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Intervento di Sr. Maria de Lourdes Lodi Rissini

Alle ore 10.30 di questa mattina, in diretta *streaming* dall’Aula “Giovanni Paolo II” della Sala Stampa della Santa Sede, ha avuto luogo la Conferenza Stampa a conclusione della Campagna internazionale di *Caritas Internationalis* “Share the Journey – Condividiamo il viaggio” sul tema: “*Caritas Internationalis* journeying with migrants and refugees. Looking at the future after four years of Share the Journey campaign”.

Sono intervenuti l’Em.mo Card. Luis Antonio Tagle, Prefetto della Congregazione per l’Evangelizzazione dei Popoli e Presidente di *Caritas Internationalis*; il Rev.do Mons. Bruno-Marie Duffé, Segretario del Dicastero per il Servizio dello Sviluppo Umano Integrale; il Sig. Aloysius John, Segretario Generale di *Caritas Internationalis*; e Sr. Maria de Lourdes Lodi Rissini, Coordinatrice nazionale della *Caritas* del Sud Africa, in collegamento da

remoto.

Ne riportiamo di seguito gli interventi

Intervento dell'Em.mo Card. Luis Antonio G. Tagle

Four years ago, *Caritas Internationalis* launched a confederation-wide campaign with the ambition of creating bridges of hope between islands separated by fear. We gave ourselves a few challenges: not just seeing the migrants, but looking at them with compassion; not just hearing their voice, but listening to their stories and concerns; not just passing by the other side, but stopping, as the Good Samaritan, and living a moment of communion with them.

Four years later, I can say that the Share the Journey campaign has helped us to reach out to the migrants, to embrace their poverty and suffering, to lift them up with the conviction that they are not numbers, but persons with names, stories and dreams, and to see in them Jesus Christ who as an infant, became a refugee in Egypt with his parents.

We believe that through this campaign, Caritas has helped to develop and spread a new culture at a global level, a living culture of personal encounter, a new vision of welcoming the human person in the migrant.

My visit to the refugee camp in Idomeni, Greece in 2015 was a religious experience that will linger for a long time. I keep memories of my trip to Lebanon in 2016 when I met refugees from Syria in the Bekaa Valley. In 2017 I visited Jordan and had an edifying encounter with refugees from Iraq. And then in Cox's Bazar Rohingya camps in Bangladesh that I visited twice in 2018 and 2019. I remember that I had mixed feelings. A part of me rejoiced that they were being given the attention they deserved as human beings. But at the same time, a part of me continued to be sad because I wondered if this was a permanent state of life for them or temporary. I cannot imagine how parents would respond if their children asked them what future awaits them. Even in my own country, I have met internally displaced people, bearing the wounds of violent conflicts, poverty, human trafficking and environmental disasters.

These refugees reminded me of my "migrant roots". In them, I saw my grandfather who was born in China, but was forced to leave his homeland as a young boy with his uncle for the Philippines in search of a better future.

The Share the Journey campaign has been a great moment of encounter, solidarity, and above all an expression of the love of the Church for people on the move. Christians, Muslims, Hindus, followers of other religions and those with no religion were received as human persons.

At a time when COVID-19 should lead to global solidarity, and at the same time when the States are more concerned with protecting their own citizens, with the risk of intensifying selfishness and the fear of strangers, the end of *Caritas Internationalis'* global campaign is a call to continue to share the journey with migrants, especially at this most difficult moment. The campaign formally ends, but the mission continues.

The Holy Father Pope Francis was a source of inspiration for our campaign. He accompanied us at every important step of this journey. He encouraged us to welcome, defend, accompany and integrate migrants.

Caritas Internationalis heeded this call, and today we can say that we have fulfilled it. And I say again that even if the campaign comes to a close, our mission towards the people on the move, that is the refugees and migrants will continue. We invite all people of good will to live this mission.

[00833-EN.01] [Original text: English]

Intervento del Sig. Aloysius John

In 2017 *Caritas Internationalis* launched the “Share the Journey” campaign with the key objective of living out the moral imperative to welcome and give hospitality to migrants and refugees who are fleeing injustices, sufferings, violence and poverty in search of a dignified life.

During these four years of the campaign, *Caritas Internationalis* relentlessly undertook different challenges to manifest its determination not only to welcome and give hospitality to the migrants, but also to motivate and mobilise the public to undertake various actions of solidarity so that they too could live out this moral obligation.

In different countries a range of activities were undertaken to sensitize the public on the difficult and dangerous journey that the migrants take, leaving behind their beloved ones and leaping into the unknown on often dangerous journeys where most of them experience distress and difficulties. Indeed, hundreds of them have died along this perilous journey.

The confederation undertook these activities to share the message that migration is an opportunity to open our arms to receive the stranger, to share what we have with these strangers in order to live in communion, and, above all, to symbolically walk with the migrants, showing the confederation’s solidarity with them.

During the 2018 regional conference in New Zealand, there was a “Share the Journey walk”. One migrant said, “You cannot imagine how I feel a sense of belonging to the human community; how I feel that we are brothers and sisters of one human family”. Since then, members of *Caritas Internationalis* all over the world have undertaken symbolic solidarity walks. They have covered around 600,000 kilometres while walking with migrants – the equivalent of making a round the world trip 15 times over.

The “Share the Journey” campaign aimed to change hearts and plant seeds of awareness and openness towards the other. In these four years we have witnessed so many people reaching out to migrants, opening their arms and hearts. And who knows how many other similar cases of “conversion” have taken place all over the world thanks to our global campaign? This should encourage all of us to continue along this journey, putting into practice in our daily lives the culture of encounter to which we are constantly called by Pope Francis.

Over the course of these four years, Caritas motivated its members to encounter migrants and promote a culture of solidarity by “welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating” our most vulnerable brothers and sisters. Member organisations in different countries have courageously faced the odds to bring support to migrants and refugees, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, by enabling them to access food, basic needs, clothing, and, above all, health care. Children of migrants were also given special care and support in different parts of the world.

The migrants’ centre in Lebanon supported migrant workers who were imprisoned in the country, unable to go back to their homelands due to the travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and still facing the effects of the aftermath of the chemical explosion, of which their employers were also victims.

Caritas Jordan continued to help Syrian migrants and refugees with food and medical aid.

Caritas Bangladesh helped thousands of Rohingya refugees seeking safety in Bangladesh.

By welcoming, supporting and accompanying migrants, Caritas member organisations bring to evidence how migration offers us an opportunity to overcome our fears and how, through this encounter, we can allow ourselves to be enriched by the diversity of each person’s gifts.

The end of the “Share the Journey” campaign is a moment for the confederation to express its conviction that Caritas will continue to welcome and journey with migrants. As the Holy Father says in the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, “We are called to dream together, fearlessly, as a single human family, as companions on the same journey, as sons and daughters of the same earth that is our common home, sisters and brothers all.” (cf. *Fratelli Tutti*, 8) Caritas will continue this journey with migrants in the same spirit.

At a time when wall-building and discriminatory politics are being utilised to dissuade or prevent the entry of migrants, at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to evidence the need for solidarity, and in line with the teachings of the Holy Father, Caritas member organisations will work to transform borders into privileged places of encounter, where the miracle of an ever wider “we” can come about. Caritas will build bridges of love and care to facilitate the integration of migrants and ensure their well-being and dignity. Where there is indifference and intolerance towards migrants, Caritas will stand by them to express the love and concern of the Mother Church.

Caritas Internationalis considers this the right moment to affirm its “commitment to make no distinction between natives and foreigners, between residents and guests, since it is a matter of a treasure we hold in common, from whose care and benefits no one should be excluded.”

Finally, we would like to invite all of you to visit *Caritas Internationalis* website and join our initiative by lighting a virtual candle of hope and sharing a message in solidarity with millions of forcibly displaced from their homes worldwide. After the closure of Share the Journey on 20th June 2021, we will collect all messages received until then to create a booklet that will be offered to the Holy Father.

[00834-EN.01] [Original text: English]

Intervento del Rev.do Mons. Bruno-Marie Duffé

1. Migrants are not primarily migrants but people, with a history, a memory, a land and an inalienable dignity.

- Each of them has a journey, an intimate pain that haunts them and each of them has a hope: to be considered as a person, to be called by name, to be welcomed and recognised.

- We must therefore talk about people in migration who ask us to share their path and to share the land and the world that we have in common with them.

2. The four verbs that Pope Francis has used on more than one occasion in relation to our solidarity with people on the move commit us to go on a moral, social, political, juridical and spiritual journey with them.

- Welcome: which means opening the door and one’s views

- Protect: which means taking care

- Promote: which means encouraging

- Integrate: which means living together

These four verbs define the four concentric circles of urgency: opening the door and sharing the bread; caring for and supporting human rights; making it possible for people to fully express themselves through their skills and talents; integrating, that is, sharing in the same hope.

3. The dignity of the human person, a major principle of Catholic Social Teaching, gives meaning and moral translation to the human rights of all people: men, women, children, minors and the elderly.

Pope Francis also used three Spanish words:

- *Techo*: a roof, a shelter, a protection, a sign of trust

- *Tierra*: a land, a community, a place to live in and hope for

- *Trabajo*: a job, an activity to partake in the construction of the common world and the common good

4. We understand that any programme of action, any mission with and for people with an experience of migration, calls for action on the causes of migration: the violence of war and power conflicts, poverty, inequality, corruption, trafficking, abuse, political negligence.

Working on the causes of migration means agreeing to work with the countries from which the migrants come. It means venturing to support programmes of integral human development, including care for Earth, the environment, water and biodiversity.

For there is a primary right to be welcomed, but there is also a right to return to one's land - the land of one's ancestors and community - to live there in peace.

Jesus said: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35). This word is spoken today for us to live it out.

[00839-EN.01] [Original text: English]

Intervento di Sr. Maria de Lurdes Lodi Rissini

South Africa is a destination for many migrants and refugees from all over the Africa Continent and the world. For example, we welcome migrants from Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia, Angola, Malawi, Eswatini etc. South Africa has thousands of asylum seekers and refugees, mostly from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Somalia. Historically migrants from the countries of Southern Africa have been coming in and out of South Africa for job opportunities, studies or medical reasons. Some migrants enter the country for one of the mentioned reasons but choose to stay. The Country is also struggling with thousands of undocumented and stateless people.

According to Statistics, South Africa report (2019:146) "inequality in the South African labour market remains very high and has increased in the recent past..." The majority of migrants and Refugees in South Africa work in the informal sector and experience enormous challenges to support themselves and their families. This is a thorny issue that translates into xenophobic/afrophobic attacks, the citizens bemoaning that migrants are taking their jobs.

Caritas South Africa has taken the message of Pope Francis of "share the journey campaign" to heart in our service to Migrants and refugees. The liaison Bishop for Migrants and Refugees within the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC) has issued statements and preached on the importance of 'welcome and hospitality.' Caritas South Africa in Aliwal North is advocating for undocumented children to be allowed into the education system in South Africa and to be documented. There have been successes in this regard through court cases.

In a place like Rustenburg which is a mining area, Caritas is working as a pivotal role in welcoming the migrants and helping them integrate within society. Caritas assists many women and children who come to the mining town following their husbands from the neighboring countries. Sometimes when the women arrive they find that their husbands are living with other women, or and building another family. This is one of reason they are not sending finances.

Renting a house, or having one, is a big issue especially for migrants and refugee women and their children in any cities of South Africa. Caritas is assisting such families with rent while they are looking for employment. There are initiatives to assist migrants and refugees especially those who come from non-English speaking countries to learn English to enable them to integrate and get better opportunities for their families. Caritas in South Africa is extending their arms to embrace migrants and refugees by engaging with different stakeholders to better their lives and advocate for their human rights.

Caritas South Africa through our President Cardinal Napier OFM is partnering with other religious leaders to curb covid19 pandemic and xenophobic attacks and assisting the victims with shelters, food and other basic needs.

During the hard lockdown in South Africa due to covid-19, many migrants and refugees lost their jobs. As indicated above they work in the informal sector where they sell on the streets, or as domestic helpers. Covid-19 regulations did not permit that they continue working. Caritas South Africa driven by “share the journey campaign” message of welcoming and embracing migrants and refugees sought assistance for them. They were assisted with the basic needs; Covid-19 awareness and precaution, food, clothing, shelter and sanitation. Migrants and refugees, became our priority because our government excluded them when they availed aid to the citizens.

The share of the journey campaign is not ending here. The spirit of the campaign will continue in our Caritas and we with hope are embracing the Migrants and Refugees as testimony of what Jesus said “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Lk 25, 35).

[00838-EN.01] [Original text: English]

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