



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLENARY COUNCIL OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC MIGRATION COMMISSION**

Monday, 30 May 2022

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am pleased to greet all of you taking part in the Plenary Council of the [International Catholic Migration Commission](#).

In these days, you are called to carry out three very important tasks: to choose the Commission's new governing committee, to approve its new statutes, and to determine its operational guidelines for the coming years. I readily take this opportunity to emphasize some points that I believe can help you in your discernment.

The Commission was founded in 1951 by Venerable Pope [Pius XII](#) in order to form a network among Bishops' Conferences worldwide to assist them in their pastoral care of migrants and refugees. Its nature and ecclesial mission distinguish it from other organizations operating in civil society and in the Church. The Commission is a collegial expression of the pastoral activity in the area of migration on the part of the Bishops, who, in communion with the Pope, share in his concern for the universal Church "in a bond of peace, love and unity" ([Lumen Gentium](#), 22). For this reason, in the Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium* it is mentioned and included among the competences of the [Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development](#) (cf. Art. 174 § 2), so that its nature and mission can be safeguarded in accordance with its founding principles. In your Plenary Council, you officially represent the Bishops' Conferences affiliated to the Commission. Their willingness to work together in order to welcome, protect, promote and integrate migrants and refugees is confirmed by your presence.

The ecclesial mission of the Commission is carried out on two tracks: *ad intra* and *ad extra*. It is primarily called to offer expert assistance to Bishops' Conferences and Dioceses that find themselves needing to respond to today's many complex challenges with regard to migration. It

strives, then, to promote the development and implementation of projects of pastoral care for migrants and the specialized training of pastoral workers in the field of migration, at the service of the particular Churches and in accordance with its proper competences.

Ad extra, the Commission is called to respond to global challenges and migratory emergencies with focused programs, always in communion with the local Churches. As an organization of civil society on the international level, it is also engaged in advocacy. The Commission expresses the Church's commitment and works for a broader international awareness on issues involving migration. In this way, it fosters respect for human rights and promotes human dignity in line with the Church's social doctrine.

I offer you my heartfelt thanks for the Commission's work over the past seventy years. Many of these activities have had a truly decisive impact. I thank you in particular for your committed efforts to help the Churches respond to the challenges associated with the vast displacement of persons caused by the conflict in Ukraine, which has seen the largest movement of refugees in Europe since the Second World War.

At the same time, we cannot forget the millions of asylum seekers, refugees and displaced persons in other parts of the world, who desperately need to be welcomed, protected and loved. As a Church, we wish to serve everyone and to work diligently to build a future of peace. You have the opportunity to give a face to the Church's charitable activity on their behalf!

I offer all of you my prayerful good wishes for the fruitfulness of your work, and I assure you of my remembrance in prayer. And I ask you, please, to remember me in your own prayers.

From the Vatican, 20 May 2022

FRANCIS