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Migration, a Sign of the Times: a Framework for a Pastoral Care Response

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Migration as a Sign of the Times

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Migration, a Sign of the Times – A Framework for a Pastoral Care Response.

I carry home within me, imperfectly imagined, but intact. And the angels brandish flaming swords, to guard it, and rebuke me.²

Introduction

This paper shows that migration is not just a 'sign of the times'; migration is a window onto the 'signs of the times' which the various sciences including theology are constantly seeking to engage. Migration is referred to as an orphan of the global institutional architecture it could also be described as an orphan in the world of theological studies. This paper shows how theological reflections on migration have found a home within a pastoral care framework thus allowing it to grow in an understanding of its mission within a broader ecclesiological framework.

By examining the concept of pastoral care in the writings of Pope Benedict XVI this paper details how the care of migrants not only fits comfortably within the overall understanding of pastoral care but contributes to a greater understanding of the concept of pastoral care. The paper will further show how the dynamic engagement of the institutions charged with the pastoral care of the migrant become windows on the signs of the times. This is achieved by conducting an overview of the pastoral responses to the needs of Irish Emigrants by the Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants (IECE) since the mid 1950s. A further reflection on

² Eire, Carlos, Home, *The Hedgehog Review* 2005, vol 7, no. 3, pg. 37.

the current challenges facing IECE reveals how the dynamic between the emigrant and those caring for the emigrant opens a vista onto the broader challenges posed to those interested in the betterment of society.

By examining the pastoral care needs of Irish Emigrants this paper will highlight the current trends in migration policy which in turn will reveal global policy trends. In the spirit of the theme of the conference and in the spirit of the document of the Second Vatican Council on the Constitution of the Church in the Modern World entitled *Gaudium et Spes* the paper will propose that these global trends are among the 'signs of the times' that cry out for scrutiny by the light of the gospel. It is within this mission that one finds an overlap with social policy as social policy aims at 'making things better for the society and its peoples'³.

Finally in the light of these global policy shifts and more aware of the challenges facing migrants and those caring for migrants this paper highlights the need for a framework within which policy for migrants can be improved and developed. Long acquainted with migration this paper looks to the migratory habits of animals, birds, reptiles and insects for assistance in the establishment of an appropriate framework.

Migration as a Sign of the Times

This conference is welcomed by those involved in the pastoral care of migrants. There are many reasons why the convenors of this conference are to be congratulated. Here are six reasons why it is important that theologians engage with the world of migration. Firstly, citing the ever present reality of migration, the United Nations estimated that over two hundred million, close to three per cent of the world's population were migrants in 2006⁴. Secondly, migration has been part of the human journey since the earliest records of civilization. Trade diasporas are in evidence since 3500 BCE and clay tablets dated at 2000 BCE reveal records of Assyrian trade settlement, hundreds of miles from their home in Cappadocia, modern day Turkey⁵. Thirdly, those who live, work and engage in theological debate in the developed world need to be aware that the world's migrant populations are

³ This definition of social policy is based on the work of Prof. Gary Bouma, see Bouma, Gary 2006 *Australian Soul*, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press. pg 172

⁴ United Nations. 2006 *Report of the Secretary-General, International Migration and Development*, UN General Assembly, 60th Session, UN doc A/60/871, 18TH May 2006. (pg 12)

⁵ Goldin, Ian, Geoffrey Cameron and Meera Balarajan, 2011 *Exceptional People: How Migration Shaped Our World and Will Define Our Europe*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. pg.23.

concentrated in the developed countries of the world with one in five migrants living in the United States⁶. One of the consequences of these migratory flows is that in many of these countries the growth and continuity of religious faith is attributable in a large part to the presence of immigrants⁷.

Fourthly, as academics note the transition from what is termed the modernist period where the nation state was exalted as the main reference point, there are many discussions today as to the future shape of society. In this regard society can learn from migrants and migration. For instance, within the migration phenomenon, religious groups are proven to have an edge on what one might term a 'transnational' consciousness and experience⁸. Various studies on the phenomenon of diasporas reveals the importance of religious belief and practice of ethnic groups in transcending the cultural norms of the societies within which they are now a part of. Fifthly, the migration debate alerts society to emerging new realities within which knowledge is to be fostered. For example, the statelessness experienced by the migrant is according to Hannah Arendt, a symptom of the limits of the nation state. The growth of critical regionalism and the phenomenon of people's statelessness in their own geographical states are leading to deeper questions as to how human beings create an ethical and sustainable future for themselves⁹. Sixthly and most importantly from a theological perspective, migration is intrinsically linked to the history of salvation in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Abraham, Joseph, and Moses are among those whom God chose to reveal himself. In each case the revelation was made while those who were chosen were migrants. In the New Testament migration has significance. Jesus was born into the world as a migrant, an asylum seeker, a displaced person, an undocumented person and a refugee. So strong is the association of the Gospels with migration that Mary the Mother of Jesus is represented as 'a living symbol of the emigrant, in the Catholic

⁶ Ibid pg. 122. The United Nations reports that seventy five per cent of all immigrants live in 12 per cent of the world's countries.

⁷ There are many references to these facts in various publications of the Catholic Church in America United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano, 2002 *Strangers No Longer: Together on a Journey of Hope*, USCCB and research undertaken in Australia at <http://www.ncls.org.au/default.aspx?sitemapid=6424> at

⁸ One of the major contributors to research on this matter is Levitt, Peggy, 2007, *God Needs no Passport: Immigrants and the Changing American Religious Landscape*, NY: The New Press. Increasingly there is an interest in diaspora phenomenon. Most work in this area reveals the transnational nature of migration and the role that religious belief plays in fostering diaspora connections.

⁹ For a synopsis of this debate see Butler, Judith and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 2010, *Who Sings the Nation State?* Calcutta, Seagull Books.

Church's document on migration entitled *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*¹⁰ (*EMCC, The Love of Christ Towards Migrants*). It is in the light of these emerging contexts that the words of Joseph Ratzinger have more than a mere symbolic significance as he feels the need to remind us that 'the Christian understanding of reality continues to be a powerful force'¹¹.

These six observations highlight the significant role that migration plays in the life of faith communities. There are many other important observations that could be made at this stage, indeed the role of migration in the faith life of migrants could well be a paper in its own right. A significant point to note at this early juncture is that despite the strong relationship between migration and faith there is what Daniel G. Groody refers to as a 'Migration-Theology Divide'. By this statement Groody means that theology is very seldom mentioned at centres of migration studies and similarly 'little has been written about migration as a theological reality' despite evidence of the importance of migration in the human quest for an understanding of God¹². Migration has been described as 'the orphan of the global institutional architecture'¹³, maybe it is also an orphan of theological discourse! This is maybe the most important underlying reason why those involved in migration studies welcome this conference. Migration has sustained a place in religious discourse by classifying itself in the pastoral care framework. Before one can understand fully how migration is a sign of the times it is necessary to understand the pastoral care classification within which migration has found itself stabled.

Pastoral Care : the heart that sees.

While on a visit to Fatima in May 2011, Pope Benedict addressed a meeting of Pastoral Care Organisations at a Celebration of the Word. In his address he drew on the parable of the Good Samaritan. Referring to the valuable work undertaken by pastoral care workers and organisations he said that they are like the main character in the parable. When ministering to people in their care, they are the ones who 'pour(s) upon their wounds the oil of consolation and the wine of hope'. Whereas this is the ultimate task of the pastoral care

¹⁰ Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, 2004 *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*, (The Love of Christ Towards Migrants) Vatican City, para 14-15.

¹¹ Ratzinger, Cardinal Joseph, *Dialectics of Secularization*, IN Habermas, Jürgen and Joseph Ratzinger, 2006 *The Dialectics of Secularization: On Reason and Religion*, San Francisco, Ignatius Press.

¹² Groody, Daniel J., *Crossing the Divide* IN Kerwin, Donald and Jill Marie Gerschutz, 2009 *And You Welcomed Me: Migration and Catholic Social Teaching*, Lanham, MA: Lexington Books. (pg 2)

¹³ Goldin et al. *Exceptional People*, pg.7

worker it can only be achieved through the appropriate disposition which is that of 'a heart that sees' which in turn is giving ultimate expression to the love of God 'revealed in responsibility for others'¹⁴. Pastoral care, therefore, is foremost and foremost a disposition of the pastoral care worker.

Benedict XVI's insights show that the pastoral care worker is one that cultivates a loving disposition and who responds appropriately to the lives of individuals who are in need of spiritual and pastoral attention. Whereas the pastoral care worker is focused on the needs of those cared for; Benedict XVI also draws attention to the context within which the pastoral care worker has to minister. The context within which the care is extended cannot be overlooked. It is in attending to this context that one becomes aware of the signs of the times. Therefore it is in understanding, analysing and identifying the context within which one ministers that provides deeper insights into the signs of the times.

In his Fatima presentation, Benedict XVI identifies three contemporary challenges faced by the pastoral care worker which if not alluded to could impact the level and quality of pastoral care administered. Firstly he draws attention to the increasing levels of accountability being placed on the shoulders of the pastoral care worker. This increasing level of bureaucracy can sow the seeds of discord in a person's heart. This can make itself felt in trails of paperwork making it all the more difficult to hold onto 'a profound and authentic unity of heart, spirit and action'. It is trends such as this that make it all the more challenging to 'arrive at a satisfactory synthesis between spiritual life and apostolic activity'.

Secondly, Pope Benedict alludes to the difficulty faced by faith based organisations as they engage with various institutions and agencies. If there is not true transparency then the core values, beliefs and identity of the faith based organisations can become the casualties of the relationship. Thirdly, the individual acts of love that are administered by the pastoral care worker have at all times to be informed by the larger mission of the church which is aimed at 'achieving a greater humanisation of society'¹⁵. The pressure to ensure that every act is the perfect act that succeeds in meeting an individual's entire needs and that an individual's needs are the only important reference point item can distract from the fact that those who minister are part of a greater plan which has an eschatological dimension

¹⁴ Benedict XVI, Celebration of the Word with Pastoral Care Organisations, 13th May, 2010, Fatima

¹⁵ Benedict XVI *Caritas in Veritate*, para. 20

Each of these three areas alluded to by Pope Benedict XVI namely: increasing accountability; the risk of losing core values and the larger communitarian context of care are also alluded to in various ways by social commentators. On the subject of increasing accountability, recent research entitled WREP (Welfare within the Social Economy) found that as religious groups compete with for-profit or not-for-profit groups in society that 'in every case the language of service is increasingly giving way to a discourse of purchasers and providers'¹⁶. The second point, that of the loss of core values, research has shown that the religious content or marker can be obliterated when religious groups engage with secular partners¹⁷. Thirdly, the aim of reflecting on the larger, even eschatological realities is compounded by current trends wherein

One is supposed to discover in the kingdom of one's own life the very thing that in earlier times was seemed to dwell in paradise: what is sought today is paradise now, in the here and now of one's own life¹⁸.

The presentation by Benedict XVI to the pastoral care workers in Fatima highlights that the disposition of the pastoral care worker of 'the heart that sees' is one that not only ministers to the individuals and groups in need of pastoral care; the heart cannot avoid seeing and evaluating the circumstances within which one is ministering thus alerting the community to the signs of the times.

Migrant care is truly faithful to the spirit of the Second Vatican Council's document on the role of the Church in the world; *Gaudium et Spes* from whose pages the theme of this conference is inspired. Migrant care is an on-going action of the church as she engages a process of 'scrutinising the signs of the times and interpreting them in the light of the Gospel'¹⁹. This paper will now examine the pastoral care of migrants in the light of our understanding of pastoral care.

¹⁶ This study was published in two volumes entitled Backstrom, Anders, Grace Davie, Ninna Edgah, and Per Petterson, 2011, *Welfare and Religion in 21st Century Europe, Vols 1 and 2*, Farnam, Surrey, Ashgate Publishing Company. This particular study is the second of three undertaken by the Uppsala Religion and Society Research Centre, Vol 2, pg 160.

¹⁷ Roy, Olivier, 2010 *Holy Ignorance: When Religion and Culture Part Ways*, London, C. Hurst & Co. (Publishers)Ltd.

¹⁸ Beck, Ulrich, 2010, *A God of One's Own*, Cambridge, Polity Press, pg.129.

¹⁹ Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, Promulgated by Pope Paul VI, December 1965, para.4.

Pastoral Care of Migrants: Seeing and Responding.

The charter for the pastoral care of migrants is the previously mentioned document EMCC. The document is in no doubt as to the reality of migration; 'today's migrations constitute the greatest movements of persons, if not people of all time' (EMCC 96). This statement gives migration a central role in the dynamics of the world today. The style of the document is such that when migration is put in a global or policy perspective it is quick to follow with the implications of that statement for migrants and those that care for them. For instance in the case of paragraph ninety six which has just been quoted, the document goes on to say that many of those who migrate end up in refugee camps, 'soulless megalopolis' and slums on city's outskirts. Before concluding the paragraph the following statement is made. 'The migrant thirsts for some gesture that will make him feel welcome, recognised and acknowledged as a person' (EMCC 96).

Similarly in paragraph 101 when the vast movement of people today is described 'as the new 'credo' of contemporary man', the document brings the reader from this global perspective to the local reality and the implications for those communities;

'The 'foreigner' is God's messenger who surprises us and interrupts the regularity and logic of daily life, bringing near those who are far away. In 'foreigners' the Church sees Christ who 'pitches His tent among us' (cf. Jn 1:14) and who knocks at our door' (cf Ap 3:20). This meeting, characterised by attention, welcome, sharing and solidarity, by the protection of the rights of migrants and of commitment to evangelise –reveals the constant solicitude of the Church, which discovers authentic values in migrants and considers them a great human resource' (EMCC 101)

This pattern is at play even in the early sections of the document. Paying particular attention to two categories of 'domestic migration' (EMCC 10) Firstly, the document notes the category of people fleeing to cities from the outlying countryside to escape the ravages of, terrorism, war, drug-trafficking or famine. Secondly, seasonal workers are identified as another category with special needs moving within their counties. Again rather than leaving the discussion at the point where the awareness of the plight of migrants is identified, attention is focused on how the local community can best respond to the migrant's needs. Recommending 'loving attention to 'people on the move' and to their need for solidarity and friendship', the document calls for 'well designed forms of welcome and pastoral

activity, that is, continuous, thorough and adapted as closely as possible to the actual situation and specific needs of the migrants'(EMCC 11).

This overview of EMCC shows how the pastoral care of the migrant highlights the importance of a 'heart that sees' in the caring dynamic. The relationship of the individual or institution that ministers to the migrant or migrant groups is a relationship that is greater than mere charity. It is a disposition, a virtue which the Judeo-Christian tradition calls hospitality., Hospitality has been described as the 'pedagogy of seeing'²⁰, a phrase that echoes the words of Benedict XVI. The three extracts from EMCC show that the 'pedagogy of seeing' is a two-fold exercise. Firstly it involves seeing the migrant and their needs and secondly seeing and understating the context within which the migrant is situated. It is within this dialectic that the pastoral care of the migrant ultimately identifies the 'signs of the times'. This dialectic guides the appropriate pastoral care response which individuals and communities take. Therefore for those interested in the 'signs of the times' it is worth noting that the engagement of the needs of the migrant by suitably formed pastoral care workers and institutions that identifies the 'signs of the times'.

Before leaving this section the significance of this dialectic of 'seeing' cannot be underestimated. It has a valuable contribution to make to broader theological debates and discussions currently taking place. Describing the societal shift within which the pastoral care of the migrant occurs EMCC refers the fact that;

the passage from monocultural to multicultural societies can be a sign of the living presence of God in history and in the community of mankind, for it offers a providential opportunity for the fulfilment of God's plan for a universal communion. This new historical context is characterised by the thousand different faces of humanity and, unlike the past, diversity is becoming commonplace in very many countries. Therefore Christians are called to give witness to and practise not only the spirit of tolerance – itself a great achievement, politically and culturally speaking, not to mention religiously – but also respect for the other's identity. Thus, where it is possible and opportune, they can open a way towards sharing with people of different origins and cultures, also in view of a "respectful proclamation" of their own faith.(EMCC para. 9)

²⁰ O'Neill, William Christian Hospitality and Solidarity with the Stranger, IN Kerwin, Donald and Jill Marie Gerschutz, 2009 *And You Welcomed Me: Migration and Catholic Social Teaching*, Lanham, MA: Lexington Books. pg. 150. Fn. 14 O'Neill attributes the phrase 'pedagogy of seeing' to Jean-Marc Éla.

This passage captures the present challenges faced by those involved in the mission of the church today and specifically the task of theologians. The shift from a monocultural paradigm to a multicultural paradigm reflects the shift from modernity to what is referred to as a postmodern culture or as some have begun to identify as second modernity. The tasks and narratives of communion, diversity, politics, culture, tolerance, respect and proclamation symbolise the signs of the times and are contextual challenges not just for the pastoral care of migrants but for the mission of the church and the work of theologians generally. This reinforces the point that a reflection on the pastoral care of migrants provides a window onto the 'signs of the times' which further engages and challenges those responsible for policy in society and within churches. Paul Scheffer, the author of '*The Multicultural Drama*', a work which ignited a controversial debate in the Netherlands when published in 2002, observes;

this explains why the debate about migration is so enlightening. A society must win the acceptance of newcomers by seeing their arrival as a reason to measure itself against its own ideals²¹.

A brief overview of pastoral engagements of the *Irish Catholic Bishop's Council for Emigrants* formerly the *Irish Episcopal Commission for Emigrants* (IECE) with Irish emigrants since the foundation of the commission in the mid nineteen fifties underlines significance of the dynamic engagement between the needs of the migrant and the cultural context within which those needs occur.

The Pastoral Care of Irish Emigrants.

For a more thorough consideration of the work of IECE the soon to be published work of Dr. Patricia Kennedy of University College, Dublin, is highly recommended. Dr. Kennedy was given unrestricted access to the archives of IECE. Her work, in the main, examines the response of the Irish Church to emigrant needs in England. It is important to know that between 1951 and 1961 close to 500,000 left Irish shores in search of better life abroad. This is a very high proportion for the then population. According to the 1951 Census the population of Ireland was 2,960,593 people and in 1961 it is recorded at 2,818,341²². Close

²¹ Scheffer, Paul, 2007, *Immigrant Nations*, Cambridge, Polity Press, pg. 320

²² Source: <http://www.census.ie/-in-History/Population-of-Ireland-1841-2006.151.1.aspx> [ACCESSED 08:04:2012]

on 18% of the population emigrated over this period of time. Seeing the near destitute situation of emigrants in Manchester a number of Columban Missionary priests wrote to the Irish Bishops alerting them to the problems facing their people abroad. Their initial concern was for the spiritual well-being of the emigrant but over time it was becoming abundantly clear that the context and the circumstances dictated that a broader range of services were required²³.

Priests were dispatched from Ireland with the sole purpose of providing help and support to emigrants. Initially these priest chaplains were appointed to motorways, engineering works, hotels and to parishes that had a large proportion of Irish emigrants. The Irish Centre in Camden Town, which now provides a home to the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain and to a wide range of welfare services offered to Irish people started life as a hostel providing bed spaces for the many people arriving in London for work in the 1950's. Centres were set up in many parts of London and in other cities including Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Coventry and Luton. Many parishes with a high proportion of Irish emigrants built local Irish clubs adjacent to parish catholic churches giving people an opportunity to network with fellow Irish people in their free time.

As the number of priest ministering to the Irish in Britain increased they organised themselves into the Irish Chaplaincy Scheme in Britain. The 'Scheme' was a precursor to the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain which is still serving the needs of Irish emigrants today. Many religious sisters joined the team and provided invaluable assistance to Irish emigrants in various locations around the country. The initial primary concern of the chaplaincy and the Irish Bishop's was the provision of culturally sacramental rituals. This provision is an important step on the road towards integration and provides the migrant with familiar symbols and practices thus reducing feelings of alienation.

Faith traditions give their followers symbols, rituals, and stories they use to create alternative sacred landscapes, marked by holy sites, shrines and places of worship²⁴.

²³ See the recent Emigrant Information Pack 2012 for further details. Available at <http://www.catholicbishops.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/IECE-Emigrant-Information-Pack-201211.pdf> pg.3.

²⁴ Levitt, Peggy, 2007, *God Needs No Passport: Immigrants and the Changing Religious Landscape*, New York NY: The New Press. pg 12-13

The provision of culturally sensitive religious services especially at a time of bereavement was greatly appreciated by the emigrant communities. However Kennedy's work shows how the engagements with the Irish emigrant highlighted that the needs extended into nearly every dimension of the emigrant's lives. A wide range of initiatives characterize this era.

Irish Centres were set up to give advice, providing assistance in tackling unscrupulous landlords and giving information on employment. Young Irish married couples were unable to obtain mortgages for their houses; the chaplaincy started a co-operative saving and housing scheme allowing emigrant couples gain access to the housing market. The political situation in Northern Ireland created its own unique challenges which couldn't be ignored. Seeing the difficulties experienced by the families of Irish prisoners in English jails the chaplaincy set up a support service for families called the *Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas* (ICPO) which continues to provide services to this day. The chaplaincy also played its part in highlighting the injustices served on innocent Irish people charged with various offences one of which was popularised in the movie *In the name of the Father*. The 'signs of the times' said it was very hardy to be Irish in Britain in the eighties due to the on-going 'troubles' as they have come to be known. The pastoral care extended to the Irish by the Irish helped alleviate some of the tensions that existed within the Irish community and between the emigrant and the host society.

These were just some of the ways that those who were charged with the care of Irish emigrants in Britain responded. The pastoral outreach, while tending to the migrant, was also negotiating with the cultural reality highlighting once again the dialectic between the migrant and the context identifying the 'signs of the times' that were crying to be scrutinised and responded to in the light of the Gospel. Some may argue that these initiatives only heighten the insularity of migrants. The opening presentation of *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi* emphasises the 'duty of forming a culture of welcome and solidarity'. This duty, if shared by the host and sending church has untold benefits for the migrant and society as research shows that immigrants who feel welcome seldom set out to destroy their new home²⁵.

²⁵ Quoted from Aristide R. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design* IN Scheffer, Paul, 2011, *Immigrant Nations*, Cambridge, Polity Press. pg. 251.

The current work of the Chaplaincy in Britain is focused on three main areas. Outreach to elderly men and women who are the victims of the 1950's emigration and are now living lonely and isolated lives. There is also a dedicated service offering support to the members of the Irish Traveller Community; a group who have specific cultural needs. Finally, there is the previously mentioned support given to prisoners and their families by ICPO. These specific groups are evidence of the fact that while mainstream emigrants become more and more integrated into the host society; there remain specific groups with specialised needs among larger migrant communities. The reasons why people get left behind have as much to do with cultural circumstances as with economic circumstances. Not providing for your future, not living according to dominant narratives is punishable by the modern state or the dominant political community. There is little room for sub cultures whom may be classified as ethnic or religious minorities and who by choosing to live according to inherited norms, 'reject the universalism and determinism of modernizing agendas and to improvise economic strategies rooted in their particular circumstances, customs, and traditions'²⁶. The provision of services just outlined highlight how the pastoral care of migrants once again calls attention to the socio-political context within which the care is given. These actions directed towards the needs of migrants also bring attention to the 'signs of the times'.

Pastoral Care of Irish Emigrants: Current Needs and Trends.

Ireland is currently experiencing an increase in emigration. The Central Statistics Office estimates that 40,000 Irish born people left the state last year. If these numbers continue to rise at these rates, this decade will be witnessing a wave of emigration similar to the nineteen-fifties and the nineteen-eighties. Responding to this trend on Saint Patrick's Day this year, IECE launched an information pack for intending emigrants. The pack was distributed to every diocese in the country and from each diocese it was circulated to parishes. The launch received favourable and extensive coverage on prime time radio and television and on national newspapers. It provided information but more importantly it included narratives of those who experienced emigration and the experience of those who were left behind. The preparation of the pack was made all the easier as IECE could link with a network of centres in the UK, the USA and Australia. The pack highlighted the positives of

²⁶ Lears, T.J. Jackson, *The Trigger of History: Capitalism, Modernity, and the Politics of Place*, *The Hedgehog Review*, vol 14, no.1, pg. 89.

emigration and highlighted some of difficulties and challenges associated with emigration. The preparation and publication was a very interesting insight into the 'signs of the times' we live in.

The work of preparing for this document and its launch raised a number of matters that this paper deems to be 'signs of the times' that we live in. An analysis as to how people who either choose or are forced to leave the shores of one country brings attention to both the obstacles and supports facing those making a migrant journey. Many of these obstacles and supports experienced by people leaving a small island on the west of Europe reflect growing global phenomenon. Migration policy in the developed world is largely driven by market needs and is managed by security concerns giving less and less attention to human rights and human well-being. Despite the fact that those promoting migration may wish to import factors of production overtime society comes to realise that they import not just factors of production but agents of social change. Policy takes little account of the human dimension of the factors of production. This is precisely why immigration policy is failing. Research previously undertaken by the author of this paper shows that migration policy fails because it takes little account of what Castles refers to as 'human agency'²⁷.

Economic theorists and bureaucrats have ignored the character of migration which Castles sees as a collective process based on the needs of families and communities within a migration context²⁸.

As a result those intending to emigrate and those concerned with migrant well-being are required to extend extra vigilance. These findings also have implications for those providing pastoral care to migrants. The short-sightedness of policy is felt not only by those who migrate but also in society generally as it is quite evident that 'the social, spiritual and political effects of migration are huge and enduring, while the economic effects are puny and transitory'²⁹.

²⁷ Castles, Stephen, 2002 Migration and Community Formation under Conditions of Globalisation. *International Migration Review*, vol 36 no.25

²⁸ Hilliard, Alan 2010 Mind the Gap: Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion, Masters by Research in Applied Social Policy, UCD, Dublin. Pg 14

²⁹ Caldwell, Christopher 2009, Reflections on the Revolution in Europe; Can Europe be the same with different people in it?, London, Allen Lane. Pg. 32

As mentioned in an earlier section the globalising space is creating increasing amounts of inequality and isolation among peoples³⁰. It is the view of Christopher Caldwell that present migration policy is creating a form of global apartheid. Countries try to keep poor people out and all educated and wealthy people much more ease of movement. However despite its best efforts policy fails to stem the tide of people who migrate from poor countries to wealthier ones³¹. It goes to prove that 'migration often occurs in spite of official policy and not always because of it'³².

The present points based system adopted by many countries is serving to create this system of apartheid. This system operated by counties like Canada and Australia among others gives preferential option to highly skilled professionals leaving a growing undocumented or illegal work force tending to the lower skilled end of the market. Whereas this policy gives rise to undocumented kitchen porter, undocumented bar staff or undocumented gardeners one never hears of undocumented surgeons, undocumented physicists or undocumented university professors.

The work of George J. Borjas gives an insight into the vagaries of the points based system. His research revealed that if the Canadian points based system had been adopted by the United States at least forty per cent of those who secured citizenship would not have been granted visas. Furthermore, the points based system would have been uneven in its impact, excluding six per cent of English people and up to seventy five per cent of Mexicans³³. To compensate and to meet the demands and needs of the lower skills sector countries have developed 'working holiday visas' that can extend from a one year to a two year period. These are similar to the student J-1 visa except they extend over a longer period. These visas allow what is at times a highly trained and often highly skilled work force to work in the low skilled sector. The Australian government has recently extended its one year working visa program to two years if the visa holder can produce evidence showing that they have worked in the agricultural sector in the outback. These areas of the country find it hard to

³⁰ The ratio of the purchasing power of the five richest countries to the five to ten poorest countries was 9:1 in 1900, 30:1 in 1960 and is 100:1 today. DeLorey, Mary International Migration IN Kerwin, Donald and Jill Marie Gerschutz, 2009 *And You Welcomed Me: Migration and Catholic Social Teaching*, Lanham, MA: Lexington Books.

³¹ Legrain, Philippe, 2006 *Immigrants: Your Country Needs Them*, London, Little Brown Book Group.

³² Goldin, Ian, Geoffrey Cameron and Meera Balarajan, 2011 *Exceptional People: How Migration Shaped Our World and Will Define Our Europe*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. pg.249.

³³ Scheffer, Paul, 2011 *Immigrant Nations*, Cambridge, Polity Press. pg. 90

attract labour at harvest time. The other function of temporary work visas in countries like Canada and Australia is to give the more highly motivated and qualified a chance to attract sponsorship from companies. This gives the person an opportunity to apply for residency and citizenship in the future.

Universities play their part in this form of global apartheid. Attempts are made to attract foreign students to the Universities in the developed world. Overseas students pay full fees bringing much needed cash flows to the colleges. Countries then have an opportunity to hold onto the best and the brightest of those that graduate or pursue post-graduate studies. There were three million overseas students in 2009; that number is expected to rise to between eight and fifteen million by 2025. On the ground this is reflected in the finding that twenty-five per cent of skilled migrant to the US were previously enrolled in an American University and close to fifty per cent of skilled migrants to Australia have a degree from an Australian University³⁴.

This overview shows that journeying with the migrant is a journey into the heart of the world identifying the 'signs of the times' in the process. The journey exposes the opportunities and challenges, the supports and obstacles, the openness and the hostilities faced by the migrant in a world that sees more and more people on the move. The heart of the pastoral care worker is asked to foster and encourage those circumstances that provide help and support for the migrant's journey. They are also faced with the task of naming and challenging those circumstances that undermine and steal the hopes of those who journey towards a land of new opportunity. In naming these obstacles they highlight global trends in policy that are moving us further and further from what Benedict XVI calls the 'civilization of love, whose seed God has planted in every people, in every culture'³⁵.

Pastoral Care of Migrants: Creating a Framework in the Face of Current Challenges

This overview of recent trends in emigration reveals the on-going need for pastoral care of migrants. This applies not just to migrants from developing countries but to migrants from

³⁴ Goldin, Ian, Geoffrey Cameron and Meera Balarajan, 2011 *Exceptional People: How Migration Shaped Our World and Will Define Our Europe*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. pgs. 230-231.

³⁵ Benedict XVI, *Caritatis in Veritate*, para. 20

developed countries. Some might argue that the ever increasing and vast array of information available on the web reduces the need for traditional pastoral care services. These trends signify that pastoral care services may need to adapt to the age we live in; however much they adapt they are still very important. There are anecdotal indications that people, while appreciative of the benefits of modern technology, are beginning to realise the limitations of technology. This trend is emerging some of the contributions to a series entitled 'Generation Emigration' in an Irish daily newspaper. Speaking of his experience of emigration from Ireland to Malaysia one young man said;

Homesickness surfaces now and then. My parents Skype my mobile phone a few days a week, and they visited me here last November. I can see how my friends are on Facebook, but I prefer writing them letters. No amount of Facebook notifications can match the feeling of getting a letter in the post³⁶.

The academic world is also acknowledging the limits of the World-Wide-Web. Arguing that the web, even though it has made an increasing amount of data available to the world, Chad Wellmon offers the reminder that the World-Wide-Web is a technology developed by humans to 'organise, evaluate and engage their world³⁷'. As such the web 'needs to be understood in deep, embodied connection with the human'. Wellmon refers to the view held by many that, 'true knowledge is deep, and its depth is proportional to the intensity of our attentiveness'. It could then be argued that increasing the amount of information available to people may add to problems rather than reducing them or even solving them. It was Immanuel Kant who said that an overabundance of books while encouraging people to read a lot may have them reading material in a more superficial fashion³⁸. Information which is at the heart of life's decisions ought not to be read superficially.

It is challenges such as these that highlight the 'signs of our times' and beg the question as to how those committed to the pastoral care of migrants respond to these self-same challenges. The heart that is attempting to see can easily find itself overcome by these challenges. The changing needs of the migrant and the changing circumstances and environment within which people migrate makes the task of migrant care all the more challenging. A framework that could withstand the vicissitudes of time and circumstance

³⁶ Irish Times, *Teaching a little and learning a lot*, Friday 6th April, 2012, irishtimes.com/generationemigration

³⁷ Wellmon, Chad, *Why Google Isn't Making Us Stupid Or Smart*, *The Hedgehog Review*, vol.14, no. 1, pg. 79.

³⁸ *Ibid* pg. 71

would be of immense benefit. Human mobility responds to circumstances. As this paper has already shown it is very difficult to predict human mobility and as a consequence it is very hard to create policy for migrants. Even when policy is in place that is helpful or supportive there are many other variables influencing the decisions of migrants as the psychologist Kay Deaux who has carried out extensive research into the psychology of migrants outlines. The migrant is;

an active agent who, in the face of varying situations and experiences, negotiates and adapts to changing circumstances-some of which can be marked by the officially documented transition points, but most of which depend on more variable psychosocial events³⁹.

Phillipe Legrain's book, *Immigrants: Your Country Needs Them* subtitles the introduction to his book as follows: *Migration Isn't Just for the Birds*. This reminds us that human beings don't have the monopoly on migration. The continued importance of migration in the world beyond the homo sapiens leave one wondering if there are any lessons to be learnt from birds, insects, animals and reptiles that could possibly be applied to human migration.

In the natural world migration is an important phenomenon. For many creatures migration is necessary for the survival and pro-creation of their species.. One of the first to bring attention to the complexity of human migration was Oscar Handlin. His research focused on the impact of migration on the migrant and less on society. This went against the academic trend at that time. One work entitled *The Uprooted* claims that 'the history of immigration is the history of alienation and its consequences'⁴⁰. Migration within the animal kingdom is not without its hazards and degrees of alienation. Distance, environmental changes associated with global warming and developments on the migration corridor can hamper the traditional paths that are traversed on a regular basis. This paper offers the opinion that the one major difference between the migration of birds, animals, reptiles and insects and that of humans occurs in the place of arrival. When the newly arrived people meet those who have pre-existed them, both natives and newcomers have to engage in self-examination. This is often the place of resistance; the place where the seeds of alienation are present. Aware of these factors can humans learn about migration from the members of the bird,

³⁹ Deaux, Kay, 2006 *To Be an Immigrant*, New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation. Pg 153.

⁴⁰ Handlin, Oscar 1952, *The Uprooted. The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that made the American People*, Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, pg. 2

insect, reptile and animal kingdom who have been migrating, quite successfully for centuries?

The biologist Hugh Dingle has spent his life studying the migratory patterns of a large number of creatures. He has identified five characteristics that can be applied in varying degrees to all migrations. The characteristics of successful migratory journeys are: the journeys involve travelling to places outside familiar habitats; the journeys tend to be linear and they avoid what he terms zig zagging; they involve special behaviours and preparations at departure and arrival; the journey demand special allocations of energy and finally 'they maintain a fervid attentiveness to the greater mission'⁴¹.

These characteristics can be easily applied to those who migrate and can be adapted by those involved with their pastoral care. The first characteristic, moving outside a familiar habitat may be deemed to be so obvious that it is overlooked by many who migrate. The impact of the loss of a familiar habitat is for the large part underestimated. Referring to the plight of the 'average migrant' Ulrich Beck says they,

must combine a minimal change of perspective, dialogical imagination, and ingenuity in their dealings with the contradictions which are part and parcel of the border regimes if they are to survive at all⁴².

Crossing borders, stepping out from the familiar to the unknown requires more than the ingrained habits gleaned in the place of origin offers. As Beck observes, stepping out requires new perspectives, expanding one's imagination and a degree of ingenuity if one is to survival never mind flourish.

Secondly linear journeys tell of a more focused, purposeful journey than can often be the case today. To illustrate this point a novel by Colm Tóibín proves helpful. It describes the plight of a young lady called Eilis Lacey. Towards the end of the novel she struggles to know if she should stay in Ireland in the town she grew up in or should she return to Brooklyn. She had returned to Ireland because her sister had passed away and subsequently found herself questioning if Ireland or Brooklyn was home. Eventually she decided to return to her

⁴¹ Quammen, David, Great Migrations IN *National Geographic*, vol 218, no. 5 pgs. 28- 51. The overview by Quammen includes a number of biologists including Hugh Dingle. For a more extensive overview of his work see Dingle, Hugh.1996, *Migration: The Biology of Life on the Move*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

⁴² Beck, Ulrich, 2010, *A God of One's Own*, Cambridge, Polity Press.pg. 162.

husband and her life in America, not before a lot of procrastination. Once she made her decision she was focused and determined. She wrote a few letters telling people of her rather rash decision to return to Brooklyn. Having booked her ticket, she knew that not only that she wouldn't get to see them but that they might try to unsettle her again. A simple sentence shows the linear focused mind-set that she eventually adopts. Having booked the ticket for her ship to New York in the local post-office, 'she discovered she had left her umbrella in the post office but did not go back to collect it'; she was moving on and had no time to go back. The umbrella is symbolic of what she left behind. After an encounter with the local shop owner and gossip that left her livid, and proved to be the final straw the book tells us that;

Eilis was shaking.

'I saw you after the Byrne one's wedding getting into the car with Jim Farrell. Your mother looked well. I hadn't seen her for a while but I thought she looked well.'

'She'll be glad to hear that'. Eilis said...'So is that all, Miss Kelly?'

'It is,' Miss Kelly said and smiled grimly at her as she stood up. 'Except don't forget your umbrella'

This encounter was the one that finally stopped the zig-zagging, indecisive mind-set that burdened Eilis. When she left the umbrella behind, she left everything behind that held her back from her life in Brooklyn⁴³. The linear focused aspect of a migrant's journey has implications for the preparations for departure and arrival.

The special behaviours of departure and arrival are at times a stronger characteristic in animal migrations than human migrations. One of the findings in the research among centres in preparation for the launch of the IECE's Emigrant Pack reflects this. Centres report that many of who have made the journey and are now undocumented could, with their skill sets, have travelled to their destinations legally if they had been less hasty with their decision to travel on a holiday visa or a visa waiver. Kennedy's research highlights that this phenomenon is a constant issue of concern for pastoral care workers. Her work also underlines the valuable role that Irish Emigration Centres played in the past for those that arrived ill-prepared;

⁴³ Tóibín, Colm, 2009, Brooklyn, London, Penguin Books Ltd, pgs, 246-7. This novel has stunning insights into the peculiarities of Irish emigration. It has a particularly helpful portrayal of an Irish Emigrant chaplain, Fr. Flood.

Many – far, far, too many –arrived ill equipped, unprepared, penniless and with no knowledge of who would provide the next night’s accommodation, let alone the next meal⁴⁴.

Though the cases may not be as severe as those in the 1950’s wave of emigration, people may still be unaware of simple facts like the cost of setting up a new home in a distant place and the need to have a large amount of money on deposit to aid the transition until permanent employment is obtained and a degree of stability achieved.

Fourthly those who migrate require special allocations of energy. For the animal kingdom the focus is largely on the physical energy necessary for the journey. Dingle describes the journey of an arctic tern. So focused is the tern on the journey fROm Terra del Fuego to Alaska that it will not waste it’s energy on the distraction of tasty morsels being thrown from a fishing trawler; ‘these critters are hell-for-leather, flat-out just gonna get there’⁴⁵. The human journey requires more than mere physical energy. The transition from one place to another is an act of negotiation. This dynamic between the transition of home and away is captured by the author Colum McCann. He said that

It struck me that distant cities are designed precisely so you can know where you came from. We bring ‘home’ with us when we leave. Sometimes it becomes more acute for the fact of having left⁴⁶.

This act of negotiation has not gone unnoticed by others. Ulrich Beck provides similar insights into the challenges of transition faced by the migrant;

If they are to survive, the average migrants must become frontier artists (evading the frontier, exploiting the frontier, establishing the frontier, crossing the frontier and so forth) and they can easily come crashing down from the high wire of the frontier they are balancing on⁴⁷.

Both McCann and Beck reveal the need for a ‘special allocation of energy’ for the migrant. The space between home and away is a frontier that requires great energy if it is to be negotiated successfully.

⁴⁴ Kennedy, Patricia 2007, Pastoral Care Without Frontiers–The Irish Chaplaincy in Britain, 1957-2007, From Pastoral Care to Public Policy- Journeying with the Migrant, Dunboyne Castle, Co. Meath, Irish Catholic Bishops Conference. <http://usairish.org/pdfs/Patricia%20Kennedy%20draft%20conference%20paper.pdf> [accessed 07:04:2012]

⁴⁵ Quammen, David, Great Migrations IN *National Geographic*, vol 218, no. 5 pg 37.

⁴⁶ McCann, Colum, 2009, Let the Great World Spin, New York NY: Random House Publishing Group. pg 59.

⁴⁷ Beck, Ulrich, 2010, *A God of One’s Own*, Cambridge, Polity Press.pg 162

Lastly Dingle's observations on successful migratory patterns emphasise the need to give 'fervid attention' to the greater mission. Migration in the world of animals, insects, birds and reptiles is sustained by the desire to procreate their species. It is this factor that sustains them at difficult points in the migration journey giving them the determination to traverse climactic and environmental obstacles. For people the greater mission is related to the reason why they emigrate in the first place; some may be blissfully unaware as to the motivating reason behind their desire to emigrate. They may be driven by a need to escape adversarial circumstances with little reflection and thought put into the end point of their journey. In such cases emigration can be simply an escape. However there are other circumstances where people are all too aware as to the reasons that forcing them to migrate.

Haiti has a population of eight million people with an estimated two million people living abroad. Bishop François Gayot of Haiti suggests three reasons why his people, in the main emigrate. Firstly, survival and mostly economic survival, drives family members to new territories in order to provide for those who are left behind. Secondly; the desire for a better life and opportunities may force a person to leave their home land seeking better life opportunities abroad. Thirdly, a person may seek peace; they leave behind troubled homes, troubled communities or troubled families⁴⁸.

These reasons, among others can be the strength and inspiration behind a migrant's journey. This can help those on the move to negotiate their way out of difficult and challenging circumstances in the country of their birth. If there was one overarching reason for emigrating it is best captured by the title of the pastoral letter issued by the joint Bishop's Conference of the United States and Mexico entitled, *Strangers No Longer: Together on a Journey of Hope*. Each and every migrant's journey is a hope-filled one. Hope sustains them in difficult and dangerous situations. For a variety of reasons hope has eluded them in the place they previously called home.

These five lessons gleaned from the migratory patterns animals, birds, reptiles and insects provide a basic framework for human migration. This framework is an aid to the dual mandate of the 'pedagogy of seeing'. It helps focus attention on both the migrants' efforts

⁴⁸ Hilliard, Alan, Migration – a pastoral response, *The Furrow*, vol.57 no.12 pg 652

involved in migrant care. Having to deal with both the migrant and the context is a complex challenge which is highlighted throughout this paper in the history of IECE and in the challenges fostered by current migration policy which can at times serve to discriminate, alienate and add to global apartheid . The vast arrays of issues that arise highlight the need for a frame work for the pastoral care of migrants. The significance of this is reinforced in this paper as it shows that the migrant context is exacerbated by the fact that the migrant operates outside normal national borders and boundaries. The borders and boundaries that provide a framework and a reference point for the support and well-being of those that live within them are largely absent to the migrant particularly in the early stages of their journey.

These unique conditions surrounding the lives of migrants demand unique solutions. Indeed these unique conditions are not just conditions for the migrant but for more and more of the world's citizens as this paper presents. The unique solution presented in this paper lies in the work of the botanist Hugh Dingle who provided five characteristics in the lives of migratory creatures. This paper has shown that these five characteristics are applicable to the human migratory journey; they provide a framework within which the key elements of migrant care are captured. It is the recommendation of this paper that further investigations into the characteristics of successful migratory patterns of animals that are suitably applied to policy for migrants will contribute to their overall wellbeing in our increasingly globalizing world.

Epilogue

The journey of the migrant was described in this paper as a 'Journey of Hope'. The task of policy and the task of those committed to the pastoral care of migrants is to accompany the migrant on that journey. The overall is to support them and to reduce the risk to their dignity by adverse circumstances that can often be at the hands of exploitative policy. To this end a poem by the Irish poet Brenda Kennelly captures the dynamic of this relationship.

Hope⁵⁰.

Like lightening in the dark skies

⁵⁰ Kennelly, Brendan, 2009, *Reservoir Voices*, Northumberland, Bloodaxe Books Ltd. Pg.61

and the importance of the socio-cultural context of the migrant's journey. Any authentic effort to serve the dignity of the migrant cannot be done without paying attention to the socio-cultural conditions within which the migrant is trying to establish themselves. This is the two fold act of 'the heart that sees'. The response of the heart that sees alerts the larger community to the 'sign of the times' provides a service to the larger community. The two fold action of the heart that sees is affirmed by the joint letter of the American and Mexican Bishop's Conferences.

We recognize the phenomenon of migration as an authentic sign of the times. We see it in both our countries through the suffering of those who have been forced to become migrants for many reasons. To such a sign we must respond in common and creative ways so that we may strengthen the faith, hope, and charity of migrants and all the People of God. Such a sign is a call to transform national and international social, economic, and political structures so that they may provide the conditions required for the development for all, without exclusion and discrimination against any person in any circumstance⁴⁹.

Conclusion

This paper has shown that the pastoral care of migrant cannot be disconnected from the socio-cultural context within which the migrant is ministered to. The migrant by his or her very nature is at the cusp of social change as they constantly negotiate new economic, cultural, social and religious borders. It is in responding to the needs of migrants that those involved in their pastoral care discover not only the needs of the migrant but the all too present 'signs of the times' which are important for the migrant but are also important for those who are interested in 'making things better for society and it's peoples'. The overview of the work of IECE has shown this to be the case. From providing religious rituals to housing and support for specific groups at specific phases of its existence, IECE have successfully applied itself to the needs of those who run the risk of alienation that Oscar Handlin rightly observed is at one and the same time the history of migration.

One can say therefore that the 'pedagogy of seeing' as outlined in this paper has a dual role; that of scrutinising the needs of the migrant and also the socio-cultural circumstances within which the needs of the migrant manifest themselves. This raises important issues for those

⁴⁹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano, 2002 Strangers No Longer: Together on a Journey of Hope, USCCB para. 102.

I love to brighten up dark lives
and rid sad hearts of lonely cries

I have one fierce enemy, despair,
all driven energy, forever there,
rip hearts apart and doesn't care

I care. Let's walk together now,
help me to help, to grow and thrive
and let the future shine alive

Despair would murder it and make you
guilty. Let's talk now as we walk and see
the future reaching out to you and me.

Our skies are brightening up today.
I love your company, dear friend,
and always will, come what may.

I dream of being the living song
everyone would love to sing.
Impossible? No. That's me. Let's keep walking

Until both our hearts are singing.