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Message of the 15th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops on the grave consequences of the movement of people taking place throughout the world

The 15th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, presided over by Pope Francis, meeting in Rome on 6 and 7 February 2020, reflected, among other things, on the consequences of the migratory phenomenon taking place in different regions of the planet.

Owing to wars, economic inequalities, the search for work and more fertile land, religious persecution, terrorism, the ecological crisis, etc., many people are forced to move from one country to another. The effects are often devastating. People are disoriented, families destroyed, young people traumatized, and those left at home induced to despair. Sometimes these people suffer in refugee camps and some even end up in prison. Women and young people are forced into prostitution; they are physically, socially and sexually abused. Children are separated from their parents and deprived of the right to grow up in the security of a united family.

Faced with this situation, the Council of the Synod wishes to recall that the Church, while deploring the reasons for such a massive movement of people, is called to offer comfort, consolation and welcome to all those who are suffering in one way or another. She identifies with the poor, the little and the foreigner, considering part of her prophetic mission the commitment to raise her voice against injustice, exploitation and suffering.

At the same time, the Church appreciates governments and non-governmental organizations that show interest and are committed to helping those who are forced to move. She supports those who are trying to initiate policies that are conducive to welcoming these people into their communities. She hopes that local governments will address situations that force people to leave their homes. She demands vigilance against trafficking, and commitment to bringing an end to the conflicts that cause so much suffering.

We entrust our suffering brothers and sisters to Mary, Mother of humanity, the first to experience the pain of having to leave her home and her country with her family in search of security and peace.