



FEBRUARY 2011

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC MIGRANT & REFUGEE OFFICE

News

The official newsletter of the Australian Catholic Migrant & Refugee Office

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Return to Afghanistan?



Returnees preparing for the final leg of the journey home

Source: UNHCR Photo: Slezic, L

Recently, Australia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Australia, Afghanistan and the UNHCR to facilitate the return (preferably voluntary), arrival and reception of Afghans judged not to be in need of international protection. The MoU is particularly concerning for the Hazara people who as an ethnic minority face different circumstances to other ethnic groups due to their race and religion. In this edition we wish to explore the story of the Hazara people and shed light on their life and challenges, to gain a better understanding of the reasons behind their journey. This edition will also share information from the UNHCR on their perspective of the situation in Afghanistan, and ACMRO will give our reflection on the MoU and the responsibility of Australia.

New ACMRO Website coming soon!

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE



Dear Friends,

In this issue I want to share with everyone my gratefulness to the Holy Father for appointing me as a consultant to the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. My thankyou goes also to Archbishop Antonio Vegliò, president of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, and Father Gabriele Bentoglio under-secretary of the same council, for the privilege and the trust to be working in the pastoral care of migrants and refugees.



In the last two months I had the privilege of visiting migrant chaplains, the Episcopal Vicars and diocesan directors for the pastoral care of migrants and refugees. I want to thank them for their warm welcome and their willingness to minister together in the vast, exciting and challenging field of migrants and refugees. All together we are working to welcome to Australia Arch Bishop Vegliò and Father Bentoglio for their pastoral visit to the migrant communities in Australia.

Following the death of Bishop Joe Grech, the Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life has given the responsibility as delegate for the pastoral care of migrants and refugees to Bishop Gerard Hanna DD, Bishop of Wagga Wagga and member of the Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life. AMROC staff and myself look forward to working alongside Bishop Hanna.

We hope this newsletter is also a way to communicate with those who are involved in the pastoral care of migrants and refugees and we hope it can become more and more a forum to increase our knowledge of what is happening to migrants and refugees worldwide and to make available to the public the teachings of the Catholic Church on migrants and refugees.

Let us treasure the word of Pope Benedict XVI who reminds us in his *Caritas in Veritate* that “every migrant is a human person who, as such, possesses fundamental, inalienable, rights that must be respected by everyone in every circumstance” (CV, 62).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr Maurizio Pettenà CS

National Director

Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office

Consultant to the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People

Memorial Mass for Bishop Joe Grech

On the 20th February 2011, Bishop Gerard Hanna, presented the following homily at a Memorial Mass held in honour of Bishop Joseph Angelo Grech at the Bendigo Cathedral.

Archbishop Mark Coleridge – my brother bishop – spoke of Bishop Joe at the Solemn Pontifical Requiem Mass for our late brother Bishop (6th January 2011) –

He remarked:

Joe's ministry was in many ways the Holy Spirit's work of art.

It had about it a touch of Pentecost, the sense of a new beginning, the roots of which, however, reached deep into the mighty heritage of Maltese faith.

Bishop Joe gave particular expression to this faith in many ways – not the least in his teaching commitment to the Charismatic Renewal Movement. At the 40th Anniversary Conference of Catholic Charismatic Renewal, he reflected on the scriptural passage: the Baptism of Jesus in the river Jordan and in particular the verse: “And a cloud came covering them in shadow; and a voice was heard: This is my Beloved Son. Listen to Him.”

Bishop Joe emphasised: God gave us Jesus, His Beloved Son – Listen to Him”. Not to what the latest opinion polls say or to what popular fashion dictates. NO – Listen to Jesus Christ.

Bishop Joe taught that (and I quote him).....

“This is crucial to us because we are living in times of great anxieties, times of great challenges and times of great problems; and the danger is that we say “Oh what can I do – I just can't do anything.” ***No, you can do something. You can.*** We need to make a decision – and that decision is a basic one. “Lord Jesus Christ I accept you, and only you, as my God and as my Saviour; I

accept you and only you as my guide; I accept you and only you as my shepherd and I want to follow you.”

And he asked: How should we follow? He looked to the New Testament – The Letter to the Hebrews - for inspiration and held up the passage –

“with many witnesses and a great cloud all around us, we too then should throw everything that weighs us down and the sin that clings so closely, and with perseverance to keep running the race which lies ahead of us.”

How does Paul say we are going to run this race? “Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.”

It is not difficult for us, gathered here this morning to see the inspiration of St Paul in the life of our late brother Joseph Angelo Grech.

In later life, looking back over the years – the apostle Paul said: “I have fought the good fight.” The apostle was not a passive spectator in the arena of life. He was a vigorous participant. He threw himself into every activity with all the energy and conviction of his soul. A good life in an evil world always leads to conflict, and Paul had met it with commitment and courage. And at the end of the way, he was glad for the feeling that he had fought a good fight.

Bishop Joe was also a valiant warrior in life and a faithful soldier of the cross. He fought for justice and decency. He fought for progress in the community and church. He firmly stood against injustice and unjust policies particularly in regard to migrants and refugees. He accepted and filled with distinction whatever post the church and community asked him to serve.

He knew only too well that this is not an easy world in which to live for Christ. It never has been. He would say, this is the place right here and these are the days right now in which we must earn the testimony, “I have fought the good fight.”



Paul's second affirmation was, "I have finished the race." He had lived with a sense of destiny,

believing that God had a purpose for his life. ***He articulated that purpose in his preaching and writing and embodied it in his day-to-day living.*** It had been a long race over an obstacle course. But Paul had pressed on until he reached the goal. He had finished his work and rounded out his life. He had done what God intended him to do.

Bishop Joe lived with that same sense of purpose. He had a job to do, and he did it. The important thing in this race is not speed but steadiness. He knew the challenge to fix our eyes on some worthy goal and keep moving toward it. Then, at the end, he too could say "I have finished the race."

The third and final thing that Paul said about his life was, ***"I have kept the faith."*** To him the good news of Jesus Christ was a sacred trust, and he had been true to it. Faithfulness to Christ and his gospel had been the key-note of his life.

What a marvellous way to live, and what a beautiful way to die. That kind of testimony cannot be invented on the spot. It must be built, day by day, in the workshop of life. To keep the faith is not simply to believe it, preach it, and preserve it. It is to practice the truth as it was presented in the life and teaching of Christ.

St Paul did that, and so did the one whose memory we honour here today, Bishop Joe Grech. But both of them have passed from this earthly scene. Now the sacred trust is in our hands. May God help each of us to so live that when our time comes we, too, shall be able to say: "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith."

I would like to conclude this reflection on the life of

our brother in Christ, using the analogy of a great river on its journey to the sea.

Every great river has its beginnings in the mountains – high in the lofty peaks where springs and streams begin to gather their forces toward the great river. The river knows many a varying terrain before it finally loses itself in the expansive waters of the sea.

There is the infancy stage, when almost unnoticed it springs from the mountains. Who would then predict its grandeur or longevity? Adolescence comes as these little streams begin to gather force and cascade down the mountainside with youthful zest and vigour. But having left the mountains it enters its stage of maturity and makes its long journey to the sea.

In the final stage, where the river meets the sea, it moves slowly and with one purpose. One could almost be sad at the fate of the great river. Sad that is, unless you understand that the river has literally given itself away. On its journey many drew life from its waters. Life-giving water for crops and communities seeking out an existence along its banks.

This analogy depicts the life of Bishop Joe. There was a time when he was but a lad. Nobody could have known that he would someday be such a strategic figure. ***Nobody could have predicted that at his passing so many would pause to reflect that one of great stature had walked among them.*** But now we stand in silent and humble memory of one who, like the great river, gave himself away day by day. He literally spent himself in service to God and to others.

In my mind I can picture a scene in which this one stands before our Saviour and hears him say, "Well done. You are an industrious and reliable servant. Come, share your master's joy."

The situation in Afghanistan for the Hazara People

The Hazaras are an ethnic minority of about three million concentrated in Afghanistan's central highlands. It is widely accepted that Hazaras do have Mongolian ancestry, but Hazaras are a very mixed race. The Hazaras speak Hazaragi which is derived from Turkic-Mongolian roots. The majority of Hazaras are Shi'a Muslims and Asiatic looking. Hence, in a mostly Sunni country, the Hazaras are the most persecuted minority in Afghanistan. It is estimated that roughly one million Hazaras live in neighboring Pakistan and Iran.

There has been an extended history of conflict and persecution between Hazaras and the Pashtuns since the mid 18th century. The Hazaras have been forced to flee from many parts of today's Afghanistan to central mountainous region of Hazarajat.

After a decade of occupation, Soviet troops left Afghanistan in 1989. They left behind a civil society in tatters, an economy based on the drug industry, and a country littered with weapons. The stage was set for various freedom fighter groups who opposed the Soviets with western military arms, to turn on each other in an effort to take control of the country (Poppelwell, 2010).

Afghanistan was carved up into fiefdoms controlled by commanders and warlords were the rule of law no longer applied and people lived in constant fear of sexual and physical assault. From this situation, the Taliban emerged and grew in popularity as a movement that would reinstate order and respect for the principles of Islam (Poppelwell, 2010). However, ethnic tension from years of war along with cultural and religious differences saw the emergence of the Northern Alliance in response to military campaigns carried out by the Taliban.



Above: Sakhi camp near Mazar-I-Sharif, Afghanistan: during the 1992 civil war, some 60,000 fled to northern Afghanistan. 30,000 found shelter in this camp.

Source: UNHCR Photo: Hollman, A.

Left: Internally displaced child from Kabul. Sarshahi camp near Jalalabad, Afghanistan.

Source: UNHCR



The Taliban consist of mostly ethnic Pashtuns who are Sunni Muslims. The hostility that exists between the Hazaras and the Taliban are due to different religious beliefs, different ethnicities and a long history of violence and targeted killings. The Taliban often criticise the Hazaras for being Shi'a and urge them to convert to Sunni Islam (HRW, 1998).

In 2001, the Northern Alliance regained control of the capital Kabul with the help of the US led military campaign. An interim government was set up under the Bonn Agreement which aimed to form a multi-ethnic broad-based government led by Pashtun leader Hamid Karzai (Poppelwell, 2010).



Today the political landscape remains precarious, especially for the Hazara people. Experiences of persecution of Hazaras remain common. Recently, fighting emerged over pastoral land in the mountainous central region between Hazaras and Kochies. This land is very limited and the only source of income and livelihood for the local Hazaras (AIHRC, 2010).

The Kochies are a nomadic group mostly of Pashtun ethnicity and claim the utilisation of these pasture lands based on the decisions made by previous rulers in Afghanistan around the early twentieth century. The local people claim the rights to these lands as native inhabitants and assert that the decisions of previous rulers are not legitimate because they were not based on constitutional principles and were discriminatory towards Hazaras (AIHRC, 2010).

Conflicts over these rural lands occur fairly seasonally. The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) has provided documentary reports to the Afghan government. However the government has not taken any effective steps towards preventing further conflicts, or prosecuted any offenders. By not taking weapons away from Kochies the government is effectively enabling more violence against the Hazaras to occur.



The Kochies also have members in parliament who deny the reports of violence towards the Hazara people. In 2010 alone, six Hazaras were killed, six were wounded and over 2791 families from three districts were displaced after their homes were looted. Around 153 homes were completely burned and 35 schools were forced to close which meant 5450 students were deprived of their right to education. In addition, heavy damages were inflicted on the local people as a result of looting, loss of livestock and destruction of their agriculture based industry (AIHRC, 2010).

After speaking to members of the Australian Hazara community, it is clear that these people want the opportunity to live peacefully and to get on with their lives without the constant threat of conflict. However, before the people in Afghanistan can find employment and a sustainable livelihood, there needs to be a significant improvement in security. The security situation for Hazaras can only improve if they are afforded equal justice and rights as the rest of Afghanistan. Unfortunately, currently this is not the case.

Joe Moloney, Research and Information Officer ACMRO



Source: Teresa Poppelwell, 'FMO Research Guide: Afghanistan', 2010.

Human Rights Watch, 'AFGHANISTAN: THE MASSACRE IN MAZAR-I SHARIF' November 1998 Vol. 10, No. 7

Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, 'Report on the Case of Conflict between Kochies and the Local People In Behsood (Hessa-e-Awal, Hessa-e-Dowm) and Diamirdad districts of Maidan Wardak province' July 2010.

Above: In Tajikistan's Kabodian district, IDPs and returnees from Afghanistan wait outside a mobile clinic run by the NGO, Relief International. Source: UNHCR Photo: Hollman, A.

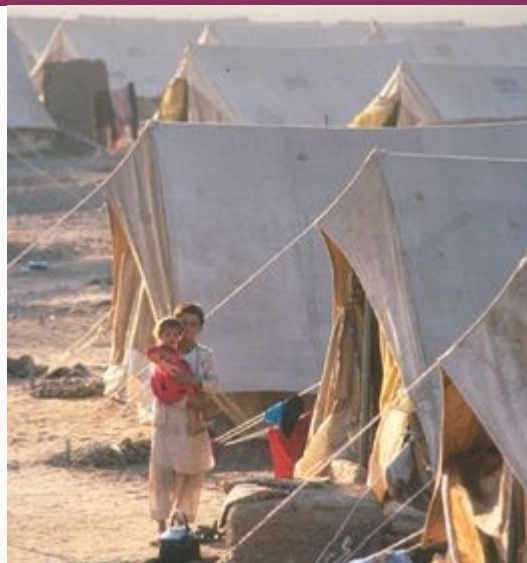
Left: Returnee child on the way home from exile in Afghanistan. Khatlon Province. Source: UNHCR Photo: Hollman, A.

UNHCR in Afghanistan

In their country operations profile for Afghanistan in 2011 the UNHCR states:

“For the UNHCR, the operational environment is one in which the protection of civilians remains a major issue, but deep poverty continues as the biggest threat to life and progress. With Afghanistan’s capacity to absorb returnees stretched to its limits, achieving sustainable return and reintegration is becoming ever more difficult.”

The UNHCR reports more than 5 million refugees have returned to Afghanistan since 2002 increasing the population by around 20%. Returnees need support for their livelihoods, shelter and land. Land rights for returnees and IDPs are particularly difficult due to a weak judiciary (UNHCR).



Above: Young Afghanistan refugees in Pakistan. 50% of UNCHR's budget for assisting Pakistan's 1.2 million Afghan refugees is spent on education and health services. This is expected to have long-term development impact and facilitate reintegration should they repatriate. Source: UNHCR Photo: LeMoyne, R.

Left: Convoy en route from Chitral to Badakshan region. Despite the dramatic events in their country, Afghans long to go home. Here, a convoy carrying 114 returnee families crosses the 4,600 m high Sarehouse pass, en route from Chitral in Pakistan to Afghanistan's Badakshan region Source: UNHCR Photo: Colville, R.

Below: A young Afghan learns to walk with his new prosthetic legs. In Afghanistan children run a high risk of being injured by land mines. Here a young Afghan victim participates in a workshop to help him learn how to walk with his new prosthetic legs

Source: UNHCR Photo: Pagetti, F.



The UNHCR report;

“Children face a wide range of protection concerns, including child labour, smuggling and human trafficking, and early or forced marriage. Doing more to address the livelihood needs of vulnerable returnee families is one way to address the economic factors that can create such protection risks.”

The UNHCR also report that part of their strategy and activities in 2011 is for “the voluntary return of Afghans”. In addition, the UNHCR advise the security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated steadily since 2006 limiting UN access to half the country. The UN has access to some more stable areas hosting highest levels of returnees and IDP. However, the UNHCR report little or no access to areas with the highest numbers of conflict-induced IDPs’. See www.unhcr.org





ACMRO Reflection on Memorandum of Understanding

It is important for nations to acknowledge the need to work together in order to successfully manage the related problems of conflict and forced migration. At present, it is appropriate for the Australian government to invest in the long term promotion of peace and prosperity in Afghanistan.

It is to be hoped that the MoU represents a shift away from ineffective and cruel policies of deterrence to control forced migration; towards a more proactive approach which addresses the underlying issue of war and instability in Afghanistan.

The focus on getting tough or stopping the boats adds nothing to the debate. These people are coming to Australia for protection that Australia agrees to provide as a signatory to the Refugee Convention.

The current system for processing excised offshore asylum claims is not sufficient to accurately justify the return of unsuccessful applicants. The system must incorporate fair review of both cases that fail on the basis of merit and cases that fail on the basis of procedure.

In November last year, the High Court ruled that the current non-statutory Refugee Status Assessment (RSA) which applies to excised offshore applicants was procedurally unfair.

In their 2010 report on Christmas Island, the Australian Human Rights Commission opposed the excision system because it treats asylum seekers differently based on their mode of arrival. It is an unfair process operating within an unfair system (AHRC, 2010). The RSA process is only granted

to asylum seekers at the discretion and intervention of the Minister. The Minister decides if it is in the public's interest to lift the bar and allow the person to apply for a protection visa.

This process of ministerial intervention is non-compellable and non-reviewable. Recent changes to the RSA process announced on the 7th of January 2011 are

an improvement; however the system remains fundamentally unfair. The Government should end the excision policy and process all asylum claims under the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) process which currently applies to applicants arriving on the mainland.

Under the RSD process, unsuccessful applicants have access to the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) to review the merits of their case.

It is vitally important due to the uncertain and dangerous situation still present in Afghanistan, that Afghans claiming asylum be given the opportunity to have the merits of their case reviewed. All claims for asylum undergo a fairer and more robust process under the current RSD process operating on the mainland.



We must remember the protection and welfare of all humans is paramount. If there are concerns about unfair procedures and of the environment these persons will be returned to; we should give them the benefit of the doubt and the opportunity to remain.

Last week, the Australian Government introduced a bill for complementary protection of asylum seekers who fail to meet the legal requirements to be granted refugee status but who nonetheless still need our protection. This is welcomed news, however needs to be extended to excised offshore applicants as a right, not just at the discretion of the Minister.

Above: Afghan returnee women rest at the encashment centre in Kabul. With elections coming up in October, 2004 was a crucial year for the future of Afghanistan, and Afghans returned to their homeland in record numbers. In the first seven months of that year alone, more than half a million returned from exile, the vast majority from neighbouring Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Source: UNHCR Photo: Slezic, L.

Left: Landmine victim in Kabul. The prolonged war in Afghanistan continues to cause death and injury. The estimated 10 million landmines that are still uncleared can remain active for more than 50 years.

Source: UNHCR Photo: LeMoyne, R.



Pastoral Visit to Migrant Communities and Migrant Chaplains by Archbishop Vegliò and Fr. Gabriele Bentoglio President and Under-Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People.

His Excellency Mons. Antonio Vegliò, President of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People has expressed the wish to visit the migrant communities and the migrant chaplains in Australia. It will be the first time that such a visit takes place in Australia and it will contribute greatly to make our experience of pastoral care to migrants and refugees known with the Holy See. The visit will take place from 2 to 14 May 2011.

We wish this visit to be pastoral in nature and have an impact on the wider community in Australia to showcase the pastoral care of the Catholic Church to Migrants and Refugees in the broader context of the Church's teaching on this matter.

Continued,

The situation in Afghanistan is complex and certain areas may be safe for some but not others, largely depending on gender, age, race and religion. Claims for protection should be addressed on an individual basis.

Those of the Afghan Hazara minority who have suffered horrendous persecution should not be forced to return even if they do not fit into the legally termed category of a "refugee". Australia should be extremely cautious before sending a persecuted minority back to a country which does not have the capacity to guarantee their safety. Pakistan currently has over 1.7 million refugees from Afghanistan. The majority of displaced Afghans eventually want to return to their homes and way of life, however, only when it is safe to do so. Australia must be patient and only proceed with repatriation when we can establish a certain level of safety.

People smuggling activities cannot be controlled by returning unsuccessful asylum seekers to Afghanistan. The message is lost on people who are desperate and have no other choice. The Minister should guarantee beyond doubt that those who are returned to Afghanistan over the coming months will be protected from violence and persecution.

Source : Plaintiff M61/2010E v Commonwealth and Plaintiff M69 of 2010 v Commonwealth [2010] HCA 41 (11 November 2010).

Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010 Immigration Detention on Christmas Island (2010 Christmas Island report) p13.



His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI accepts resignation of His Beatitude Lubomyr Cardinal Husar

10 February 2011: Today **His Holiness Benedict XVI** announced that he has accepted the request by **His Beatitude Lubomyr Cardinal Husar**, father and head of the Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic Church and Patriarch of Kyiv-Halych in accordance with 126 § 2 of the Code of Canons of the Oriental Churches. (Canon 126 - §1. The patriarchal see becomes vacant at the death or resignation of the patriarch. §2. The synod of bishops of the patriarchal Church is competent to accept the resignation of the patriarch, having consulted with the Roman Pontiff, unless the patriarch approaches the Roman Pontiff directly.) His Beatitude will celebrate his 78th birthday on February 26.

At a press conference in Kyiv Ukraine today, His Beatitude Lubomyr explained that he had asked the Holy Father to accept his resignation, saying, "Today, when I no longer have sufficient strength, I wish to handover the leadership (of our Church) to a successor, who would effectively continue this work. For this is not my work (alone) and I am not the key factor. The Church is the key factor, and the goal of our work is service to the Church, we strive to fulfil this task, as long we can do so effectively.

"I will continue to do that which I am able to do. I will pray for the Church, reflect on the past, to be vigilant so that nothing from our Church's past is lost. I would like to hold encounters with the youth, as well as with various professional groups."

Most Reverend Ihor Vozniak C.Ss.R, Archbishop of Lviv (Ukraine) has been appointed Administrator of the Patriarchal Church. It will be his responsibility to convoke a Synod of the Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic Bishops to elect a new leader.

Patriarch Lubomyr Husar visited Australia twice. The first time in 1999 for the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia and in 2001 only days after his election to the post as Head of the Church. He came for the funeral of the first Bishop of Ukrainian Catholics in Australia, His Grace, Ivan Prasko.

He was very well received by the whole Catholic Church in Australia.

Bishop Peter Stasiuk C.Ss.R, the current Eparch of Ukrainian Catholics in Australia said "Patriarch Lubomyr was the right man for the job at a very critical time for the church. The church in Ukraine had just come out of the underground about 10 years before then. He led the church through the critical rebuilding era. As Canon Law requires, he moved the seat of government of our church from Lviv to Kyiv. He was commonly referred to as the most trusted moral authority in Ukraine today. His Ecumenical skills were outstanding. He spoke with authority regarding the relationship of church and state.

Bishop Stasiuk added that, "some of his work was not obvious to the public, namely the reorganising of the Synod of Bishops and the building of the structures in our church. He was a wonderful leader and a truly holy man. He has left us all a great legacy".

Ukrainian Catholic Bishops from around the globe will be gathering in Lviv, Ukraine, beginning March 18, for a special Synod called to elect a successor to His Beatitude. The more than 45 members of the Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Catholic Church represent not only the Church in Ukraine, but also local churches in North and South America, Australia, as well as in Western and Eastern Europe. The majority of the estimated 6.5 million Ukrainian Catholics reside in Ukraine.

A brief Biography of Lubomyr Cardinal Husar

Until his resignation, His Beatitude Lubomyr Husar was the Patriarch of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, the largest *Sui Juris* Eastern Catholic Church in full communion with the See of Rome. He remains a Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church.

Born in Lviv, Ukraine, on February 26, 1933, Lubomyr Husar fled from Ukraine with his parents in 1944, ahead of the advancing Soviet army. He spent the early post-World War II years among Ukrainian refugees in a displaced persons camp near Salzburg, Austria. In 1949, he emigrated with his family to the United States of America.

Patriarch of Kyiv-Halych and Head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church



From 1950 to 1954, he studied at St. Basil's College (Ukrainian) Seminary in Stamford, Connecticut. He continued his studies at Catholic University of America in Washington DC, and at Fordham University in New York. He was ordained a Ukrainian Catholic priest of the Eparchy of Stamford on March 30, 1958.

From 1958 to 1969 Fr. Husar taught at St. Basil's College Seminary, and also between 1966 and 1969 was the pastor of Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic parish in Kerhonkson, New York. In 1969, Fr. Lubomyr went to Rome, where he earned a doctorate in Dogmatic theology at the Pontifical Urbanian University in 1972. During his stay in Rome he joined the Ukrainian Studite monastic community at the Studion Monastery not far from Castelgandolfo, Italy, and was elected hegumen (superior) of the monastery in 1974.

He was consecrated a bishop in 1977 in the Studion monastery chapel in Castelgandolfo by Patriarch Josyf Cardinal Slipyj. He was named Archimandrite (Abbot) of the Studite Monks in Europe and North America in 1978. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, he returned to his native country and served as spiritual director of the newly

re-established Holy Spirit Seminary in Lviv. In 1994, he established a new Studite monastery near Ternopil, Ukraine.

The Synod of Ukrainian Catholic Bishops elected him Exarch of the Archiepiscopal Exarchy of Kyiv-Vyshhorod in 1995. In 1996, the Synod elected him as auxiliary bishop with special administrative delegated authority to His Beatitude Myroslav Ivan Cardinal Lubachivsky, Major Archbishop of Lviv. Upon the death of Cardinal Lubachivsky on December 14, 2000, Pope John Paul II named Bishop Husar apostolic administrator of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

In January of 2001, the Synod elected him Major Archbishop of the Church and Father and Head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The following month, he was named a cardinal by Pope John Paul II.

In 2001, Cardinal Husar along with the Catholic bishops, clergy and faithful of Ukraine welcomed Pope John Paul II on his first visit to a former Soviet Republic. His Beatitude also became the first Chancellor of the newly established Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv, Ukraine. Under his leadership in August 21, 2005, the Patriarch see of Kyiv-Halych was officially transferred to Kyiv, the capital city of Ukraine.



The Catholic response to Immigration Detention

Recent reports of the mental health of those in immigration detention are horrific. The treatment of detainees is not reminiscent of a civil nation who holds human rights in high regard. The Commonwealth Ombudsman, the Australian Human Rights Commission and Amnesty International all report on overcrowded conditions, lack of health and legal services, insufficiently qualified government and contractor staff, high turnover of staff, insufficient interpreter services, isolation, depression, hopelessness, despair, anxiety, self harm, suicide and countless attempts of suicide. To the minds of many Australians, detention amounts to torture.

No one would be a refugee unless he or she was forced to go through that situation. ***The journey of an asylum seeker is a humiliating one.*** People are treated with indignity, mugged, bashed, exploited, forced to go against their values and must do things they would never do just in order to survive.

All those who have visited detention centres for pastoral reasons can provide endless stories of people who have witnessed terrible atrocities, particularly young people and children, many of whom have witnessed their own parents, brothers or sisters killed in their homelands. They could not stay. They had to leave.

They come to Australia and can be held in detention for months or years before they get any answers. Detainees don't know what is going to happen to them and they are not told for months. The uncertainty of their future escalates their despair.

Many organisations are helping. They need the support of all members of the community, the government and the judiciary (particularly the despairing decision in the recent case of Sister Brigid Arthur).

This year, Pope Benedict XVI message for world migrant and refugee day focuses on one human family. ***All human beings are brothers and sisters under God our Father in heaven.*** It is time to act and respond in the spirit of human solidarity. All Australians are witnesses to the suffering of detainees and are called to protect human dignity.

For Christians the care of migrants and refugees is not an option.

The instruction *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi* (15) explains;

In the foreigner a Christian sees not simply a neighbour, but the face of Christ Himself, who was born in a manger and as a foreigner fled into Egypt, summing up and repeating in His own life the basic experience of His people (cf. *Mt* 2,13ff). Born away from home and coming from another land (cf. *Lk* 2:4-7), "he came to dwell among us" (cf. *Jn* 1:11,14) and spent His public life on the move, going through towns and villages (cf. *Lk* 13:22; *Mt* 9:35). After His resurrection, still a foreigner and unknown, He appeared on the way to Emmaus to two of His disciples, who only recognized Him at the breaking of the bread (cf. *Lk* 24:35). ***So Christians are followers of a man without a country "who has nowhere to lay his head" (Mt 8:20; Lk 9:58).***

Commonwealth Ombudsman, 'Christmas Island immigration detention facilities' February 2011

Australian Human Rights Commission, 'Immigration detention on Christmas Island' 2010

Amnesty International, 'Report on Immigration Detention Conditions', October 2010

ACMRO Director appointed to Pontifical Council for Migrants and Refugees

Director of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee office Fr. Maurizio Pettená CS has been appointed as a consultant to the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Refugees.

The announcement was made by the Holy See Press Office on 29 January, 2011.

Fr Maurizio brings to this new position over 20 years of pastoral experience, having worked in countries as varied as his native Italy, Argentina, the Philippines and Australia.

He is a member of the order of Scalabrinians of Charles Borromeo, which has a particular charism to work with migrants and refugees.

Fr Maurizio is honoured to have been appointed to this post, and hopes that it will give issues facing migrants and refugees in Australia more prominence.

"The Church in Australia is without doubt a multicultural church. The impact of migration is more and more visible especially in parish life, and in the priests serving the dioceses and in the membership of religious congregations", said Fr Maurizio.

Fr Maurizio yesterday dedicated his appointment to the late Bishop Joe Grech, who was the Australian Catholic Bishops delegate for Migrant and Refugee issues.

"Bishop Joe taught me how we love and serve migrants and refugees in the Church in Australia. Migrants and refugees are an ongoing hot-button issue in Australian politics. Prior to his death, Bishop Joe Grech intervened frequently on issues pertaining to the welcome of asylum seekers and refugees, and two other Australian bishops (Bishop Eugene Hurley and Bishop Christopher Saunders) have also come out in defence of asylum seekers since Bishop Joe's death."

"This appointment will give the Church in Australia the opportunity to bring the wealth of their pastoral experience in the service of migrants and refugees to the wider Church", he said.

Fr Maurizio has been well published in the area of migrants and refugees, and his most recent book, edited with Fr Fabio Baggio CS is titled *"Caring for migrants – pastoral documents on the care of migrants"*.

New Director for Jesuit Refugee Service

Jesuit Refugee Service has welcomed Malaysian-born Jesuit Fr Aloysius Mowe SJ as its new director. Fr Mowe, who is an expert in Islamic studies and interfaith dialogue, says he hopes to continue advancing the cause of the people served by JRS. 'No one is excluded from God's graciousness and blessing, and those who consider themselves God's people above all are to welcome the stranger in their midst, on their land. In one sense I can bring nothing new to my role as director of JRS; all I can do is pledge fidelity to this mission of JRS: to be bringers of hope to these strangers in our midst who seek the help and protection of Australia, and who often have the least reason to be hopeful.'

To find out more or pledge your support for JRS, go to www.jrs.org.au

Cote d'Ivoire

In Cote d'Ivoire recent fighting has meant thousands have been forced to flee their homes. UNHCR have been informed that many people are still trapped in the conflict including pregnant women, elderly people and handicapped people.

UNHCR report, in the Capital of Abidjan between 20,000 and 30,000 people have been forced from the suburb of Abobo find shelter away from the conflict. The majority of the exodus occurred in just two days.

The continuous flows of women, children and some men are on foot walking several hours under the hot sun. Many are heading to their villages of origin to avoid the fighting. Most are carrying bags on their heads or pulling small cases with their belongings. In the rush to leave, some people had forgotten their identity documents.

UNHCR report the conflict is due to a tense political situation stemming from the Presidential election last November, with rival candidates Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara both claiming victory.

Libya

The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has called on the Security Council to consider immediately concrete steps against Libyan President Muammar Al-Qadhafi's Government for its deadly repression of protesters, with options ranging from sanctions to assured punishment.

The violence has sparked a mass exodus from Libya as thousands flee to neighbouring Tunisia and Egypt. The UNHCR commends the humanitarian spirit shown by the Tunisian and Egyptian governments in welcoming and caring for people fleeing Libya. The UNHCR also calls upon the international community to provide substantial humanitarian support for these two countries.

The Tunisian Government declared that its borders are open for all nationalities fleeing violence in Libya. They report over 22,000 mostly Tunisian nationals as well as Egyptians, Turks, Moroccans, Chinese and some Libyans have crossed over to Tunisia since 20 February.

The UNHCR are concerned that Libyans deeper inside the country and in the capital Tripoli, are being prevented from fleeing.

Haiti

On the 7th of February, Archbishop José H. Gomez, Coadjutor of Los Angeles and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Migration, and Bishop Gerald Kicanas of Tucson, chairman of the Board of Catholic Relief Services, the U.S. Bishops' international humanitarian agency, expressed opposition to the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) recent decision to resume deportations to Haiti. The USCCB also urged the DHS to take further steps to provide immigration relief to Haitians in the United States and to reunite Haitian families impacted by the earthquake.

DHS has stated that it intends to deport 700 Haitians by the end of the year. However, a cholera outbreak has killed over 3,600 Haitians and infected more than 400,000. The USCCB report that reconstruction continues at a slow pace and hundreds of thousands still live in tent cities. There remains dispute over the November 2010 presidential elections which have resulted in violent protests. In addition, the Haitian government routinely holds deportees in jails which are notorious for the inhumane treatment of detainees and are now rife with cholera.

The definition of a refugee does not cover natural disasters, therefore the majority of Haitians do not meet the requirements or receive the protection of refugee status under the 1951 Convention.

