aviation apostolate reveals itself as a true apostolate of actual grace.

10. *The Interconfessional Dimension*

[834]

In airports, and especially in international ones, followers of all religions meet. Ecumenism and, more extensively, interconfessional collaboration is not, therefore, a facultative option. It demands an opening to the religious needs that may be revealed and an active cooperation in seeking the appropriate response. One must do one's best to foster the possibilities of meetings, of dialogues, of participation and of common prayer, while respecting the related ecclesiastical directives and the

norms. Nor can one not take account of non-Christians and of non-believers who, in moments of solitude in the midst of a cosmopolitan crowd, may be reached by the impulses of grace.

THE PASTORAL CARE OF NOMADS

[835]

1. Complexity of the nomadic world

It is difficult to speak generically of the nomadic world, so great are the differences between the groups which may justifiably claim to belong to it. Fundamental contrasts arise between those nomads in a state of permanent nomadism and those who have begun to adopt a more sedentary way of life; between those who still live in a primitive state, far removed from industrial society, and those who, for natural or economic motives, find themselves, if not absorbed into the modern world, at least in contact with it, and so on. The reflections offered here must therefore be referred to each category, in relation to the specific nature and forms of nomadism.

2. Integral human promotion

[836]

The inseparable links between evangelization and human promotion¹ find a particularly relevant field of application in nomadism.

To limit ourselves to the problems which immediately affect pastoral activity, we must recall the need for fundamental prescriptions which respect the dignity of man and safeguard the freedom of nomads to choose their own way of life; this includes the compelling need to provide vocational training to those who wish to adapt themselves to industrial civilization. [837]

Of no less significance is the problem of primary education, which demands to be tackled in ways which are calculated to strengthen the ethnic distinctiveness of these minority groups, instead of humiliating them. [838]

3. Degree of marginalization and literacy

[839]

The pastoral approach cannot ignore the degree of marginalization. Those nomadic groups which are more enclosed in themselves demand a continuous presence, identified with their way of life, or even sharing it. In the case of those who, whether accidentally or deliberately, find themselves intermixed with other peoples, a dual effort is necessary, directed both at the nomadic groups themselves and the Christian communities that receive them, so that the obstacles created by differences in mentality, often charged with suspicion or distrust and reinforced by racial prejudice or tribal pride, may be removed.

The pastoral approach must also take account of the degree of basic literacy achieved by these groups, adapting the course of pastoral care to it. For those who lack the rudiments, an adequate introduction to the knowledge and practice of [840]

reading and writing is a necessary preliminary.

4. *Respect for the original ethnic heritage* [841]

In no way may the educational task entails the negation or destruction of their own spiritual heritage; the guiding principle must be respect for - and utilization of - everything in their culture and traditions which is compatible with the Gospel and Christian morality.

The clear enunciation of this principle thus demands the abandonment of such terms [842] as integration or assimilation, which in some sense legitimate forced procedures, direct or indirect. It is, on the contrary, a commitment to free incorporation, showing continued respect for their original identity, which holds good.

5. *The pastoral organization* [843]

The peculiar delicacy of this apostolic mission demands that Pastors give it their special attention. Hence it is more than ever necessary to provide institutions - where they do not already exist -at both the national and diocesan level, able to implement appropriate measures and support particular initiatives wherever the presence of nomadism is especially acute. All this, too, with the aim of educating and developing the sensitivity of Christian communities towards their nomad brothers.

The typical figure is that of the priest who dedicates himself to the pastoral care of [844] nomads, bringing into their midst the Church's maternal concern and the message of evangelization and salvation.

It is almost superfluous to note that the exercise of the priestly ministry presupposes [845] a particular vocation, as well as special preparation and an adequate initiation in this field, and the need for the constant cooperation of religious and laypeople. The local Churches owe the chaplain of the nomads sympathy and appreciation for the difficulty of his mission, a brotherly welcome, help in his needs, and a close incorporation in the presbyterium.

Current pastoral experiences increasingly reveal the need to work towards [846] encouraging the priestly and religious vocation in the nomadic world itself.

6. *Adequate catechism and catechumenal initiation* [847]

The religious mentality of some groups of nomads often conceals in its depths a whole pagan tradition, sometimes imbued with superstitions, elements of syncretism or concessions to magic rites.

On the other hand, this mentality implies a series of natural religious values, on [848] which a catechesis leading to the conversion to Christianity may base itself.

It is important, therefore, to encourage "socio-cultural" studies, together with [849] theological insights for adequate pastoral reflections, with a view to identifying the

most appropriate paths to the faith.

In this context, reservations about a too-rapid process of sacramentalization, at least [850] if not accompanied by a preliminary maturation of the faith, are understandable. It seems essential for these groups to be embarked on the stages of a catechumenal initiation, without skimping the time necessary, to enable them, without being uprooted from their environment, to enter permanently into an authentic Christian existence.

7. *The Christianization of culture* [851]

The more the nomadic group lives enclosed in itself, the less is it possible - bearing in mind the richness of its own spiritual heritage - to limit pastoral care to a form of evangelization of an individual type. On the contrary, what is required is an effort particularly aimed at progressively Christianizing the customs and, at a deeper level, the whole cultural universe of these groups. This involves considerable discernment, not only to prevent a body of traditions from being rejected as invalid but to foster a progressive purification of the original religious content and the rites in which it is expressed.

8. *Pilgrimage* [852]

In the tradition of these peoples, pilgrimage remains a favourite means for the communal expression of the faith. Experience shows that it may represent a firm basis for initiating a genuine catechesis, and contributing to integral human promotion.

THE APOSTOLATE OF TOURISM [853]

1. *A mass phenomenon*

Tourism, a typical reality of modern life, has become a mass phenomenon, bound up with situations which have profoundly changed the life-style of society.

The main causes for its growth, as a specific and legitimate expression of leisure, [854] are the working conditions of the industrialized world, with their holiday and retirement opportunities, the development of the means of communication and transport, the exploitation of the phenomenon for therapeutic purposes, and educational access to acknowledge of different peoples and communities. Nor must the effort to transcend national barriers, as part of a new concept of the “human family”, be forgotten. The prerogative of a fortunate few in the past, tourism is today widely enjoyed, and has assumed - to use a term adopted by the Holy Father Paul VI - a “planetary dimension”.

In many societies, tourism has now been included among the basic rights of [855] workers and recognized in labour laws. From the educational point of view, moreover, it is often considered an essential component in the education of young people and the permanent formation of adults.

This new type of migration challenges the Church and urges it to adopt an evangelizing presence, with the aim of bearing witness to Christ and serving the Christian in the places to which this form of mass travel is directed. The faithful, as “itinerant heralds of Christ”, are in fact bound, wherever they may be, to render due worship to God, to read the message of the Creator in daily events and the wonders of Creation, and to express their own faith, as a proclamation of the Kingdom of God, in their human encounters. [856]

2. *The values of tourism* [857]

Without minimising its less positive aspects, the Church recognises certain values to be inherent in tourism, which demand to be developed from a human and spiritual point of view.

Tourism, in fact, encourages the unity of the human family, the communion of man with the universe, and the transformation and advancement of the social level of life. In particular, if properly used, it contributes to reciprocal goodwill between men and greater charity in the understanding of common problems and, more specifically, in the exercise of hospitality; it reduces the gap between nations and social classes; helps to overcome prejudices and barriers between peoples; creates new sources of employment; contributes to remedying historical situations of poverty; and promotes and reinforces the sense of universal brotherhood. In those countries closed to evangelization or deprived of religious liberty, Christian tourism may take the form of authentic witness, the invaluable coefficient of evangelization. [858]

Some particular forms of tourism, moreover, heighten man’s consciousness of belonging to a divinely created order, his awareness of it increased in the contemplation of the universe. If used with foresight and discrimination, it is a means of recuperating physical and psychological reserves; it offers, besides, a respite from the sometimes alienating pressure of modern life, a source of providential rest, and a means for developing some aspects of the human personality. It provides favourable opportunities for the fulfilment of the evangelical mission. [859]

3. *Multiple dimension* [860]

Experiences which form an integral part of existence, inseparably linked to the needs of everyday life, are developed by tourism. It gives man the opportunity of questioning himself on his most important problems, his outlook, needs and duties. Under some circumstances, it is the tourist experience alone which permits a closer relationship with one’s family, or provides real possibilities for the education of children, and true family dialogue.

Tourism, then, involves, many dimensions: human, family social, spiritual, religious and political, etc., and is expressed in a wide variety of forms. [861]

4. *Social tourism* [862]

Particular importance now attaches to social or group tourism, Whether for

purposes of excursions, education, holidays or pilgrimages, etc., group travel is accessible to the less well-to-do sections of society and obviates the risks characteristic of individual or improvised travel: charter cruises or flights, apart from the reduction in cost, ensure an efficient organization which relieves the individual tourist of all anxiety.

5. Adequate Christian formation

[863]

Like every human phenomenon, and perhaps more than other contemporary social phenomena, tourism is ambivalent. Unfortunately, it is very often conceived and practised on the basis of an ill-regulated attitude to life, or as a means of avoiding family, religious and social obligations. Hence the need for discrimination and foresight, and at a yet earlier stage an adequate formation, so that it may be the source of authentic progress.

It is the task of Christian education to ensure that the harmful aspects do not prevail. [864] In this field, too, it is the Church's mission to carry out the liberating task of redemption of the natural and participation in the supernatural. The life-giving action of Grace and the illumination of the faith help man to be, not a mere client of tourism, a passive consumer of leisure, but an intelligent and effective worker for good, ready to respond during holidays to the call to the Lord's Day.

6. Inseparable part of the normal pastoral mission

[865]

In addressing itself to this phenomenon, the apostolate of tourism takes several specific factors into account:

- the extent of tourism and its importance as a human phenomenon;
- the discernment acquired by the modern mentality;
- the plurality of the forms of tourism and its repercussions on life, in the area of departure no less than in that of reception;
- the tourist phenomenon, and especially its separate components, seen as a whole: tourists themselves, workers in the tourist industry, planners and organizers, the political and social framework.

Understood as a specific occasion for the formation of the Christian's personality, [866] the apostolate of tourism is an inseparable part of the normal pastoral mission, especially with regard to the correct evaluation of tourism, the preparation of the Christian in its balanced use, which must never take the form of an affront against poverty, the spiritual assistance of tourists, operators and employees in the sector, the animation of the lay apostolate, and the facilitation of divine worship for those who are not in full union with us.

7. Study and research

[867]

It must not be forgotten, however, that tourism remains a substantially novel phenomenon and one, moreover, that is continuously evolving. It demands of the universal Church and of individual Churches a constant effort of study and research, in relation to the cultural and social changes which derive from it, and

which exercise a strong influence on its religious aspects. Theological enquiry is the basis for providing adequate guidance to Christian consciences and permitting true spiritual maturation.

Such research is carried out as part of the pastoral action and relies therefore, on the human sciences too, including, for example, sociology, the psychology of homo ludens, and, as regards particular sectors, the ethical standards of the various professions. The pastoral effort, in other words, needs to be able to draw on a careful study of man, globally considered, and variously involved in the tourist phenomenon, in order to identify the best ways of bringing him into contact with the Gospel and the Christian message. [868]

8. *Responsibility of Christian communities* [869]

The attitude towards tourists is also the outcome of an ecclesial conscience: it is part of the totality of the Christian concept.

Normal pastoral care is called to arouse and strengthen the missionary conscience of the faithful, with a view to encouraging the various services of hospitality, widening the range of dialogue, and giving scope to human contacts characterized by disinterestedness, friendship and charity, especially towards our less well-endowed brothers. [870]

In particular, it is incumbent on it to give a sound orientation to the forms of recreation and the cultural channels which have repercussions on the style of tourist life. Young Catholics can bring their sensitivity and skill to bear on the introduction of special modes of Christian presence. [871]

9. *Celebration of the Liturgy* [872]

The main task is to ensure that the celebration of the Liturgy, especially on Sundays and holy days, achieves the authentic community spirit in the unique opportunity represented by persons of various language and provenance, gathered together to express the unity and universality of the people of God.

To this end, provision should particularly be made for celebrations in more than one language, keeping Latin as a basis, so that, as far as possible, no one may feel himself excluded from the meeting of cultures. [873]

10. *Centres of Cult* [874]

The role of centres of cult - churches, oratories, chapels - as a recall to the sacred and as places of prayer, reflection, and welcome, cannot be minimized in the context of this apostolate. Road signs, now widespread in many countries, indicating in more than one language the proximity of churches and the hours of religious services, have made a valuable contribution to guiding the tourist. But of more fundamental importance are the dignity of the House of God, order, propriety and the sum of the elements which concur in creating the typical atmosphere of sacredness, capable of arousing positive impressions in even the passing visitor,

curious or not, and disposing all to prayer.

11. *Feast-days and special occasions*

[875]

The apostolate of tourism is not confined to the liturgical act. It is not uncommon for the holiday period to show itself particularly suited to a renewal of the sacramental life; sometimes it may coincide with the high points of the liturgical year: Christmas, Easter, Whitsun, etc. Some faithful, moreover, choose to celebrate such sacramental events as Marriage, First Communion or Confirmation while on holiday and involve their relations and friends.

Holidays, once unheeded, are occasions to be evaluated with the greatest care.

[876]

Tourists must be given adequate preparatory catechesis by pastors of souls in their own parishes one which may also encourage their reinsertion into them. There remains, however, the positive catechumenal role to be played by the welcoming Church. This is helped by the atmosphere of relaxation, the greater individualization and more direct communication which may be provided in tourist areas, in contrast to the anonymity which so often characterizes contacts in urban environments.

12. *The ecumenical dimension*

[877]

In tourism, perhaps moreso than in other phenomena, the encounter with people belonging to other confessions and communities plays a conspicuous role. All the greater, then, is the obligation of ecumenical responsiveness and cooperation, following the guidelines laid down by the competent ecclesiastical authorities.

It is the responsibility of Ordinaries, in particular, to evaluate the opportuneness of contacts with ministers of other confessions, with a view to ensuring the celebration of religious services for non-Catholic guests, and to take appropriate measures to this end.

[878]

13. *Tourism in the developing countries*

[879]

The growth of tourism directed towards the developing countries provides valuable opportunities for dialogue with the missionary world and the young Churches.

It is not uncommon, though, for the style of the vacation and the image given by the tourist environment to provoke a negative reaction, especially if contacts with the local people reveal too great a disparity between wealth and poverty, between the habits and customs of different societies.

[880]

Careful preparation will convince the Christian that, as a missionary and evangelizer, he must give an authentic witness to the faith in such countries and, at the same time, discover the face of the missionary Church. In this way, it will be easier for him never to lose sight of the aims of Christian charity, so as to understand - beyond the usual temptations held out by tourist consumerism - the goals of human and spiritual promotion.

[881]

The Churches in the developing countries, no less than in those of departure, have the major task of seeing to it that tourism promotes true dialogue and fruitful exchange on the values to which every culture is heir. [882]

14. Pastoral contact with tourism operatives [883]

Special attention must be paid to those who are responsible, in whatever way, for the organization of tourism and who may represent a sizeable proportion of Catholic laity in this major pastoral endeavour. They have at their disposal the means to shape the image of tourism for good or for ill, and can exert a formidable influence.

The apostolate finds initial scope for action in the colleges which train young people for the exercise of the various professions connected with the tourist phenomenon; this it does through a discreet and effective presence, capable of imbuing the educational process with a spiritual sense and the ethical standards due to the professions. It is then developed through appropriate contacts and initiatives at various levels. [884]

Particular importance attaches to meetings between Christian tourism operatives, with a view to their joint adoption of general pastoral guidelines. [885]

15. The animators [886]

With the growth of group tourism, the vocation of “animators” has gained in importance. They are not mere “guides” charged with showing tourists round historical monuments; their duties are more numerous and detailed: entertaining the tourist, assisting him during travel, organizing suitable activities for periods of free time.

It is easy to understand how closely, and sometimes how decisively an adequate sensitization of this group may relate to pastoral effectiveness. [887]

16. Tourist industry workers [888]

Nor must those employed in the tourist industry, especially in hotels, restaurants and holiday resorts in general, be forgotten. The peculiar nature of their situation, of foreign staff in particular, and the scale of their needs, demand an adequate pastoral response, capable of expressing the Church’s affection for them.

17. Youth [889]

The tourist industry caters to youth by offering it special attractions, so developing the forms of tourism spontaneously practised by young people.

Both the fact in itself, and the prospects which youth tourism hold out for the future, must be the object of pastoral concern. [890]

18. Religious tourism [891]

So-called religious tourism utilizes the means characteristic of modern tourism in general, thus making it possible for increasing numbers of people to visit sanctuaries or go on pilgrimage to the places hallowed by Christian tradition.

Sanctuaries are often at the centre of a much wider phenomenon, consisting of ordinary visitors to whom the holy place acts in itself as a powerful witness. [892]

Implicitly, the tourist has recourse to the sanctuary in the same way as the pilgrim, albeit differently motivated. [893]

Pilgrimages and visits to holy places become occasions for evangelization. The pastoral action of the sacraments, the sermon, and the form of the liturgical celebrations may, if properly conceived, respond to whatever is most valid in man's - and the christian's - search and is reawakened by the voice of the holy place. Sanctuaries, too, may encourage reflection, elevation in spirit, a sense of charity towards the poor and the sick and Christian meditation on the world's problems with the aim of translating them into prayer and grasping - in the context of the pilgrimage as a high point in the religious dimension of life - the stimulating proclamation of the kerigma. [894]

Young people are often the subjects of the most modern and lively forms of pilgrimage. Sanctuaries may give them the cue for a rediscovery of fundamental Christian values and the opportunity of feeling themselves in communion with fellow-Christians from throughout the world who congregate there. [895]

APOSTOLATE OF THE HIGHWAY [896]

1. *A new field of apostolate*

In times of mobility, major arterial roads and highways, assume a key role among the means of trade and communication in general, and even in countries equipped with good railway systems, become a vitally important sector with a high – though variable – rate of flow. This is shown by the rapidly increasing growth in local and long-distance road traffic.

The categories involved are numerous: long-distance road-haulage crews, who handle the vast turnover of international and intercontinental freight; the drivers of public service vehicles, coaches, buses and private cars; tourists in search of various forms of amusement, recreation or cultural enrichment; traffic police, petrol-station attendants; garage mechanics; road maintenance crews; ambulance men; refreshment room staff, etc. [897]

The problems raised by this heavily-used and widely-articulated world of the highway, and the apostolic opportunities it presents, cannot be excluded from the Church's concern. [898]

2. *Effects on religious life* [899]

Drivers and road crews have to cope with a demanding, solitary and highly responsible job. The intensity and irregularity of its pace inevitably have repercussions on their way of conceiving and practicing religion.

The absence of a permanent link with the Christian community in the place of residence cannot but result in the long run in some alienation from religious practice. The fact of living in a state of continual motion, moreover, does not in itself create the willingness to put down roots; indeed, it leads to a certain superficiality and a certain relativism of convictions. [900]

3. *Specific pastoral task* [901]

Pastoral attention, which has never lost sight of the human, social and religious problems of these professions, is being expressed in a growing concern for them. The known meeting places of truck drivers and road crews should not be overlooked: parking-places of truck drivers and road crews should not be overlooked; parking-places reserved for them in city centres or suburbs or on the highway, freight depots at city markets, quay-side terminals at major ports or airport freight offices, customs yards, restaurants and hotels commonly frequented by drivers, etc. are all places in which Christian animation may be carried out.

It is not therefore out of place to bring this sector, generally so little known, to the attention of pastors, Christian communities and apostolic movements and organizations, and promote particular initiatives, such as, for example, an annual commemoration day. The coordination of the pioneering activities now being carried out would also be useful. [902]

Here too it is desirable that in countries with particularly heavy road traffic conditions the hierarchy should give a central office the task of directing this apostolate, not forgetting the potential role which chaplains assigned, in some countries, to the highway police might play. One can also appreciate the usefulness of a wide-ranging exchange of information, so that the knowledge of what is being carried out in some local Churches may encourage in others the introduction and development of this apostolate, which could in time represent a viable means of evangelization and brotherhood. [903]

4. *Highway personnel* [904]

Those variously employed in the maintenance and service of highways are, as already mentioned, numerous. The apostolate has them in mind, both for their working conditions, and the potential contribution they could make to the humanization and evangelization of highway mobility. Certainly, such personnel, in contrast to road haulage crews, being of fixed residence, do not lack the ordinary support of the parish. Nonetheless, they are conditioned by emergency situations and availability at short notice. If their human and Christian responsibility were turned to account, they could represent links in a long chain of brotherhood on the highways.

5. Religious assistance on the highway

[905]

The apostolate of the highway is responding to the need to provide a better religious assistance on the roads themselves. Some major motorways have been equipped with chapels in strategic positions, to facilitate religious worship, especially on Sundays. Moreover, the number of uniform road-signs, indicating the times and places of Mass, have been considerably increased on road-sides at the entrance to towns and cities. In some areas, caravan-chapels, capable of being moved in response to traffic density, have been introduced.

Small notices have also been widely distributed, to be affixed in conspicuous positions in vehicles, requesting, in the event of serious accident, the ministry of a Catholic priest. Elsewhere, the printing of a Catholic identity card, to be kept among the driver's documents, has been preferred. In some dioceses, priests have been recommended always to keep the Holy Oil in their car, in case of necessity.

[906]

All these various initiatives have the same basic aim: to give the Church a recognizable presence on the highways and to put religious assistance within the range of all those who must travel on them.

[907]

6. Christian formation in brotherhood on the road

[908]

To a greater or lesser extent, we all use roads a good deal more than we did in the past, thanks to mechanization and increased needs. The highway has thus become a factor which influences our psychology, even before it does our way of life. A mature consciousness of everything this phenomenon entails – its risks and dangers no less than its potentialities for good – are thus essential, so that the highway may become a place in which Christian brotherhood is practiced in the light of the social virtues – Kindness, politeness, accommodation – and especially charity towards our neighbor – charity which anticipates, succours and helps.

Source: "Chiesa Mobilita Umana" (Pontifical Commission). *On the Move*, 8:20 (1978): 39-69, 95-115, 128- 139, 147-153, 159-163, 176- 187, 192-195.
