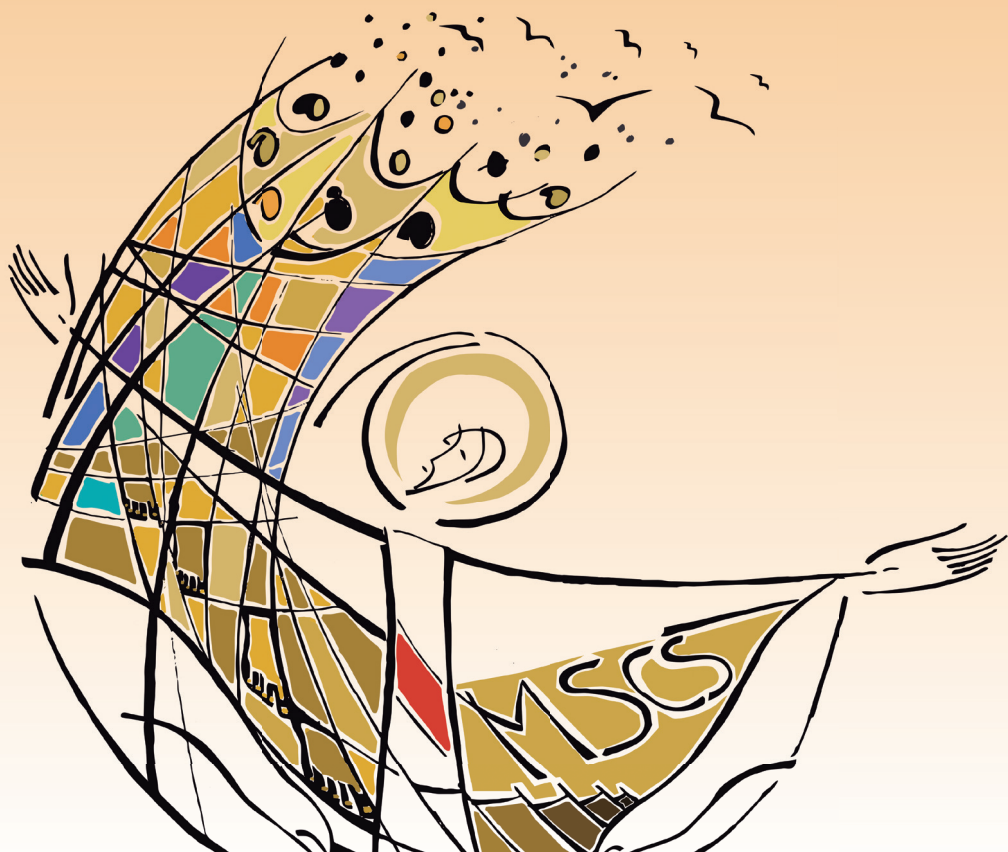


General Guidelines for the Apostolic Mission

Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters



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Author

Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters

Coordination

Sr. Janete Aparecida Ferreira –
Counselor and General Animator
of the Apostolate

Collaboration

Sisters Carolina de França,
Maria do Carmo dos Santos Gonçalves,
Maria Eugenia Vazquez,
Marlene E. Wildner,
Maruja Padre Juan Samaniego

Responsibility

General Superior and Council of
Sexennium 2019 – 2025

Consultancy

Centro Scalabriniano de
Estudos Migratórios – CSEM

Translations

Sr. Marlene E. Wildner and
Carmem Lussi

Revisions

Sergio Junqueira,
Marcia Maria de Oliveira,
Sergio Coutinho, Wilfrido Acuña,
and the Sisters Lice M. Signor,
Giuliana Bosini,
Maruja Padre Juan Samaniego,
Inês Faccioli, Isaura Paviani,
Nyzelle J. Dondé,
Vijaya Stella John Joseph

Layout

Maria Inês Ruivo Andrade

Cover design

Anderson Augusto Souza Pereira

Drawings

Sr. Elda Broilo

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CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF
SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO – SCALABRINIANS
Via Monte del Gallo, 68 – 00165 – Rome, Italy
Tel.: +39 06 393 77 320
Email: apostolatogenerale@scalabriniane.org

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Presentation

“... shall bring to you the wealth of the nations” (Is 60,11).

Celebrating 15 years after the first version of the **General Guidelines of the MSCS Apostolate** was published in 2008, it is with great joy and confidence in the mission we carry out in the Church and in the world of human mobility that I am presenting to you the updated version of the **General Guidelines on the Congregational Apostolic Mission of the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles Borromeo – Scalabrinians**.

This text is the result of the process of interacting, studying, sharing and discerning over a period of more than two years, in which hundreds of MSCS Sisters have collaborated by taking part in seminars and mappings about the Congregation's work with migrants and refugees. The collaboration in the reflection, interpretation of the data collected and identification of the elements contained in this document also took place through virtual meetings organized according to themes and in different idioms, as well as through the reading of texts with specific contributions by many MSCS Sisters and external consultants.

The updating of the Guidelines was coordinated by the General Coordinator of the Apostolate, with the Congregational Support and Reflection Team and with the collaboration of the Centro Scalabriniano de Estudos Migratórios – CSEM, as well as, the contributions and permanent supervision of the General Superior and her Council.

The General Guidelines of the Congregational Apostolic Mission is the result of a text constructed by many hands; it also contemplates the personal and community experience of the Scalabrinian mission, which is translated into service and the sharing of life with migrants and refugees. This text is a systematization of our praxis, with elements collected and reflected upon by the MSCS Sisters present in countries where we work, while maintaining a vision of the future that we aspire to build.

It is, therefore, a guiding document that seeks to motivate, qualify and also strengthen our praxis and our way of being as consecrated women, as Scalabrinian missionaries, as an institution and as a people of faith and action that make themselves *migrants with the migrants*, in

accompaniment, in service, in solidarity and in the attention to life, and life in abundance.

These Guidelines are intended to be an instrument to strengthen our capacity to learn by serving and to serve by loving what we do, to qualify ourselves to act efficiently and effectively where we are sent in mission. At the same time, they seek to strengthen our capacity to recognize and understand the situations in which we live and where we are called to operate. Therefore, much more in our mission, we are able to advance in advocacy of migratory policies, in commitment to the whole society for the human rights and life of migrants and refugees, in all the directions of the missionary action, with amplified possibilities for attention to migrants and refugees, their reception, protection of their human rights and their agency, in the church and in the society.

The General Guidelines of the Congregational Apostolic Mission are an incentive for our mission as Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, so that the discernment, planning, execution and evaluation may be processes of valorization of the experience as laboratory of human, spiritual and professional experiences which teach and develop knowledge and purposes, that when accepted, systemized and integrated to our being and working, strengthen our actions with migrants and refugees, in the different ambits of life and acting contexts.

It is my invitation to you to get to know the richness of the contents of this document, through study and deep reflection, and to integrate it in our activities, so that each Sister and community can adopt it effectively as a reference to the responses we are called upon to give in the face of local, regional, national and international needs, in our commitment to be a prophetic and supportive presence in the world of human mobility.

Rooted in Jesus Christ, we entrust to the Founder, St. John Baptist Scalabrini, and to the co-Founders, Blessed Assunta Marchetti and Venerable Father Joseph Marchetti, the Guidelines for our Apostolic Mission, accepting them as instruments that can provide a new impulse to our apostolic vitality in creative fidelity to the Scalabrinian charism.

Sr. Neusa de Fátima Mariano, mscs
General Superior

Rome, April 09, 2023

Easter of the Lord's Resurrection!

Historical overview of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo, Scalabrinians

1 “Our Congregation’s origin rises from the specific pastoral action that Scalabrini undertook on behalf of migrants and personally committed himself to it by gathering helpers and protagonists of his work”¹.

In his socio-pastoral action in favor of migrants, Scalabrini observed that the mission he had begun should be completed through the pastoral action of a female congregation.

After several attempts to respond to this pastoral demand, Scalabrini founded the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo, Scalabrinians.

The foundation took place on October 25, 1895, with the admission to religious profession, the giving of the crucifix and the sending of the first four missionaries: Carolina Marchetti, Assunta Marchetti, Angela Larini and Maria Franceschini. They were prepared, gathered and presented to Scalabrini by Father Joseph Marchetti, a Scalabrinian missionary, co-founder of the Congregation, who contributed a lot to sustain the Scalabrinian missionary spirit of generosity of the first members of the new female congregation.

The orphanage Cristóvão Colombo - Ipiranga, in São Paulo - Brazil, was the first community of the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles Borromeo, Scalabrinians, and the orphans there were the first beneficiaries of their mission.

1. CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles Borromeo-Scalabrinians (MSCS) – Congregational Historical Summary, p. 101.

The beginning of the Congregation was accompanied by successive difficulties, but it was a period rich in fruits of holiness and in the affirmation of the congregational identity. Thanks to the charismatic fidelity of the co-founder, Mother Assunta Marchetti, the sister of Father Joseph Marchetti, the identity of the Congregation was affirmed in the Church. The declaration of Pius XI on January 13, 1934, approving the new constitutions *ad experimentum* for seven years, legitimized the Congregation as a Religious Institute of Pontifical Right. After the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the constitutions were renewed, entered into force *ad experimentum* at Christmas of 1971 and were approved on Scalabrin's Day, June 1st, 1985.

2 A period of flowering of vocations and expansion of the Congregation followed. In 1936 the Congregation, with four pioneers, settled in Piacenza, Italy. In 1941 another four missionaries from Brazil began their mission in the United States. The Generalate was located in Brazil until 1960, when it moved from Brazil to Italy, firstly in Acilia, in the outskirts of Rome, and since 1982 in central Rome, where it is located now.

The charism reinterpretation made on the occasion of the special General Chapter in 1969-1971, especially the option for a pastoral service to migrants of all nationalities, promoted a greater internationalization of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo, Scalabrinians.

Currently the Congregation is made up of three provinces: Province of San Giuseppe, based in Piacenza, Italy, covering the presence in Europe; Province of Our Lady of Fatima, based in Melrose Park, IL, USA, with presence in Central America, the Caribbean and North America; Province Maria, Mãe dos Migrantes, based in São Paulo, SP, Brazil, which integrates the presences of South America and Africa; and a Delegation in Asia, based in Manila, Philippines.

3 The Congregation, faithful to the mission entrusted to it by the Church, has as its own goal the evangelical-missionary service to migrants, preferably the poorest and most vulnerable². The spirit that animates the Congregation is that of Pentecost that gathers us all in unity and makes

2. Constitutional Norms – CN, n. 5.

visible the Scalabrinian missionary vocation in the recognition and love of Christ in the person of migrants.

The initial formation of the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters includes the following stages: Aspirancy, Postulancy, Novitiate, and Juniorate. It takes place in different countries and seeks to offer a process of vocational discernment to young women in view of their definitive option for Jesus Christ on pilgrimage, and their missionary insertion among migrants and refugees, so that they can grow in the universality of the charism. The Juniors live in community, assuming the commitments of fraternal and missionary life, and dedicate themselves to academic studies, contemplating the various areas of missionary activity of the Congregation. In the 5th year of the Juniorate, the young sisters join the Congregational Juniorate Project in Acilia, Rome (Italy) for an intensive year of training and accompaniment in preparation for perpetual profession of their religious vows.

THE APOSTOLIC MISSION

4 The apostolic mission of the Congregation is expressed in its evangelical and missionary service to the migrants, with different faces and in different situations of migration, seeking to respond to the challenges of the new migrations, in articulated actions oriented to the person of migrant, in all his or her dimensions, and includes training, awareness, and advocacy services to promote in the Church and in society the interculturality that favors life with dignity for all, without discrimination.

In the countries where the Congregation is present, the field of action is vast: pastoral service in the different realities and ecclesial structures, shelters and centers for the reception and promotion of migrants and refugees, psychosocial assistance centers and alternative health care, schools, hospitals, collaboration with related organizations in service and advocacy networks, and the presence in the coordination of Pastoral Care of People on the Move in Bishops' Conferences, Archdioceses, Dioceses, Caritas, Parishes, and Universities. The MSCS Sisters also network with governmental and non-governmental organizations, international bodies, and other entities that are co-responsible for human mobility concerns.

5 The Congregation, considering the present situation of the migration and refugee world, has focused on a process of re-organization within the Institute towards a more integrated action in caring for the faith and in the defense of the rights of migrants and refugees. Therefore, the presence of the Congregation in the specific service has been growing in the quality of the services rendered, as well as in the number of Sisters involved and committed to the cause of migrants and refugees.

The great effort to redesign works, services, activities, and presences has brought to fruition the enthusiasm and commitment of the sisters with greater creativity and fidelity to the charism, responding to the challenges and opportunities of human mobility, according to the country, culture, and categories of migration, aiming to build an intercultural society³.

Since 2018, the Congregation has been developing a specific project of temporary presence with migrants and refugees in emergency situations, called Itinerant Service. Through this specific program, the Congregation has been contributing to help migrants and refugees, especially women and children, in emergency situations and in vulnerable conditions, to ensure that their dignity is respected, basic needs are met, and that they have access to opportunities for human promotion.

6 Since late 1980, the Congregation of the MSCS Sisters has had the Scalabrinian Center for Migration Studies (CSEM)⁴, which operates in partnership with universities and other civil society organizations, promoting seminars, research, studies and conferences focusing on the protagonism of the migrant, the promotion of human rights and valuing the opportunity that human mobility represents, concretely for the societies involved and for humanity in general. CSEM is based in Brasília, DF (Brazil).

The Center's mission is to foment, produce, and disseminate scientific and interdisciplinary knowledge about migration and forced displacement and related processes, in a perspective of respect and prophetic promotion of human dignity and the protagonism of migrants

3. Regulations of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles Borromeo -Scalabrinians, n. 79.

4. See www.csem.org.br.

and refugees, towards a more just world, where no one is a foreigner. The main publications are the *Revista Interdisciplinar da Mobilidade humana* (REMHU), and the books series: Migrações, Caminhos, Memórias e Ecumene, the latter of which aims to promote and disseminate studies on theology and human mobility, in its different aspects.

7 The Scalabrinian Foundation, an institution that establishes alliances and networks of cooperation with national and international institutions and organizations, representing the Congregation for the promotion of political and social impact in favor of the rights of migrants and refugees, is one of many other instruments available to the Congregation of the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, which favors the fulfilment of its mission with and for migrants and refugees. The Scalabrinian Foundation represents the MSCS Congregation before civil society, cooperating with a qualified contribution of attention and services to migrants and refugees and valuing the positive dimension of migration and its contribution to the construction of an inclusive and universal society.

The Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, within their areas of ministry, are committed to deepening the spiritual, biblical, social, cultural, and methodology aspects of the missionary attention to the world of human mobility through specific training courses, seminars, consultancies, and training meetings promoted by the human mobility pastoral ministry itself, through Church organizations in which they participate.

Through the articulation, synergy, and coordination with other pastoral ministries of the local Church, the sisters seek new strategies and modalities of training and sensitization in view of welcoming, solidarity, and integration of the migrants with the church community and with the societies involved with the dynamics of human mobility.

8 In carrying out their mission, the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters are supported by the Scalabrinian Lay Missionary Movement, who are accompanied by the MSCS Sisters in the various areas, with the task of caring for their life witnessing and faithfulness to the Scalabrinian charism, and encouraging them to effectively respond to the call to use the gifts they have received for their mission with migrants and refugees from their secular state, from their place of work, from the Church community, and in civil society.

Motivated by the desire to live our religious consecration in an ecological and synodal perspective, certain that the joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of those who encounter Jesus (Rejoice, 1), we feel challenged to revitalize the spiritual and missionary fecundity of the Congregation, starting from the joy of the call to be missionary disciples of Jesus, and bearing witness:

- *The joy of following Jesus Christ;*
- *the joy of prophetizing;*
- *the joy of walking with migrants and refugees;*
- *the joy of life sharing.*

*Pope Francis invites us to be realistic, without losing joy and audacity, because the challenges are there to be overcome
(The Joy of the Gospel, 109).*

*Animated, therefore, by evangelical hope and missionary fervor,
/.../ With joy, anchored in Christ,
we embrace the future with hope.⁵*



5. CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF SAINT CHARLES BOR-
ROMEO – SCALABRINIANS. Rome, 06.01.2020. Final Document. XIV General
Chapter.



Elements of the Human Mobility Context

9 Consecrated and missionary, the MSCS Sisters maintain “creative fidelity” to the charism as they prophetically carry on their service with migrants and refugees, always remaining vigilant and attentive to scrutinize the horizons of life and of the current moment¹. Therefore, in updating the guidelines for the missionary work of the Congregation, it is necessary to observe and analyze the main challenges of the current international context and identify their implications for the phenomenon of human mobility and the ways and modalities of action of the Congregation.

Therefore, following are some characteristic of the conjuncture about human mobility. The critical look at the phenomena of human mobility identifies elements determinant to interact, interpret, and serve in this context, with privileged attention to the people involved and the relevance of these processes for men and women, children, teenagers and families who migrate.

10 In the second half of the 20th century, the expression “global village” was first used to indicate a deep change characterizing the contemporary societies: the earth would be turning into a small village, a settlement, because of the evolution of the means of communication - but also of transports - that would allow a shortening of distances, facilitating the interconnection between peoples and cultures. The expression “global village”, the way it was used, suggested the idea of an increasingly harmonious, cohesive, united planet. The reality we are living in is a bit more complex. In fact, despite the diffusion and cheapening of communication and transport technologies, the current conjuncture is characterized by the increasingly capillary diffusion of walls and barriers, and not only in the physical sense. There are non-material and

1. FRANCIS. *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Lætitia* - AL, 2016.

symbolic walls purposefully built to separate, exclude, and disconnect human beings, feeding discriminations and violations of rights.

Legislation, public policies, practices and discourses marked by xenophobia and aporophobia (hatred against the poor) multiply. The spread of populist and nationalistic tendencies leads to vane sacralization of culture itself. It is disheartening to see how, after the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) and the end of Apartheid (1991), new forms of segregation and exclusion are being reborn all over the world.

The construction of walls and barriers is a sign and at the same time a tool to foster hostility towards certain human groups because of their nationality, social class, religious or political belief, sex, gender identity, ethnicity or skin color. In this way, “political existence” and “social inclusion” are often denied, as if some people are less human than others. The notion of the human race as a family - the “human family” of the Social Teaching of the Church - is lost. Fraternity (*fraternité*) disappears. The other/poor person is not seen as a brother or sister, but as an inferior being, a less human being, a threat, an enemy. Discourses of hate and rancor are spread. There is no “global village”.

11 The proliferation of walls is tangible in the context of human mobility. More and more countries have built or are building material and non-material barriers in order to restrict or complicate the movement of human beings, including all those fleeing conflict, persecution, and threats to life caused by environmental disasters. There are walls before the borders, in neighboring countries, to prevent the approach of migrants and refugees²; walls at the borders, which have been built by increasingly security-oriented, militarized and selective policies; and walls after the borders, within the countries of arrival or transit, mainly by spreading laws, formalities and stigmas that aim to make it difficult for newcomers to stay, pass through or integrate as citizens.

The walls and fences are selective, being porous for some and reinforced for others. There is a selection determined simply by the country of origin; sometimes by ethnicity, culture, religion, or dominant phenotype in the country of origin. The “undesirability” of part of the world’s population on the move impacts profoundly on the vulnerability of migrant and

2. Phenomenon known as “outsourcing of borders”.

refugee people. “No one will ever openly deny that they are human beings, yet in practice, by our decisions and the way we treat them, we can show that we consider them less worthy, less important, less human”³.

MAIN MOVEMENTS

12 The multiplication of walls is inserted in a migratory scenario in which the number of people induced to leave or flee their own lands is increasingly high. Armed conflicts, generalized human rights violations, persecution, discrimination, climate events, environmental disasters, corrupt and authoritarian political regimes, large-scale expulsions of workers from the rural areas, economic and financial crises, are just a few examples of events that induce human beings to resort to geographical mobility as a strategy to ensure survival, rebuild their own lives and those of their families. It is evident that these forced displacements, depending on the cases, can have very serious consequences in psychophysical terms, especially when the subjects experience violations, humiliation, and mourning, both in the places of origin and in those of transit, and in some cases even in those of arrival.

In addition, it is extremely worrying that more than 400 cities around the world, with a total population of 1.5 billion people, are at extreme risk of being affected by pollution, lack of water, climate change and natural disasters⁴. By the year 2050, it is estimated that a quarter of the world's population will be refugees, which means around 2 to 3 billion people. The planet is approaching an alarming future, as in Southeast Asia, in the Pacific, in the Caribbean or in Africa, people flee from floods or drought, from extreme cold or heat.

In this sphere it is also necessary to highlight the issue of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation or slave labor, as well as the trafficking of organs and human body parts. It is the clearest example of

3. FRANCIS. *Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti on fraternity and Social Friendship* - FT, 2020, n. 39.

4. ORIA, Inés. (6/02/2022). El cambio climático obliga a Indonesia a mover su capital. Available at: <https://www.eleconomista.es/actualidad/noticias/11601084/01/22/El-cambio-climatico-obliga-a-Indonesia-a-mover-su-capital.html>.

the negation of the humanity of the human being, who is reduced to a commodity to be sold and bought for profit.

The MSCS Sisters, because of their Scalabrinian missionary spirit, welcome and place themselves at the service of God's action, so that no one is "discriminated against, but hosted, welcomed, in the Common House (LS 240), in the land of abundance"⁵. The commitment is that of the whole Church, but "the contribution of the political community and of civil society, each according to its own responsibilities, is indispensable"⁶.

13 In Francis' words, "in today's world, many forms of injustice persist, fed by reductive anthropological visions and by a profit-based economic model that does not hesitate to exploit, discard and even kill human beings"⁷. From the perspective of "(in)desirability", the people who are forced to migrate, as paradoxical as it may seem, are those who encounter more resistance to entering other countries, especially those who fit the UNHCR definition as having the right and vital need for shelter and protection. This is because they have a set of rights that the signatory states of the Geneva Convention must respect, unlike other types of migrants.

Border externalization policies aim precisely at preventing the approach of people who are protected by international protection instruments and who cannot be returned to their countries of origin (the so-called right of *non-refoulement*). Therefore, many forced migrants end up going to neighboring countries, usually developing countries. The Syrian case is symptomatic: most refugees are concentrated in Lebanon and Turkey.

In many situations, people move within the borders of their own country because of the impossibility of accessing another country without increasing the risks they face, greatly diminishing the effective possibilities of finding protection and opportunities for a better life.

5. BAGGIO, Marileida. Hospitalidade. Caminho da pastoral dos migrantes e refugiados. In: LUSSI, Carmem; KUZMA, Cesar (Orgs.). *Hospitalidade, comunidade cristã e mobilidade humana*. Brasília: CSEM; Bogotá: CLAR, 2021, p. 139.

6. DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. *Bollettino*. 24.03.2022. *Guidelines on intercultural pastoral care for migrants*.

7. FRANCIS. FT, n. 22.

14 Much of the displacement today extends mainly in a South-South direction, from developing countries to other developing countries. Migrants and refugees often join local populations in situations of vulnerability. In these cases, the reception capacity is usually quite limited due to the weakness of the welfare state in the host countries. Still, there are many examples of solidarity hospitality by local populations. Another major flow is in the direction of more economically developed countries (South-North).

Despite the xenophobic rhetoric, there is no invasion and the receiving countries, in most cases, would not have serious difficulties in providing a dignified welcome to migrants and refugees, even in situations of serious challenges such as pandemic situations or environmental crises. In these cases, the political unwillingness to welcome or provide a dignified welcome is determinant, despite the resources that human mobility is able to mobilize, including through remittances that impact the development of the countries that receive them.

The displacements in border areas should also be mentioned. In a context marked by restrictive and security-oriented migratory legislation and policies, the “borders” have become spaces of attentiveness, immobility, negotiation, resistance, and struggle. The militarization of many borders is accompanied by an increase in violence, which is perpetrated even by mafia groups, drug traffickers, and narcotics traffickers; often induced by migration bureaucracies.

Even taking into account the peculiarity of each situation and each flow, as well as its temporality, it is important to underline the importance of the governance policies for these displacements, which are not always given priority and are not always placed in the perspective of promoting the rights of people on mobility. The selectivity of migratory legislation and policies induces many migrants and asylum seekers to choose dangerous routes and seek the assistance of sometimes unscrupulous smugglers. The consequences are very serious in terms of loss of life and rights violations for many migrants, with important psychic sufferings, which require priority and qualified attention.

15 The so-called migration corridors are also important to mention. This expression is used to underline the flows of people, but also of goods, skills, knowledge, between countries. According to the Global Eco-

conomic Forum (2020), the main corridor is the one that brings Mexicans and other nationalities from Latin American countries, including also people from other continents to the US, followed by the corridor of Syrians to Turkey and Indians to the USA (and also the US). Although smaller, it is also worth mentioning the corridors of Filipinos to the USA, Poles to Germany, Algerians to France, and Venezuelans to Colombia (and also Peru).

Another phenomenon that cannot be overlooked is that of internal displacement⁸. These are mobilizations that occur within a country, mainly due to climatic events, war conflicts, human rights violations, or even development projects, especially the construction of hydroelectric dams⁹. Because they do not leave their countries, these displaced people remain legally under the protection of their states.

These corridors and internal displacements are characterized by the fact that they can arise abruptly, especially due to environmental disasters. These, such as droughts, floods, or storms, can generate internal or international flows, especially in countries with little economic capacity for prevention and response. Many African, Asian, and Caribbean countries have suffered from such disasters in recent decades.

16 The persistence of wars, with the consequent multiplication in the number of people seeking refuge, has shown the world the importance of humanitarian corridors as well, to protect and strengthen protection strategies for those who move to protect their lives. The lack of development opportunities for the countries and populations in the south of the world, as well as the exploitation of natural resources in these countries by only a few, among other factors, place entire populations in extreme poverty who, without many options, seek in international migration, sometimes irregular, ways to survive in desperate and dangerous attempts that can lead to death.

This situation becomes more complex in cases of crisis, such as the pandemic that has hit the planet since 2020. In such situations, the im-

8. Cf. DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT - Section Migrants and Refugees. *The pastoral guidelines on internally displaced persons, 2020.*

9. The so-called "hit by dams".

pacts on mobility are many, mainly due to the closing of borders, restrictions on mobility, and especially the slow or interruptions in the bureaucratic procedures of refugee and migration regularization requests. Many people who are on the move in crisis situations are prevented from returning to their homeland or even from leaving the country in which they were residing.

The pandemic of Covid-19 also seems to have brought another argument in favor of securitarian policies of closing borders and criminalizing the migration of unwanted people: the phobia of the foreign migrant considered a vector of a foreign disease (2020), which adds to previous phobias focused on terrorism (2001), the financial crisis (2008), the alleged invasion of unaccompanied children (2014) and teenagers, as well as caravans at the southern USA border (2018) and refugees in the Mediterranean (2015). Everything indicates that in the coming years this “health” argument will be widely used to legitimize restrictive policies to contain mobility, especially in the large flows from South to North, like the flows through the Mediterranean or those in Central America to the North.

OLD AND NEW FORMS OF MOBILITY

17 Another aspect to be emphasized is that human mobility assumes different configurations in time and space. In some migration corridors, the displacement consists of four stages: leaving or fleeing the country of origin, passing through the transit country(ies), arriving and staying in the country of destination, and sometimes returning to the land of origin. In other cases, displacement is configured as a sequence of mobilities and immobilities, without a long-lasting stay in a given territory.

The person on the move does not aim at a mere change of residence, but at the constant search for new opportunities through further movements. In the latter case, the subject usually has little interest in integration in the territory, due to the temporariness of the stay. In some border contexts there is also a forced immobility, due to closed borders and migratory bureaucracies. There are also the migrants who “did not migrate”. They are the second and third generations of migrants who, even though

they were born in the country where they reside, live the challenges of “double belonging” and the stigma of not being authentically autochthonous, without actually belonging to the countries of origin of their family.

18 A final highlight is for some human groups that, for different reasons, face more vulnerabilities in migratory journeys: children and teenagers, especially unaccompanied ones, for being people in development; women, for the macho and patriarchal contexts they must face; LGBTQIA+ people, for the homophobic violence they suffer; people involved in human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation or slave labor; people with disabilities and sick people, among others. Paradoxically, all this is happening at an international conjuncture in which numerous countries, both developed and developing, are experiencing a strong drop in birth rates and an increasing aging population: this requires the “importation” of foreign workers, who are at the same time necessary and unwanted.

Although not all migrants move specifically for economic reasons, almost all migrants of working age must deal with involvement in the labor market. Despite the fact that the legislation of many countries recognizes, on paper, the equality of labor rights between foreigners and nationals, there is often a greater vulnerability of the former, which is accentuated when the migratory condition is intersecting with issues of gender, ethnicity, or religion. As Francis broadly teaches, the “civilization of love” and the “culture of care” include all categories of people, considering migrants and refugees as a paradox of the attention reserved to every human being¹⁰.

19 In many countries, labor exploitation is very common, and sometimes the reduction of these workers to situations analogous to slavery, especially when the stay permit of the person is linked to work or when, because they are irregular, the workers are, in fact, “deportable”. In this case there is a perverse link between the rigidity of migration policies and the flexibility of labor policies, which leads to informality for millions of newly arrived workers.

10. FRANCIS. *Encyclical Letter Laudato si' on care for our common home*, LS - 2015, n. 231.

Furthermore, migrants are usually involved in the jobs that are most rejected by the local population, jobs that are generally poorly paid, unhealthy, dangerous, and exhausting. So-called underemployment is also very common, namely jobs that require less professional training than that possessed by the migrant worker.

It should also be noted that many migrants, especially women, are involved in domestic work, including taking care of the elderly or children. This work is often characterized by invisibility, precariousness, loss of privacy, violations, humiliation, and other forms of denial of rights. Therefore, the potential of migrant entrepreneurialism, which can contribute to the growth and reproduction of the economies of the countries of arrival, is also lost.

Apparently, the policies that make regularization difficult and that erect walls, rather than reducing or limiting immigration, aim to impose a subordinate insertion, with the reduction of the rights of the people who enter. The irregular worker is a deportable worker, without rights.

MIGRANT FAMILIES

20 An element that must be focused on is the issue of family. Many migratory projects are family projects. One or more people are chosen to migrate on behalf of and for the family group, sometimes an extended family. There are a number of challenging situations that arise from this. In this context, it is also important to mention the family members of migrants who, even though they remain in their countries, live with the absence and sometimes the loss of the people who migrated. Generally, the people chosen for migration are those who are most likely to enter, stay, work, and send remittances. They tend to be healthy people, but not necessarily adult men or women.

In recent years, the migration of women and unaccompanied children and teenagers has increased. In the former case due to easier entry and stay in the foreign country, since border authorities are usually more careful with minors, and in the latter case due to the so-called feminization of work: the demand for domestic care work has grown significantly, and not only in the most economically developed countries. In fact, certain

stereotypes still identify this type of work with women, including ethnic stereotypes.

The emigration of family members leads to the formation of so-called transnational families, made up of members who live in different countries but who manage to maintain relationships through remittances, communication technologies, and periodic travel.

21 Noteworthy is the situation of many mothers who migrate with a family project, that is, to guarantee a more dignified future for their own children. These women often work taking care of the children of other women in the country of arrival, while they entrust the care of their own children to relatives or other women in the country of origin. This demonstrates how the process of emancipation of women in the country of arrival many times takes place by exploiting other women and not by overcoming patriarchal and sexist stereotypes and discrimination. At the same time, it is worth pointing out how the need to support their families, along with the responsibilities they carry for the sake of their loved ones, leads many of these mothers to accept and tolerate degrading working conditions and not infrequently also abuse.

A further challenge is the strong growth of interethnic marriages and mixed marriages, where people from different countries come together. These relationships reproduce, at the family level, the challenges present in multicultural and interethnic societies, becoming almost laboratories for the construction of new models of societies. There are numerous challenges, especially related to children and their formation.

Finally, it should also be recalled that one of the main forms of regular migration is family reunification. However, it is a right that still meets with resistance, since reunification implies the stability of the migrant's presence, which clashes with the idea of the temporary migrant to be used, exploited, and returned. There is also legitimate debate related to the type of family that would be entitled to enjoy reunification.

MULTI AND INTERCULTURAL SOCIETIES

22 Despite walls and barriers, the contemporaneous conjuncture is characterized by cultural and religious pluralism, not only because

of migratory displacements, but principally because of the globalization process and the planetary circulation of ethnic commodities. The clashes between old and new, tradition and innovation, conservation and change, local and universal challenge almost all societies, even generating intergenerational conflicts. In this increasingly multicultural conjuncture, extremist tendencies are emerging towards the sacralization of local traditions and cultures or, in the opposite direction, toward a radical denial of the memory of history.

The capillary presence of migrants coming from places with different cultures, traditions, and religions becomes a challenge. Sometimes the “foreigner” is strange because he or she is different or incomprehensible. Cultural differences are sometimes used ideologically to create scapegoats and feed the demonization of certain social and religious groups. However, there are also undoubtedly different interpretations of social and collective life that call into question the identity and cohesion of certain cultures, which can inevitably generate conflicts. The issue, for example, of the secularity of the State is a much-debated point in certain contexts. Furthermore, the integration process is not and cannot be unilateral, since it involves both the newcomers and the host society, which must also adapt to the new reality, guaranteeing the rights of all residents. In other terms, integration implies opening up spaces of citizenship, participation, and mentality, together with the recognition of the rights of alterity.

23 Finally, it is worth mentioning the situation of the second generations in their complex identity paths between the cultural universe of their parents and that of the receiving society. For them, participation in the educational sphere, such as schools and universities, represents a privileged space both in terms of integration into the host society and in terms of opening up opportunities for the world of work. Even so, in many places there is still strong discrimination, failure, and school dropout, as well as the option for less demanding school paths due to the need for quick insertion in the labor market.

The challenge is the promotion of public policies, especially with regard to the training of teachers from an intercultural perspective and to overcoming systemic racism, including in textbooks. Pope Francis in-

dicts the culture of indifference and calls for a “sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women upon which all civil society is founded”¹¹.

Through its cultural and linguistic contribution, its diversity of formation and values, migrants and refugees enrich the societies in which they enter, promoting interculture as a transversal characteristic in all contexts.

24 The criminalization of solidarity is one of the perverse effects in the processes related to human mobility that is gaining strength in many countries. The refusal of “the inalienable dignity of each human person regardless of origin, race or religion”¹², is reflected not only in hostility toward migrants and refugees, but also toward people and groups in solidarity. It is the so-called “criminalization of solidarity” or “crime of humanity”. People, groups and organizations in solidarity with migrants and refugees are not rarely accused of favoring irregular immigration and even of involvement in human trafficking¹³.

In other words, solidarity action today must deal not only with the challenges of emergencies, with the increase of people in need and the complexity of the responses, but also with the hostility of segments of the host population and often of the government officials themselves. Still, it is necessary to emphasize the signs of hope.

The organized civil society has shown in many places and circumstances its commitment in promoting the inalienable dignity of every human being: from emergency solidarity actions to more structured forms of support and advocacy, through actions of denouncement and awareness projects about the migratory universe. In many cases, civil society’s action, though often silent and invisible, is capillary and effective, fed by numerous volunteers. Other signs of hope and resistance are 1)

11. FRANCIS, LS, n. 25. See also KUZMA, Cesar. Acolher e proteger a fragilidade, promover e integrar na fraternidade. Olhando à migração desde a Encíclica *Fratelli Tutti*. In: LUSI, Carmem; KUZMA, Cesar (Orgs.). *Hospitalidade, comunidade cristã e mobilidade humana*. Brasília: CSEM; Bogotá: CLAR, 2021, p. 201-225.

12. FRANCIS, FT, n. 39.

13. See also MARINUCCI, Roberto. Algumas reflexões sobre desafios das migrações internacionais contemporâneas. In: WILDNER, E. Marlene. (Org.). *Reconstruindo vidas nas fronteiras*. Desafios no atendimento junto a migrantes e refugiados. Brasília: CSEM, 2019, p. 15-34.

the humanitarian corridors created by civil society and religious groups in different countries aimed at safe and regular displacement - there are also other analogous sponsorship experiences in various countries around the world; 2) the sanctuary cities around the planet, in which, contrary to the securitarian approaches of national policies, processes of solidarity and citizen inclusion are fostered; 3) the approval and adoption in many countries of the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (2018). This Pact stimulates the search for regular forms of migration that guarantee both the rights of migrants and the transparency requirements of the receiving societies. These examples demonstrate the vitality of broad sectors of world society for the rights of migrants and refugees.

Pointing out these signs of hope and acting to spread other analogous experiences is very important in order not to fall into hopelessness or a feeling of impotence in the face of the complexity of the migration phenomenon and the dominance of the contemporary hegemonic political and economic system. As Francis says, “we can start from below and, case by case, act at the most concrete and local levels, and then expand to the farthest reaches of our countries and our world, with the same care and concern that the Samaritan showed for each of the wounded man’s injuries”¹⁴.

We can start from below and, case by case, act at the most concrete and local levels, and then expand to the farthest reaches of our countries and our world, with the same care and concern that the Samaritan showed for each of the wounded man’s injuries. Let us seek out others and embrace the world as it is, without fear of pain or a sense of inadequacy, because there we will discover all the goodness that God has planted in human hearts. Difficulties that seem overwhelming are opportunities for growth, not excuses for a glum resignation that can lead only to acquiescence. Yet let us not do this alone, as individuals. The Samaritan discovered an innkeeper who would care for the man; we too are called to unite as a family that is stronger than the sum of small individual members. For “the whole is greater than the part, but it is also greater than the sum of its parts”. Let us renounce the pettiness and resentment of useless in-fighting and constant confrontation. Let us

14. FRANCIS, FT, n. 78.

stop feeling sorry for ourselves and acknowledge our crimes, our apathy, our lies. Reparation and reconciliation will give us new life and set us all free from fear.

AGENCY OF THE PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

25 The main sign of hope is the resistance and resilience of the migrants and refugees themselves. Human mobility, in itself, represents a strategy of those who do not passively and fatally accept the adverse situation in which they live. Another life is possible for them and their families. There is a “promised land” where one can begin again. Nothing is more human, dignified, and responsible than the courage to leave and fight for one’s own life and the lives of family members. The long geographical crossings are often accompanied by deep reconstructions of their own existences, their identities, not rarely after experiencing violence and suffering. In these journeys, each person has a history, an individuality, projects. To be at the service of these projects is the goal of solidarity action. Even when they are collective projects.

The forms of self-organization of migrants and refugees are worth mentioning in this context. The massive protest demonstrations in the USA in 2005, as well as the caravans in Central America and Mexico and the worldwide campaign started in 2019 Towards a Daily and Widespread Civil Resistance to Defend the Rights of Migrant and Non-Migrant People, among other modalities, attest how migrants and refugees can unite in pursuit of common goals. They develop their own strategies of struggle and resistance. Accompanying these collectives and offering the requested support is the priority of the solidarity action encouraged and practiced by the MSCS Sisters in the daily life of the Mission and, in particular, strategically, through the action of the Itinerant Service of MSCS missionary action, especially in refugee camps and in crisis migration situations.

In thinking about migration, one is also thinking about the migrant's co-presence and coexistence in the world.

The migrant is a human being open to the world, a dynamic being that builds and re-signifies itself through movement and in movement.

In other words, the human being is a being for migration, is immanent in him the disposition for mobility and to migrate on local, regional, national, and supranational scales.

These migratory movements that have accompanied the history of humanity were the ones that introduced the first globalizing processes.

Processes in which migration has been and continues to be a constructive practice a constructive practice in various spheres of people's lives, by providing means and mechanisms to learn to deal with otherness, alterity and interculturality. /.../

From this point of view, migrating goes beyond an act, a course, a path, a displacement in time and space.

What we call migratory act constitutes a way of life of the migrant of being-in-the-world and of being within the world, of asserting oneself before the State and the society of installation. /.../

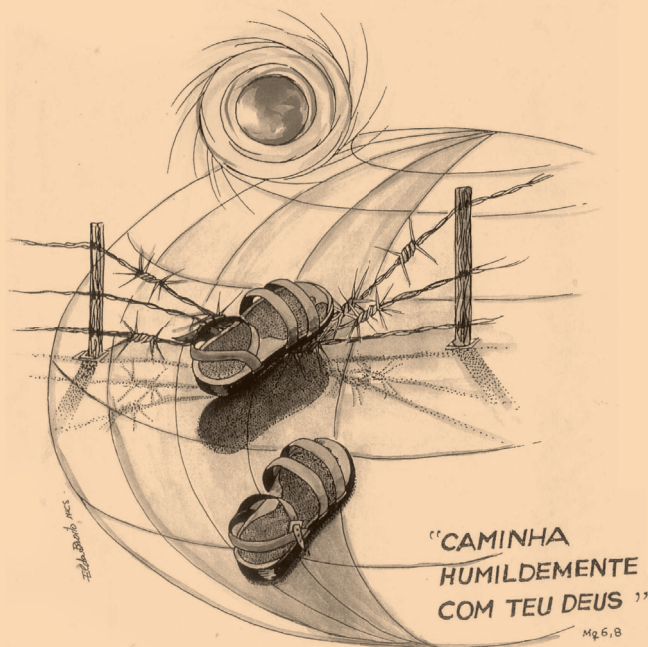
The progressive increase of the agency of migrants obeys in good part to the growing process of globalization of society today.

This fact allows us to deconstruct the stigma of the passive migrant, in a situation of vulnerability, one who tends to accept living in precarious conditions in the countries of settlement. /.../

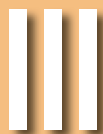
Instead of passivity, we increasingly observe a double relationship of co-presence of the migrant, as he adapts to the social world

*in which he is inserted, he also adapts society to himself,
to his realities, needs, and demands for rights¹⁵.*

(Handerson Joseph. Haitian immigrant in Brazil.
PhD in Social Anthropology)



15. HANDERSON, Joseph. Prólogo. In: Margarita Rosa Gaviria Mejía (Org.). *Migrações e direitos humanos. Problemática socioambiental*. Lajeado: Editora UNIVATES, 2018, p. 9 and 10.



Fundamentals of MSCS Missionary Action

26 Along its more than 125 years of history, the MSCS Congregation has been able to re-define itself in the features that shape its institutional profile, in the characteristics of the spiritual and missionary life of its members, and in the ways through which it carries out its mission. While the world's human mobility is dynamic, with particularities and intensity that constantly modify, the Congregation of the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters continues, led by the Spirit. In this journey, it seeks and adopts practices, makes choices and lives its Scalabrinian spirituality according to the times, to its possibilities and to the concrete situation of its members and the contexts where it is present.

The Congregation, in continuity with the process of deepening and qualifying the living of its charismatic identity and the fulfillment of its mission in the Church and in the world of human mobility, especially within the missionary mandate it receives from the Church, periodically updates its reference documents in which it collects the interpretation, the meanings and the implications of its vocation and mission as Scalabrinian consecrated missionary women. Church documents that awaken and strengthen missionary action in the world of human mobility nourish this commitment.

With the whole Church, the Congregation lives synodality, which re-mits to communion, participation and mission, as a new way of walking together and together reflecting on the path taken. The meaning is to understand, along the way, which processes can help to experience communion, to realize participation and to open up to the mission. Indeed, the journeying together of the MSCS Sisters implements and manifests the nature of the Church as a pilgrim and missionary people of God.

27 During the process of updating the General Guidelines of the MSCS Apostolic Mission, which had been promulgated in 2008, some values were identified that are considered, in the MSCS Congrega-

tion, as primordial and basic values of the MSCS apostolic-missionary activity, for being at the origin and representing the most relevant characteristics in the identity and practice of the women's missionary life lived by the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, namely:

- the **incarnation** that represents the own identity of faith that configures the MSCS life and mission,
- the **welcome** and **itinerancy**, which are the main expressions of the Scalabrinian missionary attitude toward migrants/refugees,
- the **communion in diversity** that places the MSCS Sisters at the heart of the church and makes them capable of being promoters of interculturality in interpersonal relationships and in the society where they live and work, and the
- **political love**¹, which impels them to build the Kingdom of God in the contexts where they live and in society at large.

28 The MSCS Sisters are women committed to building bridges between people and cultures, recognizing the different people and ethnic groups with equal opportunities and freedom of expression, according to their own characteristics. They welcome the amazement at the otherness that life and mission bring, as opportunities and permanent exercise to step out of themselves and move toward the other, as a way of openness and dedication in caring for the other's life.

By living their vocation, MSCS Sisters exercise an open mind, heart, and lifestyle to a "we" that generates in people the experience that nothing human is foreign to them and calls forth dimensions such as responsibility, compassion, and solidarity.

They are constantly in an attitude of voluntary migration in order to understand, serve, and evangelize people on the move. "Where the migrant lives, happy or suffering, there is the space of the sister's fidelity. The real encounter with the migrant is the condition of the charismatic fidelity; always preceded by the Holy Spirit that opens paths of new missions and permanently evaluates the coherence and continuity to the original Scalabrinian charism"².

1. FRANCIS. FT, n. 176-197.

2. CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO – SCALABRINIANS (MSCS). General Government Report on the *Estado*

29 The Scalabrinian Sisters, in their missionary vocation, live the embodiment of Jesus that continues in each person, in the Church and in human history. “The Christ-centered spirituality in the Trinitarian perspective, embodied in the reality of migrants, permeates the life and mission of the Congregation. This experience, lived by the Founder and co-Founders, is based on the incarnation of Jesus Christ who pitched his tent among us”³.

In their life and missionary activity, the sisters are faithful to the Scalabrinian charism as they are open “to the voice of the Spirit, be attentive to the signs of the times, interprets the reality of migration in the eyes of faith, welcomes the new faces of migration and responds to the cries of the migrants.”⁴.

The charism represents a dynamic and historical reality that challenges us to live welcoming and in solidarity, to assume the apostolic exodus by being “migrants with the migrants” and empowers to live and “to witness communion in diversity”⁵. It is the spirit that impels us to adopt a vision of human mobility that values the migrant “as the protagonist of communion among peoples”⁶.

30 In their missionary activity, the MSCS Sisters live the Scalabrinian missionary spirit as a place and expression of communion that welcomes, values and knows how to interact positively with the otherness in the concrete life, transforming daily life into a space for sharing, a place of difference and integration, of relationships that welcome the other in her/his otherness-diversity, making present the experience of Pentecost. In their missionary activity, the MSCS Sisters live in common union in fraternity, reflecting the Trinitarian love⁷.

From this perspective, they embrace and allow themselves to be and to be shaped by the Scalabrinian missionary spirit. Love for the cause of migrants and refugees in vulnerable situations is manifested in generos-

atual da Congregação, sexênio 1989-1995, sent to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Society of Apostolic Life (CIVCSVA), 1995, 1.6, p. 26.

3. CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS, n. 4.

4. CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS, n. 119.

5. CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS, n. 3.

6. CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS, n. 6.

7. CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS, n. 32.

ity of heart, in a welcoming dynamism that becomes visible in gestures of compassion and solidarity⁸.

The missionary spirit experienced by the sisters of the MSCS Congregation is based on relationships, beginning with insertion, sharing, the interaction that comes from listening, learning the language, immersing oneself in the culture, and respecting the many nuances of otherness that human mobility favors and requires. It is an experience that manifests, in this way, the love of God “which manifests itself in Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit”⁹. It is the Spirit, protagonist of the mission, who leads the members and the Congregation to a continuous updating of the charism, from new contexts.

In a perspective of vocational culture, the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, with the whole Church, assume the commitment of being mediators between cultures in order to integrate those who find themselves on the side of the road or are in discernment in building their life project. Bartimaeus is the icon of the person that the community calls to follow Jesus: “Courage, get up, He calls you” (Mk 10,49), who responds by abandoning his securities represented by his mantle and takes the path of discipleship.

INSPIRED AND STRENGTHENED BY THE CHARISMATIC HERITAGE

31 Women of faith and hope in everything they do, the MSCS Sisters follow in the footsteps of the founder John Baptist Scalabrini, of the co-founders Father Joseph Marchetti and Assunta Marchetti, a woman with “the quality of a guide, administrative ability, discernment ability, /.../ a woman with a serene look, determined and balanced attitudes at the same time”¹⁰.

In the spirit of Scalabrini and his co-founders, they understand that when they are welcomed, respected and loved, people on the move and those who, for love of the Gospel, are on the move, they become, even

8. CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS, n. 32 and 116.

9. CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS, n. 111.

10. BONDI, Laura. *Madre Assunta Marchetti. Uma vida missionária*. Brasília: CSEM, 2011, p. 143.

if unconsciously, builders of new consciences and new communities. These become instruments of communion, anticipators of Pentecost, in which differences are harmonized by the spirit and charity becomes authentic in the welcoming acceptance of every person who represents some otherness.

Paraphrasing Scalabrini, starting from a biblical vision of migration and exile, they assume that human mobility is undoubtedly a good “by broadening the concept of motherland beyond the physical and political boundaries, making the whole world man’s motherland”¹¹.

32 In the human mobility, as well as in witnessing as consecrated women who through faith and vocation become migrants with the migrants, hope is intertwined with trust in Divine Providence, becoming an important dimension of the experience of charism and pastoral mission, a value that identifies people and determines the vision adopted in missionary activity.

Following the Scalabrinian heritage, they adopt a vision that recognizes migration and refugee as “always the free instruments of Divine Providence, which presides over human destiny, leading all people, even through great calamities, to their final goal:= the perfection of man on earth and the glory of God in heaven”¹².

For Scalabrini, Jesus went through, “doing good ” (At 10,38) and he had the charity that burned in his heart, animated him and propelled him in his mission. “He clothed himself with our humanity so as to be able to experience intense compassion and be able to suffer in his own person the afflictions, miseries, and sorrows of those he loves so passionately”¹³. Charity must be “is the arbiter and mistress of our heart”¹⁴, the most authentic expression of Christ Incarnate, that shapes the Scalabrinian missionaries identity and vocation, in order to strengthen fi-

11. THE SCALABRINIAN CONGREGATIONS. THE MISSIONARY FATHERS AND BROTHERS OF ST. CHARLES. THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF ST. CHARLES (Orgs.). *Scalabrini. A living voice. Excerpts from his writings - 1987*. I IntraText Edition CT Copyright EuloTech, Scalabrinians, 2007, p. 389.

12. THE SCALABRINIAN CONGREGATIONS. 2007, p. 390.

13. THE SCALABRINIAN CONGREGATIONS. 2007, p. 91.

14. THE SCALABRINIAN CONGREGATIONS. 2007, p. 136.

delity and radicality in following Jesus Christ, witnessing with life and service, in the world of human mobility.

33 With the other communities that nourish and widen the tent of Scalabrinian welcome, they assume the commitment to open themselves to the welcome of the other, so that presence of migrants may be “welcomed and valued, and may be perceived in society as an enrichment for all, an opportunity for growth through mutual integration and intercultural dialogue”¹⁵. They collaborate with the Father’s plan, so that the earth becomes a place of fraternity and sharing. Therefore, in the mission the MSCS Sisters exercise dedication and service, responsibility and tenderness, which passes through “encounter with others in our willingness to share the bread of our lives as baptized and consecrated persons, to open ourselves with humility to dialogue, to wash the feet of pilgrims whose dignity is wounded and offended, taking care of them with the tenderness and determination of Jesus, the Good Samaritan”¹⁶, for in the movement of migration it is God who comes to meet the person. The dignity of every human being is the first characteristic feature of the Church’s teaching on human mobility¹⁷.

As a Scalabrinian family, the MSCS Congregation assumes communion in diversity as a referent of its charismatic identity. “In the diversity of persons and cultures we recognize a reflection of the richness of God who in his continuous creative work manifests his beauty inexhaustibly. He calls us to become instruments of communion, healing the wounds created by rejection, recognizing what unites us and learning the language of the Spirit of Pentecost, a language that everyone understands. The communion we experience among ourselves and with migrants becomes a witness to the universal brotherhood to which we all already belong”¹⁸.

15. Cf. *Traditio Scalabriniana*. Sussidi per l’approfondimento, 33. Giugno 2021, n. 4b.

16. *Traditio scalabriniana*, n. 4d.

17. CAMPESE, Gioacchino. *O Magistério da Igreja e as Migrações*. Subsídio para formação de Leigos – n. 6. Roma: Scalabrini International Migration Institute, 2020, p. 10.

18. *Traditio Scalabriniana*, n. 3c.

INCARNATION

34 In the Bible, God reveals that the human person is a being on the way, a guest on this earth, a migrant by nature. “The land is mine, and you are but aliens who have become my tenants” (Lev 25,23). Protection and defense of migrants in the Bible is found in the historical memory of the ancient people of Israel, having been a migrant people. “You shall not oppress an alien; you well know how it feels to be an alien, since you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt (Ex 23,9).

The recognition of being a migrant people since its genesis constitutes element of the identity of the People of God and, at the same time, an ethical imperative not to repeat with the migrant the same injustices and oppressions to which the children of Israel were subjected when they were outside their homeland. “When an alien resides with you in your land, do not molest him. You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the LORD, am your God” (Lev 19,33-34).

God shows his love for the migrant/refugee and invites God’s people to live this same love through concrete actions, defending human dignity, because God “who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and befriends the alien, feeding and clothing him” (Dt 10,18).

35 Departing from the great commandment of love, Jesus declares: “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt 22,37.39). From this commandment, love for God is only possible and understandable through love for one’s neighbor, because God inhabits the other. This love is demonstrated in a practical way, with concrete facts, actions of love. Love for people is a spiritual force that facilitates the full encounter with God. “Our God in his deepest mystery is not solitude, but a family, for he has within himself fatherhood, sonship and the essence of the family, which is love”¹⁹. Living the mystique of encounter, approaching others and seeking their good, expands the interior of the MSCS sisters to receive God’s gifts for life and mission.

19. FRANCIS. AL, n. 11.

Each time the eyes are opened to recognize the other, the faith to recognize God is more enlightened²⁰. Immersed in an eco-dynamism, the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters live and express the Trinitarian relationship of love and self-giving, where God invites all His people to participate and extend this love to the whole cosmos. “Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of His creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth”²¹.

36 In Matthew’s gospel, the dimension of the incarnation of the Son of God is revealed as a love capable of participation and merciful involvement with the situation of the other. Jesus is moved when he looks at the crowd, he feels compassion for his people and invites each man and woman to share what they have, for he fears they will faint on the way. “My heart is moved with pity for the crowd, for they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, for fear they may collapse on the way.” (Matt 15,32).

Pope Francis, through his eloquent witness to migrants and refugees, invites us to look at the other; to feel compassion, he calls everyone to feel responsible for the suffering of others; a stance of one who knows that “migration will be a determining factor in the world’s future”²².

Recognizing the equal dignity of all human beings and at the same time developing compassionate attitudes is part of being and acting of the MSCS Sisters, in the fundamental experience of living an incarnate faith, as missionary women who continue the presence of God in the midst of their own. Therefore, life and vocation, service and witness are the first and irreplaceable forms of mission²³.

37 The spirituality of the incarnation motivates us to assume the humanity of Jesus Christ who, inserted in the social sphere, comes to make known the Kingdom of God here on earth. A love embodied in

20. Cf. FRANCIS. *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium* - EG, 2013, n. 272.

21. FRANCIS. LS, n. 92.

22. FRANCIS. FT, n. 40.

23. Cf. JOANNES PAULUS II. Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Missio*. On the permanent validity of the Church’s Missionary Mandate – RMi, 1990, n. 42.

the divine-human God. The incarnation is the final revelation of God, the epiphany of his love. In the beginning was the Word (John 1,1). “And the Word became flesh” (Jn 1,14).

This divine-human is what makes the difference, what empowers, motivates and sends in listening, in welcoming and in service to rescue, value and promote the human dignity of the person of the migrant, his life, his history, his legacy, his projects and potentialities “he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross” (Fil 2,6-8). This is the great kenosis that the Son of God made himself to fulfill the will of the Father and that challenges each of the MSCS Sisters, for in this attitude and kenosis they become missionary women who conform themselves to the image of the Son of God.

United in Christ’s mystery of incarnation, the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters fulfill God’s will and carry out His project on this earth, together with each person, the poorest, the neediest migrants, refugees, displaced people, on the way. “I say to you, you will see the sky opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man” (Jn 1,51).

38 The incarnation of the Son of God, by being integral and concrete, was also an incarnation in a specific culture; therefore, the incarnation is the basis and the condition for the inculturation process that characterizes the Scalabrinian Sisters in their relationships and in their actions, which places them as an integral part of the continuity of the incarnation, at the service of the insertion of the evangelical message into the cultures²⁴.

The People of God is embodied in the peoples of the earth, each with its own culture. The notion of culture is a valuable tool for understanding the various expressions of Christian life that occur in the People of God. “Grace supposes culture, and God’s gift becomes flesh in the culture of those who receive it.”²⁵ The mystery of the Incarnation determines the identity of the MSCS Sisters and challenges them at the

24. JOANNES PAULUS II. *post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation Ecclesia in Africa – Eaf*, 1995, n. 60.

25. FRANCIS. EG, n. 115.

same time, for the Gospel calls them “to run the risk of a face-to-face encounter with others, with their physical presence which challenges us, with their pain and their pleas, with their joy which infects us in our close and continuous interaction”²⁶.

39 The Son of God, in His incarnation, introduces His own to the “revolution of tenderness”²⁷. Moved by the Scalabrinian charism, the mission entrusted to the MSCS Congregation is always dynamic, flexible, and responsive to the needs of the times. To accompany migrants and refugees in different areas, in a structural way, is part of the spirituality and practice of the incarnation of Christian living.

The missionary welcomes hope as a responsibility from the Incarnation. Hope is not only personal, but communitarian, ecclesial. Those who have the gaze of faith and hope fight with love for justice, for peace, for the dignity of the person, for the balance of nature, for the progress of an integral liberation. Moved by the faith and hope of the Scalabrinian charism, the MSCS Sisters work for the values of the Kingdom, because “True Christian hope, which seeks the eschatological kingdom, always generates history”²⁸, just as the God of Jesus Christ, through His incarnation, took on history and continues to make history with His people, in the footsteps of men and women, children and families, entire peoples in mobility.

The spirituality of the incarnation enables MSCS Sisters to look at and to interpret history from the point of view of the crucified, to be close to, to meet and to listen to the cry, the voice and the point of view of people in situations of mobility. These people are often marked by pain, by cruelty arising from the imbalances and injustices that govern the systems that are at the root of many of the contemporary forced displacements.

WELCOME

40 To welcome embraces a whole inner spiritual movement in which God welcomes. Out of love, missionaries welcome God and are

26. FRANCIS. EG, n. 88.

27. FRANCIS. EG, n. 88.

28. FRANCIS. EG, n. 181.

called to welcome every human being as He welcomes them and they welcome Him; therefore, for the MSCS Sisters, welcoming is another name for mission. Migrants and refugees witness that all humanity is a guest on God's earth. God who walks towards humanity is an image that runs through the whole Bible (Gen 3,8).

The hospitality practiced by the people of Israel is a precious virtue, a duty to the pilgrim, a humanitarian precept that is based on the memory of the people. In the logic of life as movement, departure, migration, the scriptures also record a preferential love of God for migrants (Dt 10,17-19; Matt 25,35), to the point that the acceptance of the foreigner present in the community is a criterion of salvation. Migrants and refugees are also bearers of blessing, a pre-announcement of new heavens and a new earth.

The exemplary model of the welcoming hospitality is Abraham, when he welcomes the three mysterious people who appeared to him at the oak of Mambre (Gen 18,1-16), in whom God reveals Himself as a guest and, at the same time, as an outsider. That hospitality was a reference for the early Christian community (Heb13,1-2).

Another eloquent biblical figure is Ruth, a foreign woman, who enters the community of Israel; she is a reference in the Scriptures of welcome that is contemporarily to God and to the other (Ruth 1,16).

41 Following the example of the patriarchs, Jesus “and made his dwelling among us.” (John 1,14). The evangelists remember Him in foreign lands (Mark 7,24-37); and as a stranger (John 1,46). He lives as a guest and relies on the hospitality of generous people.

The Gospels show that to welcome the migrant and refugee person is to welcome God. Jesus' welcoming attitude was constant until his last breath (Luke 23,43). And, after the resurrection, he showed Himself as a guest in the house of the disciples at Emmaus (Luke 24,13-35). In the Bible, hospitality becomes a duty of all the members of the community (1 Pet 4,9) and the exercise of welcoming is an expression of the evangelical agape.

Human mobility is an image of Christian living (Eph 2,19) and acceptance is one of its characteristics: “Be hospitable to one another without complaining” (1Pet 4,9). Jesus' encounter with the foreign woman

(Matt 15,21-18; Mark 7,24-30) shows that both had to overcome many barriers to reach an understanding, which was possible in listening and empathy, which are the great keys of hospitality. Following the example of welcoming, they radically assume both the richness of welcoming and the need to be reciprocally welcomed.

42 Welcome is a hallmark of the Church. “Welcoming the stranger is inherent in the very nature of the Church and testifies to her fidelity to the Gospel”²⁹. The Church is not only called to give something to the people and peoples who arrive from other lands, it needs to have the ability to get involved in the phenomenon and the humility to learn and also to receive, entering into interpersonal relationships with migrants and refugees, which makes possible the encounter that recognizes the dignity and uniqueness of each person.

Welcoming can be understood as an attitude as well as a process. In the first case, welcoming is a benevolent predisposition of individuals and groups toward people coming from different realities. In the second case, welcoming defines all the action strategies that favor the encounter and the good life of those who arrive. Therefore, it refers to the set of choices, strategies, and actions implemented, which can and should reach the structures and even the concrete policies and guidelines that a social system implements to favor the integration of people coming from outside.

43 The strong call from Pope Francis inviting to build a Culture of Encounter extends the experience of welcome with the dimension of encounter and strengthens the dedication to be and foster missionary presence among people on the move that rebuilds life through invigorating welcome.

The culture of encounter demands a welcome that is realized on the condition of some presuppositions: to go out of oneself; to let oneself be enlightened by love; to know the power of tenderness; to be close to people; to exercise the art of listening; to engage in dialogue; to commit

29. PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS AND ITINERANT PEOPLE, *Instruction Erga migrantes caritas Christi, (The love of Christ towards migrants)* – EMCC, n. 22 - Vatican City, 2004.

oneself to fraternal relationships³⁰. In this sense, the MSCS Sisters are challenged to widen the circle of their attention, to strengthen the capacity to love in a universal and unconditional dimension, to overcome all prejudices and historical or cultural barriers, developing the capacity to welcome and to love from the perspective of the inalienable dignity of each person.³¹.

The culture of encounter can be represented in the movement of “coming close” that Francis reflects on in *Fratelli tutti*, a welcome that places the person in the condition of the other, helps to establish relationships of equality, symmetrical relationships, rescue of humanity, so that the “other”, sometimes stigmatized, is never inferiorized and has his dignity loved, protected, respected.

44 The welcome marked by the Scalabrinian missionary spirit humbly knows how to identify the asymmetries that exist between migrants and refugees and local actors in the context of immigration, which can turn into one-way movements. Where this happens, the assistance that gives without giving weakens people rather than empowering and strengthening them in their life and faith journey.

Welcoming makes human mobility a fertile ground for interculturality, in the exchange of experiences, in the giving and detachment of self. Authentic welcoming makes one aware of the greatness of each person; it is a profoundly human, ethical, and transcendent attitude. The welcome that MSCS Sisters practice includes the sense of hospitality that consists, first of all, in removing the hostility that is latent in every encounter with a stranger. This requires such a spirit that reconfigures the identities in relationship. This human movement has the capacity to generate the practice of solidary hospitality, which shows that another world is possible, managed by new relations and new criteria that question the criteria of excluding globalization.

In this way, the act of welcoming migrants and refugees becomes a privileged theological locus, that is, the place of divine manifestation, since it evokes in the welcomed and welcoming human being a new way to conceive and build the meaning of life. Through welcoming, the

30. FRANCIS, EG, n. 46. 72. 88. 171. 179. 269 and 286.

31. FRANCIS, FT, n. 83 and 86.

charism of cultural mediation is exercised and its demands are promoted: dialogue, language learning, overcoming prejudice, mental openness to differences, in addition to mercy and care.

ITINERANCY

45 A welcoming and mobilizing encounter with people on the move manifests the simplicity of human beings who carry within themselves a deep connection with the Other, that God who reveals Himself on the path of those who walk with humility and hope and seek Him in their journeys. The importance and the need to welcome the stranger point to a new perception of human existence, so that we can see every reality with a look that is transposable and purified by faith, thanks to the revelation highlighted in Jesus of Nazareth.

To live welcoming and itinerancy as fundamental dimensions of the Scalabrinian Christian and missionary life involves perceiving oneself with humility, which enables each MSCS Sister to accept people as they are. This also requires learning to accept the weaknesses and limitations of people with whom relationships may not be of natural sympathy and even of those with whom conflicts and rejection or offence may exist.

The Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters know that the relationships with migrants and refugees imply overcoming ethnocentric and xenophobic positions, demanding an openness to the other that provides a new human experience. This constant exercise allows a relearning of cultural relations and a new positioning in the world, based not on violence, but on coexistence, solidarity and respect for people and their ways of being and living.

46 The missionary identity in which the charism shapes and conforms the MSCS Congregation and its members adopts the principle of itinerancy, contemplating migrations from the perspective of faith and learning to see in migrants and refugees the image of the pilgrim Christ: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was, a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matt 25,35).

Like Abraham, the teaching is to listen and welcome the human and spiritual mandate, so that each one may be, in life and in mission, an itin-

erant woman, always ready to go on mission. “The LORD said to Abram: Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father’s house to a land that I will show you” (Gen 12,1). By the vow of obedience, the MSCS Sisters put themselves in a state of mission, making themselves itinerant. Because of their missionary work with migrants/refugees, itinerancy is for them an intrinsic dimension of their vocational choice.

The Old Testament biblical message, from reading the key of Exodus, unfolds the richness of the meaning of the itinerant dimension of life and mission of the MSCS. “The LORD preceded them, in the daytime by means of a column of cloud to show them the way, and at night by means of a column of fire to give them light. Thus, they could travel both day and night.” (Ex 13,21). Exodus is to leave, literally to depart, like Abraham, the father of faith and of a great migrant nation (Gen 12,1-3); and like Moses (Ex 3,10; Jer 1,7). To leave because of and for the mission, for MSCS Sisters, is to have God as our only reference, so it is exodus.

47 Abraham’s nomadic history is linked to the history of all humanity. The very people of Israel has its origin in the eyes of Abraham, who leaves, obedient to God. The greatest wealth he takes with him is the divine promise of the fatherhood of a great nation, Israel. Leaving the homeland, the exodus in its proper meaning, implies interrupting a cycle and starting new ones. It is the uprooting from the land of origin. To discontinue in order to continue with new patterns and other challenges. Exodus means facing the desert and the sea, but being sure that God always accompanies and illuminates the way.

With the prophet, the missionaries welcome the Word that indicates the steps to follow: “walk humbly with your God” (Mic 6,8). As with the movement of the Incarnation (Jn 1,11-14) in which God himself sets up his tent among us; also, the flight into Egypt (Matt 2,13-14), the parable of the last judgment in which Jesus identifies with the stranger (Matt 25,31-46), and the narrative of Jesus walking with the disciples of Emmaus (Luke 24,13-35) guide the commitment and the ways of living out the vocation and mission.

Itinerancy is an attitude that requires inner emptying and readiness to set out anew, to begin again and to welcome, placing the person in communion with the *Kenosis* that determined the itinerary of the Son

of God Himself (Eph 2, 6-11) and with the effective availability of Mary (cf. Lk 1,39), who set out in haste, trusting in the Word of God. Jesus Christ took up the exodus, going out to meet the needy, healing wounds (cf. Matt 9,35), casting out demons (cf. Mk 5), and announcing the great news of the kingdom of God (cf. Matt 10,7). Moved by faith and by vocation, the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters contemplate abroad the very face of Christ who, in his earthly existence, took on and recapitulated in Himself the fundamental experience of His people (cf. Matt 2,13ff).

48 The biblical vision of so many facts and peoples in situations of mobility, with the record of so many witnesses who lived itinerancy as an expression and experience of faith and belonging to the God of Israel, can be compared to the lives of men and women who migrate or seek refuge, to illuminate and strengthen them. With people and peoples on the way, the MSCS Sisters also identify with the biblical experience of itinerancy and exodus and embrace the challenges of seeking refuge for so many people on the run, an experience also experienced by the holy family of Nazareth (cf. Mt 2,14).

The response of faith, which welcomes the same God and walks because of the same faith, corresponds to those tiring stages of humanity's journey, as depositary of God's gift, toward the birth of a people beyond discrimination and borders. Faith foresees in the migrations the exodus of the Hebrew people who, sustained by the divine Promise to the Patriarchs and guided by God, continue to realize the divine plan of salvation, including men and women on the way. MSCS Sisters are also part of the realization of this Promise, who become migrants with the migrants by vocation, giving their lives until the complete recapitulation of the universe in Christ (Cf. Eph 1,10).

The exodus, in the proper sense of the word, constitutes for the MSCS Sister the experience of the vocational option. The missionary spirit of being a migrant with the migrants, is affected in a mental and geographical exodus, on the way with God, beyond the expectations of the human being.

49 Itinerancy includes and is expressed in missionary spirit, which is the essence of the vocation of the MSCS Sisters. This own identity is concretized by actions anchored in otherness, solidarity, sensitivity

to the suffering of migrants and refugees, with social co-responsibility, with knowledge of the laws and world migration policies, and with care for the common home where “everything is interconnected”³².

The Church, as an institution, has always been itinerant in its way of thinking and acting. It is pilgrim and missionary by nature, since it has its origin, “since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father”³³. The Church is mission, and its missionary action is the paradigm of its own identity³⁴. With the Church and in the Church, the Scalabrinian missionary vocation is realized, whereby acting in service is a state of existence that moves life and action, embracing the communion that is the foundation of the mission’s fruitfulness³⁵.

The Holy Spirit is the conductor of the mission, who always pushes us to go beyond, not only in a geographical sense, but overcoming ethnic and religious barriers, until we reach a truly universal mission. Like the migrant/refugee who leaves everything, the Scalabrinian missionary does the same and like the women and men on the way, she finds other permanent possibilities of self-giving, mission, call and response to live with passion and compassion the charism in a world without borders.

COMMUNION IN DIVERSITY

50 In the Scalabrinian missionary religious life is intrinsic the search and the sum of efforts to build communion and encounter of all peoples in the light of salvation history: “I come to gather nations of every language” (Isa 66,18). Through missionary life, we learn from the primitive community (Acts 15,6-21) to form one body, welcoming and valuing many members (Rom 12,4-5), with assiduity in prayer, in the apostles’ teaching, in fraternal communion and in the breaking of bread (Acts 2,42). Imbued with the spirit of Pentecost, the Scalabrinian Missio-

32. FRANCIS. LS, n. 240.

33. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL. *Decree ad Gentes on the Mission Activity of the Church*, 1965, n. 2.

34. FRANCIS. EG, n. 15.

35. JOANNES PAULUS II. RMi, n. 61.

nary Sisters constantly seek to harmonize the differences, which forms Christians, and in particular the MSCS Congregation, an open community (Acts 2,1-12) and capable of forgiveness and communion, which also includes people from other cultures and religions (Acts 10,44-48).

Communion defines and represents the Christian experience as such, which the fourth Gospel and the first letter of John identify with the term *koinonia* (1 John 1,7 and John 1,3). For MSCS Sisters, communion/*koinonia* is a fundamental value of personal and institutional identity (Acts 2,42), a distinctive and peculiar sign that implies unlimited availability, unreserved generosity, self-giving required and offered to the Church and society, to our brothers and sisters on the journey and specially to people in situations of mobility.

The following of Jesus is witnessed in communion, as a liberating experience that springs from the Love of God found in Jesus Christ, which has its privileged place in the Church, while being realized as an experience of communion with God and with people.

51 Based on scripture and their experience as consecrated women, MSCS sisters recognize an in-depth relationship between the Eucharistic Body of Christ (1Cor 12) and their ecclesial body, which is sealed and led by the one Spirit. Communion in diversity is nourished by the Eucharist; the communion that the letter to the Galatians 3,28 describes as a new reality, whether for Jews or for Greeks, for men or for women, for slaves or for free people. All can discover each other in the intimacy of faith in Jesus Christ, with their diversities transformed and assumed through the experience of the same communion (Col 3,11), which for the MSCS Sisters is a characteristic feature of spirituality and missionary activity.

The church based on communion expresses itself as participation in the communion that is granted in the welcoming and in the faith of the Lord, who, incarnate, becomes human, without ever ceasing to be for us the Totally Other.

The recognition of the otherness of God himself is an interior movement that educates and teaches the divine-human way to encounter the other, which is presented in the figure of the sisters whom the Father unites to the Scalabrinian missionary community and in the figure of

migrants, refugees, and so many other people who cross our personal path and that of the MSCS congregation. “Foreigners are also a visible sign and an effective reminder of that universality which is a constituent element of the Catholic Church”³⁶. They nurture an authentic spirit of universality that helps build an intercultural human reality. This is a call to openness and communion for the sake of mission.

52 Communion in communities where people from different cultures are present is a challenge, a laborious dynamic; it requires space and respect for particular identities, cultural, ethnic, religious, and all the otherness that human mobility and Christian living bring together.

By vocation and by the strength of the Scalabrinian charism, MSCS Sisters are called to be instruments that weave relationships of communion, witnesses of universal fraternity, recognizing the diversity of each person, the mutual enrichment in the sharing of diversities, reflections of solidary communities and of a Church “home and the school of communion”³⁷. In living the MSCS vocation and mission, communion is a trait that identifies and characterizes the Church and one’s own vocation, a unique possibility to love, within a concrete historical journey, together with other people who seek to make God’s project of love for the world happen.

This communion is the fruit of the unity of the Trinity, a model of diversity in unity, which makes the Church and each MSCS community a reflection of the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an experience of discipleship that does not annul the identities and diversities of the members that make up the community of followers, but assumes them as a common vocation and mission. In the same way, it recognizes them as equal dignity, excluding any visible or subtly mimicked form of prejudice, denial of differences, or judgments of luck.

53 Solidarity with the poor is an icon of this communion. In this way, communion is to take each other mutually in love, to give what one has and to receive what the other has. It is in this mutual comple-

36. PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS AND ITINERANT PEOPLE, *EMCC*, n. 17.

37. JOANNES PAULUS II. *Apostolic Letter Novo Millennio Ineunte* – NMI, 2001, n. 43.

mentation that one reaches the fullness of catholicity, reaching the whole world through communion in love, through the charity that should permeate all areas of life. Through recognition that includes knowledge and appreciation of the other. MSCS Sisters become women capable of fostering, strengthening and promoting communion, within themselves, in the communities and around them. Thus, they can identify the other in history, seeking a new protagonism through communion in solidarity, especially with those most in need.

These dynamic favors the building of a livable, welcoming and attractive Church community, where all people feel welcomed, respected, personally reconciled in a concrete charity, discreet and in solidarity, which knows how to keep company in life and how to build communion.

In the Church of communion, the inclusion of symbolic and cultural otherness, as well as the otherness that each person of another mentality and cultural and linguistic background may represent, passes through the basic rule of the interpersonal encounter that life makes happen. The ecclesiology of communion has the credibility and solidity to explain and include the othernesses that, inside and outside the Church, seek identification, support and acceptance in it. And all this, without demanding, as a precondition, the negation of identity, position, language and even forms for living the same faith that, since its beginnings, has been lived in ways and with mentalities that are not only different, but even opposed.

54 Communion in diversity is the recognition of difference, in the logic of the incarnation, which extends to humanity the respect, love, and recognition due to divinity. For MSCS Sister, loving the other and the Other are two aspects that integrate.

To affirm that the Church is communion means, at the same time, to recognize the commitments of solidarity with which the community of the Kingdom is realized, among which are the promotion of diversity without falling into division, the concrete and situated historicity in which Christians live their faith, inculturation into the concrete realities in which the Gospel is received. Recognition of the uniqueness of each person and each culture includes protection, esteem, trust, and strategies for mutual support and sustainability.

The ecclesial *koinonia* that characterizes the missionary spirit and the MSCS identity, and to which the Congregation contributes with the life, vocation, and mission of its members, includes plurality, has the characteristics of the culture and peoples where it happens, takes risks, and is consolidated through a long journey, because it is only possible to make communion happen where there is a relationship that is open, recognizes and welcomes the other.

For the MSCS sisters, communion is more than a final goal, it is the origin of the construction of their personal and religious identity, of their community life, and of their ecclesial and social action in the concrete realities where they work and in the moving world.

55 Communion in diversity enables the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters to seek and promote that engaging and authentic relationships, in the Church and in society, that are able to embrace the challenges of building policies and laws in the realities with the presence of people on the move. The MSCS Sisters recognize themselves as equal in their uniqueness and defend and promote the inviolable dignity of the difference of each person and community, their particularities, contributions, nuances and even their ideals.

In this sense, the communion that respects and values the diversity of gifts and charisms, as well as the plurality of cultures and knowledge, and the otherness of each new reality, impels the MSCS Congregation to act with migrants and refugees, adopting a vision of the migration phenomenon as an opportunity for all peoples.

In this dynamism, the MSCS Sisters urge the Church and all of society to adopt the logic of the Triune God, who brings everyone together in unity, without uniformity or exclusion of any kind, without imposing pre-established standards or insecurity in the face of the threatening richness of the creativity that is given from life and from the Spirit itself.

POLITICAL LOVE

56 The missionary action of the MSCS Congregation embraces all dimensions of life, as well as reaches all human contexts and conditions, since migrants and refugees live and cross the most different

realities, in search of bread to satisfy their material needs, of the Word to find the meaning of their existence, and of communities that respond to their needs for love and belonging, in which no one feels like a stranger. Therefore, MSCS Sisters are committed to living and promoting political love, understanding it as a category that explains and fosters human fraternity that is at the root of social relationships and is intrinsic to the good news of the Kingdom of God announced by Jesus Christ (Lk 17:21; Mk 1:15).

The actions of the MSCS sisters directed towards the generation of social processes of fraternity and justice where migrants and refugees are included, necessarily privilege time more than spaces, for this reason they bet on “by the goodness of the wheat.”³⁸ that manifests itself with time

In this context, it is imperative to recognize the fact that every human being is a brother and/or a sister for missionaries; and from this it follows that the search for social friendship that integrates humanity is much more than a simple utopia. It is an attitude and a responsibility that commits people and choices in missionary action. Therefore, the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters assume fraternity and social friendship as practicable realities, that is, they demand “a decisive commitment to devising effective means to this end”³⁹.

57 A great challenge, for the Church and in a particular way for the MSCS, as Scalabrinian consecrated women, is to create mechanisms to recognize the place of migrants and refugees as protagonists of their trajectories, and in particular, in the process of confronting conflicts and situations that arise in the migration processes and amidst difficult humanitarian crises.

The MSCS Sister is called by vocation to be at the borders and to be a prophetic sign in the middle of the emergencies of migration, joining the protagonism of the subjects involved in human mobility, who seek answers to the challenges they face in their trajectories. A great challenge in this sense is to build and rebuild life stories and a future with dignity, in the midst of different crises of income, permanence, mobility, peace, and citizenship.

38. FRANCIS. EG, n. 225.

39. FRANCIS. FT, n. 180.

Political love commits the MSCS Congregation to walk together with migrants and refugees with signs, gestures and efforts capable of effectively supporting and strengthening with adequate resources and strategies the various modalities of aggregation and consolidation of their agency. To be together, to mark presence, to value and to empower.

These are important aspects of interculturality, which foster more just structures of participation and which are in line with the logic of the incarnation of God's love for the sons and daughters He loves.

58 Political love also implies collective action aimed at “join together in initiating social processes of fraternity and justice for all”⁴⁰. It is about acting in the field of political charity that compels a social and political order founded on social charity, the most excellent form of all (1Cor 12,31), in relationships, in commitments, and in human coexistence.

In this perspective, charity is part of the dimension of care that the MSCS sisters address to their migrant and refugee brothers and sisters, and thus takes on a civil and political expression. Thus, it is possible to point to the ethical imperative of care as the principle of social coexistence. The MSCS Sisters therefore embrace the challenge of discovering how, in their pastoral and social work, to concretely implement effective ways of expressing political love, taken as an attribute of missionarity.

Another social process fostered by political love with people and peoples in mobility is interculturality, which represents an imperative in the development of a project of conviviality capable of establishing dialogue between cultures and peaceful coexistence among peoples. Adopting such a vision implies facing conflicts that cannot be ignored or concealed, but must be accepted, resolved, and transformed into links of new processes⁴¹. “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Matt 5,9). To take interculturality as a conscious starting point for the promotion of conviviality implies taking the stance of mediation, of deliberate and stubborn undertaking to create spaces in which migrants and refugees can expose their demands and manage their conflicts, not only for the actors who act in the direct reception processes, but also among themselves and with the actors with whom they share time and space.

40. FRANCIS. FT, n. 180.

41. FRANCIS. EG, n. 226 e 227.

59 As a Pilgrim Church, in going forth, the MSCS Congregation assumes the great challenge of avoiding welfare approaches and victimization of the assisted migrant populations and, at the same time, listens and responds to the call to be able to weave historical threads of knowledge and experiences in the same weft that migrants and refugees, silently and persistently, weave in their daily struggles. Webs of solidarity, built in the middle of vulnerabilities, exclusions, sufferings, and hopes. Solidarities that restore hope, joy, and the will to continue weaving.

These weavings find their meaning in the establishment of the culture of encounter, which according to Pope Francis, “means that we, as a people, should be passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone. This becomes an aspiration and a style of life.”⁴² The subject of this culture is the people, not simply one part of society that would pacify the rest with the help of professional and media resources.

60 Political love puts the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters in front of the challenges that socially and even internationally permeate the issues and realities of human mobility, and challenge the movements that lead to intercultural fraternity and sorority.

They are therefore called and empowered by faith and the Scalabrinian missionary vocation to overcome temptations and risks of racism by fostering xenophobia, the love that becomes neighbor, regardless of a person’s religious, cultural, racial, or national condition and belonging.

The MSCS Congregation joyfully sets out its commitment to stand for hospitality, xenophilia, solidarity, communion, and mutual welcome, through a pedagogy of care that points to the integrality of human life, including all of creation.

The Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, often on the front line, and for emergency circumstances, are ready to operate as individual operators and with great leadership to implement valuable interventions in the apostolic area and in the life of the migrant. In today’s ecclesial history and the MSCS Congregation, they embrace the challenge of working from I to us, with a high return of effective testimony. The “apostolic

42 FRANCIS, FT, n. 216.

body” needs and is built up every day with the *Diaconia*, by being close, placing oneself next to people in a situation of mobility.

To generate liberating processes, to love politically, to strengthen relationships of communion, to approach and accompany migrants and refugees are the responsibilities that animate the MSCS Sisters as human beings, but also as Christians. Together with the whole Church, they recognize themselves as called to welcome, protect, promote and integrate, as well as evangelize migrants and refugees and their families, because, as Scalabrini taught, where the people are, where the migrants and refugees are, there the Church must be, there the MSCS Congregation is also called to be.

Sing and walk, missionary of hope!

*You will be a true Christian if you recognize yourself
as such even at home and in your own country.*

Here you are a guest, because you are passing through.

You will have to leave your possessions to other guests.

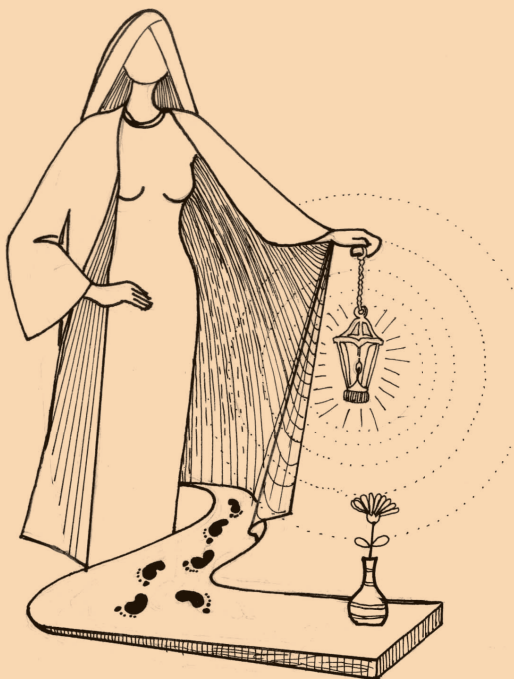
Use this world without too many attachments.

You are on a journey!

You came to walk further, not to stay.

*Use your possessions as the traveler uses the table,
the glass, the jug, the bed in the hostel:
like someone who must leave everything, keep nothing /.../.
He sings as the traveler does. Sing, but walk!
Sing, not to feed laziness, but to sustain your effort.
Sing and walk! [...].
Without getting lost, without remaining indifferent,
without stopping!
Sing and walk⁴³.*

(St. Augustine, Sermo 256)



43. The text is referenced in: R. RIZZARDO. *O carisma scalabriniano na Igreja*. Congregação Scalabriniana, Roma 1993, p. 52-53. *Apud* CANDATEN, Analita. *Povo a caminho. Uma espiritualidade que gera esperança*. Caxias do Sul: Lorigraf, 2007, p. 68.

IV

Macro Strategies of MSCS Missionary Action

61 The MSCS Congregation, in its missionary activity over time, has developed a wide range of responses to the challenges of human mobility, exercising the creativity that the charism gives rise to and practicing dedication and service, at the level of direct care, as well as in various forms of organization, implementation, animation or coordination of projects, services and structures at the service of and in favor of the world of human mobility.

The diversity of migratory profiles of people and of migratory contexts is added to the uniqueness of the history and culture of the local churches and of the countries where the MSCS Congregation is involved in missionary practice. These differences, which are combined with the multiple and diverse competencies and aptitudes of each of the people involved in the mission, among Sisters and collaborators, have favored the development of qualified strategies of action in the world of human mobility, which are identified as macro-strategies of the missionary action of the MSCS Sisters.

Result of a participatory process based on direct and indirect action in contexts of human mobility and in favor of the cause of migration and refuge, carried out with the participation of MSCS Sisters from all countries where the Congregation is present, and with contributions from lay collaborators, the macro strategies of action represent seven specific and specialized approaches to missionary action. Converging and included in these strategies are projects and programs, as well as structures and activities that are carried out with, for and on behalf of different categories of people and groups in mobility in the world, in the local and regional realities where the congregation is present.

62 We understand macro-strategy as the configuration of the general vision of missionary action that expresses an understanding of

how the whole functions in relation to the mission of the Congregation. The macro vision expressed by the strategies represents an interpretation of the context and goals and, at the same time, allows for the analysis of variables and convergence of all direct and indirect actions with persons and peoples in situations of mobility¹.

Each of the macro-strategies is structured in different strategic axes, to better define and articulate the planning and practice itself, valuing the diversity of contexts, approaches, and competencies. This approach and structuring of praxis qualify and professionalizes the service offered and the attention dedicated to the people assisted.

The strategic axis is understood as the large blocks of actions that concretize the Congregation's programs and projects. The strategic axes organize and give visibility to the set of macro-strategies that operationalize the mission.

The macro-strategies and their respective axes guide the strategic planning and serve as a framework for the elaboration of projects, programs, and the organization of actions for the concrete implementation of the MSCS missionary spirit.

63 The macro-strategies of the MSCS missionary work and the respective strategic axes are structured as follows:

- 1 SHELTER, ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION IN EMERGENCY AND VULNERABILITY**
 1. Care in situations of risk and urgent need
 2. Institutional care
 3. Listening and orientation
 4. Social assistance services
- 2 PROMOTION & INTEGRATION**
 5. Training and labor insertion

1. The definition of macro strategies, strategic axes and activities follow the characterization adopted by the Paroikos System. The Paroikos System is an integrated web-based system of data collection, storage, processing and analysis related to the MSCS work with or in favor of the world of human mobility, which includes information about people assisted, professionals who assist, activities, programs and projects, as well as the organizations through which services are implemented and offered to migrants/refugees.

6. Professional support
3. **ANIMATION AND PASTORAL COORDINATION WITH MIGRANTS/REFUGEES**
 7. Evangelization and catechesis
 8. Institutional strategic coordination
 9. Itinerant Service
4. **PRIORITY ATTENTION TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN**
 10. Protection of women and children
 11. Empowerment of women and girls
5. **STRENGTHENING MIGRANTS'/REFUGEES' PROTAGONISM AND LEADERSHIP**
 12. Advising on autonomy and integration initiatives
 13. Promotion of migrant/refugee leaders
6. **TRAINING AND AWARENESS**
 14. Raising awareness about migration and refugee issues in an ecclesial and socio-cultural context
 15. Counseling civil and ecclesial organizations related to human mobility
 16. Communication
7. **ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING**
 17. Promotion of public policies
 18. Strengthening partnerships
 19. Events
 20. Advocacy and access to justice

For a better shared characterization of this structure, a brief presentation of each one follows.

64 Macro strategy One. Reception, assistance and protection in emergency and vulnerable situations

Inspired by the legacy of Scalabrini and based on the Christian understanding of human existence, the work of the MSCS Sisters prioritizes the appreciation and protection of life, especially when the person is in situations of vulnerability. Committed to developing initiatives that aim to promote responses to the challenges that people on the move face in their migratory journeys, the works and projects of short, me-

dium and long term prioritize welcoming, listening and guidance as a privileged approach to every person who seeks support or is found in a situation of need.

MSCS Sisters stand out for their attention, care and responsibility in providing all the responses that are within their reach in favor of people on the move. In order to implement responses to the challenges faced by people on the move and their trajectories, the MSCS Congregation develops articulations with people and organizations to which it can refer or with which it can provide responses to emerging demands.

This macro-strategy characterizes the integral protection that we seek to ensure, out of love and professionalism, for people who need support. In the assistance and support offered, the protagonism that recognizes “the migrant as the subject of his history”², even in situations of particular vulnerability or fragility. The MSCS seeks, as much as possible, sustainable and lasting alternatives, favoring opportunities for quality of life, citizenship and autonomy paths for migrants and refugees in their trajectories, “can progress as human beings and contribute to development”³.

The 4 strategic axes that this macro-strategy includes are: a) Assistance in situations of risk and urgent need, in all forms and in proportion to the viability of each context, which may include, depending on the cases and the response capacity, other actions such as b) Institutional Hosting, which refers to cases in which the reception is residential; c) Listening and guidance, which permeates the meetings and precedes every service; as well as d) Concrete social assistance services, collaborating in the search for solutions to the emergency needs that people present.

65 Macro Strategy Two. Promotion and Integration

Beyond providing assistance in situations of vulnerability, the MSCS seeks to support and accompany people in situations of mobility and their families through services and the creation or availability of op-

2. CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS, n. 124.

3. DICASTERY FOR THE SERVICE OF INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT - MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES SECTION. *Responding to Refugees and Migrants: Twenty action points for the global compacts*, Vatican City, 2017.

portunities to consolidate processes of autonomy and inclusion. These are activities, programs, projects, structures and initiatives of support and service to life and existential, migratory and professional projects that help migrants and refugees to face the challenges related to the (re) construction of life and future for themselves and their families.

These are actions and resources, mainly skills and support, that assist migrants and refugees in socio-cultural integration processes into new local environments. These are efforts to favor the strengthening of the capacity for protagonism of people on the move, and the opportunity for the migratory experience and learning from the challenges experienced and overcome to be turned into a resource and a transforming impulse for the good of their family, community, and society in general.

The MSCS offers professional services, which are responses to challenges and prevention of further difficulties, without which migrants/refugees may suffer processes of humiliation and loss, including consequences of marginalization, exclusion, and risks of injustice, with threats to their lives, their dignity, and their future. It is a service in support of inclusion capable of respecting differences and working so that migrants do not deny their identity and value their memories and values.

This Macro strategy comprises a diversity of activities that seek to support and/or strengthen paths to consolidate new life projects after migratory experiences, for those who emigrated or those who stayed behind, focusing on the possibility of consolidating autonomy capacity through training and labor insertion, which include vocational training, as well as actions that enable or promote employment and income. Professional support activities include services that qualified professionals can provide and which aim to prevent exclusion and vulnerability. Such services seek to strengthen itineraries of dignity and citizenship, such as legal, socio-health, and psychological assistance and consultancy for the most varied areas of citizenship in the search for life, health, migratory regularity, happiness, interaction, participation, and success.

66 Macro Strategy Three. Animation and coordination of pastoral care with migrants/refugees

To express the Scalabrinian charism of the MSCS Congregation is a sign of hope, a presence of evangelization, education in the faith, and a

commitment to human promotion, the defense and care of life. Sharing the joy of the proclamation with migrants and refugees, co-inhabitants of the common home, and walking together is the fundamental sense of mission, ecclesial identity and prophecy that characterizes the missionary spirit of the MSCS Sisters. Through encounters, formation, celebrations, animation and the living of a liberating spirituality in intercultural or ethnic Christian communities, creative fidelity in the key of vocational culture nourishes the identity and makes the migrant Christ himself recognized in each person. “The Scalabrinian Missionary life is characterized as a specific and specialized, dialogic and communal pastoral care, fully integrated in the normal pastoral strategy of the local Church”⁴.

Studies on the systematization of practices, assistance in planning and elaboration of ecclesial guidelines and pastoral structures related to human mobility and interculturality give consistency and vigor to the MSCS mission. The fruits of this active presence stimulate the commitment, empowerment and leadership of pastoral agents among the clergy, the laity, especially the Scalabrinian Lay Missionaries (SLM), and the migrants and refugees themselves in the commitment to the mission in the world of human mobility.

The macro-strategy focusing on the pastoral dimension particularly, includes all MSCS action in the area of proclamation, faith accompaniment and Christian formation, in the service of Christian life and ecclesial living, as well as the different services developed by the MSCS Sisters in the Local Churches, Episcopal Conferences and ecclesial organizations, advising, animating, sensitizing, coordinating, as well as training church actors on the phenomena and challenges of the different categories of persons and groups on the move.

67 In the wisdom and strength of the Scalabrinian missionary spirit, this macro-strategy unfolds in three strategic axes, namely: Evangelization and Catechesis; Institutional Strategic Coordination, and the MSCS Itinerant Service.

Through evangelization and catechesis, the MSCS Sisters work to encourage migrants and refugees to play a leading role as active and re-

4. CONSTITUTIONAL NORMS, n. 123.

sponsible subjects in their trajectories, in the building up of the Church and in the construction of a new society. They seek to build relationships and spaces that respect human dignity, integrate the promotion of human rights and promote integral human development. In their role as institutional strategic coordinators, the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters implement effective collaboration and coordination with ecclesial leaders and structures at different levels, optimizing efforts and initiatives through effective networking and the scope of strategic alliances that affect both bilateral and multilateral spheres.

In this way, they also strengthen the results of their work by liaising with public agencies, civil society, and international organizations in countries of origin, transit, and destination of migrants and refugees. In creative fidelity to its charism and to the Scalabrinian dynamism at the service of the world of human mobility, the MSCS Congregation adopts the strategic axis of **Itinerant Service** as a privileged expression of its missionary spirit.

Through the Itinerant Service, the Congregation aims to contribute so that migrants and refugees, primarily women and children, in emergency situations and in vulnerable conditions, are guaranteed respect for their dignity, basic needs and access to opportunities for human promotion. With this strategic axis, the MSCS Sisters contribute so that migrants and refugees can nourish the hope of a better future and have the welcome and protection they need, thus influencing the transformation that human mobility can promote for a more humane and caring world.

The Itinerant Service, acting in articulation with related organizations, collaborates so that people on the move who go through situations of emergency and vulnerability are not defeated by the threats and risks they face on their journey. With this action in the service of life, the MSCS Sisters help to strengthen and expand responses that give effectiveness to the efforts to support the suffering, to defend and prevent human rights violations, to strengthen the capacity to overcome mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination. They also seek to identify and give visibility to situations in which migrants and refugees are in conditions of vulnerability as a result of emergencies, to promote solidarity and build partnerships to collaborate in responses to these and other demands of the world of human mobility.

It is a strategically representative action of missionary spirit, which, like faith, is multiplied by giving and strengthened by sharing.

68 Macro Strategy Four. Priority attention to women and children

The macro strategy of priority attention to migrant and refugee women and children is a transversal characteristic of all MSCS actions, because in their charisma and in their praxis, the MSCS Sisters know how to identify and see with affection and special attention the women and children who are part of the migration and refugee flows, almost always exposed to strong vulnerability, in the different contexts where they go through and where they search for a place to live and a future.

Priority attention to women, girls and children in general, has as a fundamental element, the ability to meet and respond to the specific demands or challenges of these people, which involves specialized care initiatives through the recognition of the risks and threats they face, as well as the opportunities and potentials to which they do not have access.

The work in the mission with migrant and refugee women and children includes the knowledge of women's rights at the international level and other national and universal legal foundations that apply to their protection and promotion, valuing the main international instruments of human rights and human dignity as references to support their work. Priority is neither unique nor does it produce exclusion, but a reminder that the protection of life and the recognition of dignity are indispensable and effective also for women, girls, children, and adolescents.

This attention includes the **protection of women and children**, through welcoming with listening and guidance and home care, providing direct care, multidisciplinary support, linking support networks, as well as promoting mechanisms for entry, stay and residence based on human rights protection, regularization and alternative means for return. It also includes initiatives that favor access to education, health, basic social services, legal assistance, and justice.

This priority also includes initiatives and articulations that favor, promote, and sustain the **empowerment of women and girls**, through the offer of financial solutions, training in professional and business skills, building and reinforcing self-esteem and confidence, creating

and strengthening social, ecclesial, and multilateral support networks, among others.

69 Macro Strategy Five. Strengthening the role and leadership of migrants and refugees

The protagonism of the migrants and refugees is a determining choice in the mission, since the beginning of the MSCS Congregation, because in John Baptist Scalabrini's ideal, the intervention and presence with people in mobility has the characteristics of a support in the service of people who are the owners of their trajectories, capable of taking charge of the direction of their migratory processes or of their search for refuge.

In line with the desire of the founder, the MSCS Sisters assume as a strategic priority the protagonism and autonomy of migrants and refugees, valuing their capacity, their potential to act and influence the transformation of the processes and contexts in which they find themselves and of which they are part. In this way, they can contribute in and even determine their trajectories, their lives, and their contributions to the construction of a more human, just, and solidary world, where no one is considered a foreigner, a threat, or an enemy, and where borders are not insurmountable barriers.

Migrants and refugees, for the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, are people with life opportunities and the ability to exercise self-determination, to make decisions for their lives and the lives of their families, participating in the processes of the countries and communities they are part of. The agency of migrants and refugees is anchored in an approach of human rights, of promotion of life and dignity of the subjects in situation of mobility that is transversal to all MSCS actions.

From this perspective, the action adopts a vision of human mobility that is positive and, at the same time, respectful and understanding of the complexity and diversity of the phenomena related to migration and refuge. The agency assumes different nuances in the paths taken by migrants and refugees and in their participation in socio-cultural, ecclesial and public processes, in the different realities where they pass through or where they settle.

Through a variety of advisory modalities to **initiatives of autonomy and integration**, the MSCS Sisters put themselves at the service of the life and success of migratory, family or professional projects of migrants and refugees; and, in particular, they assume the commitment to the **promotion of migrant and refugee leaderships**, favoring the empowerment of protagonist men and women in a systemic, political and social way of being and acting. By adopting protagonism as a macro strategy, the MSCS congregation challenges the church and society, as well as partnerships and the migrants and refugees themselves to rethink analytical categories and socio-pastoral and political responses, focusing on the subjectivities that make up the migration processes.

70 Macro Strategy Six. Training and Awareness

In the fulfillment of their mission, the MSCS Sisters, besides the direct action with migrants and refugees, as well as with other categories of people and groups in situations of mobility, also count on competence and activities that strategically accomplish their missionary mandate through the training, adherence and involvement of many people and organizations in the cause of human mobility, in the Church and in society. These are activities, programs and projects of action, often through partnerships with organizations of migrants and refugees, civil society and government, which have the potential or opportunity to make a difference in the lives and trajectories of migrants or refugees and in the construction of more human, intercultural and humanizing interpersonal relationships for all.

Through this macro-strategy, the MSCS Congregation contributes in the Church and in society in general to a more just vision of migration and refuge, avoiding and fighting the criminalization of migration and solidarity with migrants and refugees, and also promoting understandings of the phenomena related to migration and refuge that have human dignity as an indispensable reference. Therefore, they promote the defense and promotion of human rights for all, regardless of race, color, religion, nationality, gender, or any other otherness.

Through training and awareness-raising, people who migrate or seek refuge are valued, their life and future projects are strengthened, and their agency is preserved and promoted. Schools and hospitals with

MSCS management are protagonists in training and promoting awareness, internally and externally, for the promotion of life with the dignity of migrants and refugees and intercultural coexistence in the contexts where they operate.

71 For this purpose the MSCS Congregation adopts three primary axes that this macro-strategy comprises and promotes, namely:

a) Awareness raising on the topic of migration and refuge in an ecclesial and socio-cultural context: This service aims to raise the awareness and commitment of institutions and leaders on the topic of migration and refuge, the tragedies and challenges inherent in the processes related to human mobility and the risks and opportunities experienced by those who move, as well as their families and communities. Awareness raising includes attention to a vision of human mobility that recognizes and assumes “the complexity that characterizes the reality of contemporary human mobility, which requires openness to learn and receive light and guidance through sapient and interdisciplinary readings”⁵, which is constantly transformed by the interculturality it adopts and promotes.

b) Advisory to civil and ecclesial organizations related to human migration: Raising awareness on the subject of migration and refuge joins the task of collaborating, advising people and organizations whenever possible so that they can work together in contexts related to human mobility, with subjects and phenomena involved in the issue, from the understanding that the world is the Common Home⁶.

c) Communication: With respect for the religious and cultural identity of all, through communication, the MSCS Sisters carry out and promote their mission, as well as strengthen their own actions and the results of their service, preserving differences and expanding possibilities on the path to building communion in diversity and promoting interculturality. Through the media, MSCS Sisters also communicate, listen and interact with migrants and refugees, promoting their protagonism in the service of their life projects and fulfillment. “In front of the current migratory reality, communication is, for the Congregation, one

5. *MSCS General Guidelines of the Apostolate*, 2008, p. 32.

6. FRANCIS. LS.

of the means to promote integral human development and the rights of migrants and refugees, as well as a means to positively affect the different areas of apostolate of the Sisters. Therefore, we believe it is necessary to qualify our language and find new spaces by developing constructive communication”⁷.

72 Macro strategy Seven. Advocacy and networking

This macro strategy represents a transversal style of approach that the MSCS Sisters adopt in their work, which unfolds in a set of initiatives, always in articulation with similar actors in civil society. This action aims to transform knowledge, know-how and know-how to be into contributions to the processes of public policy formulation and to define strategies and priorities at the micro and macro-structural level, in society, in governments and also in the ecclesial context.

It is a historical responsibility to collaborate in the definition and adoption of effective public policies, social attitudes or inclusive political processes of the populations involved in phenomena related to human mobility. Through this macro strategy the MSCS Congregation aims to reach out and contribute with processes and professionals who work directly in the instances where decisions are made.

In this sense, the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters promote and assume networking as a way and space used to achieve the institutional and missionary objectives, to increase the capacity of professionalism and the quality of the processes and actions they develop, acting to give integral attention to migrants and refugees they meet and want to assist/support. Thus, also, the performance in networks of services, communication and advocacy optimize and challenge the mission of influencing governments to adopt public policies favorable to the legal and social protection of people on the move, their integration and the appreciation of population displacements as an opportunity for humanity.

73

In their missionary practice, the MSCS Sisters assume, in this macro-strategy, different strategic axes, which concretize and favor the scope that the charism and the missionary spirit provide.

7. MSCS Final Document of XIV General Chapter, p. 16.

In particular, the MSCS Congregation encourages, supports and collaborates in the formation and consolidation of the Scalabrinian Lay Missionary Movement - SLM, “so that they may respond with fidelity to their lay vocation in the Church and in society”⁸ and bear fruit for the Kingdom, in the witness and service to migrants and refugees. With the collaboration of lay people, the sisters join efforts and optimize actions of welcome, protection, promotion and integration of migrants and refugees.

The four strategic axes that rolls out this Macro strategy are: **a) Promotion of public policies** and **b) Strengthening partnerships**, strengthening multilateral processes of sensitization and formulation of proposals so that the governance of migration processes is shaped by the defense and promotion of human rights. The MSCS Sisters also organize and contribute with their service and witness through **c) Events**, to disseminate and multiply the learning that the charism and the experience of acting brings, as well as acting in **d) Defense of rights and access to justice**, for the protection and dignity of the people they welcome, protect, support and promote, with the effective collaboration and articulation of partnerships and similar actors, especially by the “role of the laity committed to persons and peoples on the move”⁹.

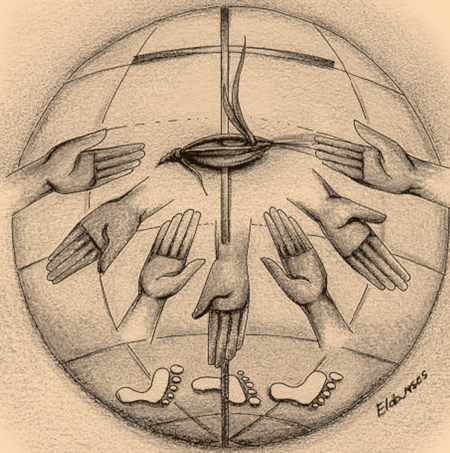
In their missionary action, the MSCS Sisters are characterized by the richness and specificity of their femininity and their own spirituality, which comes from their identity, their qualifications and the missionary experience of each one and of each community of the Congregation.

8. MSCS, *Final Document XIV General Chapter*, p. 12.

9. MSCS *General Apostolate Guidelines*, 2008, p. 28.

The Scalabrinian spirituality lived and shared by the MSCS Sisters integrates as primary axes: compassion for the migrant in the encounter and relationship with him/her and the centrality to the person of Jesus Christ, the pilgrim, the way, the truth and the life; and unity between action and contemplation following the example of the Founder and Co-Founders.

(MSCS General Apostolate Guidelines, 2008, p. 31 e 32)



V

Characteristic Traits of the MSCS Way of Life

74 By living their identity and mission, the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, observant and interacting with the most different migratory and ecclesial, socio-cultural or political situations where they live and work, over the years have been molding their organizational culture with the diversity that the plurality and complexity of human mobility determines, and with the essentiality that missionary work requires.

Being faithful to the charism and consistent with the vocation and mission they have embraced, the choices and experiences have contributed to the construction and consolidation of traits that characterize their way of being, organizing, acting, and managing their resources and processes, ad intra and add extra. Their style of life and organization generates a way of being and acting that is strictly related, underpinned by specific elements of performance methodology, coherent with a management model, whose profile indicates values and goals that influence and guide missionary action.

They adopt discernment as an open, dialogical, scrutinizing attitude of waiting and availability, on a personal and institutional level, as a prayerful expression of faith and as a constant process of freedom, radical humility, dynamism and commitment; an interior attitude rooted in a continuous act of faith¹. Through the practice of discernment, the Congregation seeks knowledge of God's will, self-knowledge and the search for wisdom to act with a renewed praxis and faithful to the charism, conformed to Christ. Discernment becomes for the MSCS Sisters a habit of prayerful attention to the presence and action of God in their lives, in the processes they live individually and institutionally, as well as in the mission, in a Church that is a place for continuous journeys of discernment (EG 30) on the paths of the Spirit (EG 45).

1 FRANCISCO. Discurso à I Congregação Geral da XV Assembleia do Sínodo dos Bispos. Os jovens, a fé e o discernimento vocacional, 03.10.2018.

This is why, besides the Values already commented upon and the macro strategies of action already presented, here are some elements that characterize the methodology of missionary action and the management model proper to the MSCS Congregation.

75 Sharing hope, building a better world for all

Known as pilgrims of hope for embracing mobility with love and faith and sharing the lives of people on the move, the MSCS Sisters stand out in situations of disappointment and in contexts where discouragement and even despair prevail because of their witness to hope. Hope is born and grows thanks to relationships with people, relationships that are open to dialogue and collaboration, which encourage people to walk anchored in trust, because “hope does not disappoint” (Rom 5,5).

The utopia of a better world, where nobody is a foreigner, is an indispensable referential, despite and without denying the hatred against the “others,” the “different,” the ones who “bother,” the ones who “are left behind”, and the fears and even threats that migrants and refugees may experience in their trajectories. In this context, it is an undeniable task to share and foster hope. The complexity of the migration phenomenon, the increase of needy people and groups, and the growing hostility that sometimes mark human mobility cannot generate resignation and giving up the commitment to the cause of the Kingdom; therefore, by the love and faith that identifies them, the MSCS Sisters live hope with the people with whom they share life and mission.

Being a presence of hope means witnessing to the joy (*letitia*) of engagement, highlighting the importance of the small seeds planted and the consequences of the slow processes of resistance and change, including in structural terms. It means overcoming the obsession for immediate results and recognizing one’s own weaknesses, being able to trigger local and regional processes of change that, at times, will have global repercussions.

76 Sharing the journey, accompanying migrants in their struggles

Accompanying and supporting the struggles of migrants and refugees is a priority task of the MSCS socio-pastoral action. This is a difficult practice, due to the heterogeneity and complexity of many situ-

ations. Still, in a situation where people in mobility are often humiliated, exploited, deceived and even forced, that is, violated in their subjectivity, treating them as subjects, respecting their autonomy and their choices, is the first way to recognize their inalienable dignity. That is why, first of all, the priority is to accompany and, when requested, support their struggles and efforts, establishing symmetrical and equal relationships.

Specifically, in the presence and support to people on the move, the accompaniment and the solidarity contributions to the migrant groups is important, because the strengthening of the forms of self-organization of people on the move is empowerment, freedom, and respect of the otherness. This, in turn, interacts and fosters intercultural and processes that favor the culture of encounter.

The sharing of the journey of the MSCS Sisters in the world of human mobility, becoming migrants with the migrants, associates in its praxis the interactive collaboration and the appreciation of the contribution of lay people, with whom the trajectories gain reinforcement and the processes and results are enriched in quality and potentialities.

77 Building a vocational culture, assuming the animation of vocations as a way of life. In the MSCS Congregation, the responsibility of giving reasons for one's own vocation is entrusted and shared with each and every one in the experiences of consecration and in the Scalabrinian mission. In this way, they place themselves in the defence and service of life, by vocation, in the accompaniment of young people for the construction and consolidation of life projects, in listening and responding in love to God, as well as in the awakening of vocations, animating all areas of mission. Therefore, the vocational animation, counts on the participation and involvement of the laity to guarantee continuous and durable vocational processes.

Inspired by the disciples of Emmaus (Lk 24), who are the icon of vocational animation², the MSCS Sisters open themselves to the encounter with the Pilgrim who makes their hearts burn, learn the art of accompa-

2 CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF SAINT CARLOS BORROMEO – SCALABRIANAS. Vocation Animation: The Path of Light and Congregational Unity. Guide document. Rome, 2021, p. 17.

nying and are contagiously touched by the Risen Christ himself, to educate and foster discernment itineraries for discipleship. It is the task of building a culture of encounter, as a Church that goes forth, that opens and strengthens spaces of love, sharing, listening and solidarity, where welcoming differences is recognized as fidelity to God's call to life.

Permeated by the vocational culture, they empower in and around the communities the mentality, the sensitivity and the vocational praxis, with their witness, words, attitudes and gestures, leading others to discover that life is a gift received, which tends to become a shared gift (MSCS, 2021). Therefore, vocations promotion is a vital task in the Church due to the dynamism that it creates and gives birth to in communities. A vocational awareness is fundamental for the Congregation, since it is an intrinsic element of the missionary vitality it needs to have. For this reason, the MSCS Sisters constantly seek to strengthen the missionary dimension of the charism, directing their eyes to the migrant and refugee person as an animator and a vocation for the mission.

78 Dialog and welcoming, making structures more flexible and more adaptable.

Through welcoming and dialogue, the MSCS Sisters contribute with their actions to break down the walls that separate, overcome self-referential postures, and reject the sacralization of their own traditions and cultures. Dialog is the act of offering oneself to the other and, at the same time, welcoming the other. To dialogue is to open physical and symbolic space for the other, recognizing each one as interlocutor and subject, with reciprocity, overcoming a limited idea of unilateral witness.

Dialogue and acceptance as a *modus vivendi* imply adopting attitudes and behaviors of openness to cultural, religious, and axiological diversity, and to trigger processes of encounter, openness, tolerance, and recognition of otherness. And all this to collaborate in the formation of intercultural societies, where there is respect, dialogue, and exchange among diversities. A way of being that is capable of transforming people, structures, and even contexts.

Rather than immediate solutions imposed from places and power structures, it is a matter of creating new participatory dynamics that gradually mature over time and have a profound impact on social real-

ity. Therefore, with welcome, openness, and flexibility, the MSCS Sisters seek to foster inter-religious dialogue, recognizing the universal action of the life-giving Spirit that blows in the conscience of every human being and in the existence of every people, and thus boost the flexibility of pastoral and social welfare structures.

79 Raising awareness and denouncing, strengthening leaderships and collaborating with related actors

The MSCS Sisters recognize, as fundamental in their experiences, interactions, services, and speeches, the work of raising awareness in society, in the broad sense, about values such as the human family, universal citizenship, the culture of encounter, co-responsibility for creation, the universal dignity of every human being, social justice, human rights, the rights of people on the move, interculturality, among others.

While xenophobic and racist discourses make migrants vulnerable, hindering the achievement of results in missionary work and feeding security and discriminatory public policies, the dissemination of correct information and a courageous and positive vision of human mobility is transformative impulse.

Awareness-raising efforts in different spheres - ecclesial and lay, political and economic, interpersonal and communal, local and global - through multiple strategies range from personal and community witness to the use of social media. In this mission, the MSCS Congregation calls upon and unites with like-minded individuals and organizations to optimize and expand the scope of its action.

A privileged area of awareness, reporting, and training is education, understood as action in all the areas in which MSCS Sisters operate in order to build knowledge and interpretations of the reality together with their interlocutors: catechesis, social and pastoral activities, academic activities, communication networks, and educational initiatives and training programs.

80 Caring for life, protecting in vulnerability and supporting with solidarity

In their strategic institutional choices and day-to-day actions, the MSCS Sisters take care of life in all senses, with integral attention, beyond

recognizing and protecting the right to come and go, as well as the right not to have to migrate.

In defense and promotion of life, they strive to provide, with partnerships, answers to the challenges of migrants and refugees, with guidance, services and assistance that welcome, protect, promote and integrate, especially in favor of those most in need. They seek to expand collaboration, with training and with the support of volunteers, expand and strengthen the care and promotion with migrants and refugees, sharing responsibilities.

The context characterized by the growth of involuntary migrations and by increasingly dangerous crossings, not rarely marked by experiences of violence, suffering, and mourning, requires a specific care to the integral health of the person on the move, including in terms of psychotherapeutic support, especially for children, teenagers and women. Particular attention is reserved to those who most need and suffer the most from the vulnerabilities and risks that the migratory journey can bring. Care also includes a commitment to the environment, to social and environmental ecology, and to the sustainability of life on planet earth.

81 Valuing otherness, promoting interculturality and co-responsibility for our common home

MSCS Sisters, by vocation and mission, live and work in constant interaction with people from different cultures, with different languages, religions, and value scales that are often unique and challenging to build positive and enriching relationships for all.

The responsibility for the defense of dignity and respect for differences is added to the efforts to strengthen the defense of justice without exclusion or discrimination and the protection of human rights and dignity of every human being, with his/her baggage of faith, culture, resources and dreams. The Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters participate in the indispensable struggle for a world in which the otherness's are put into relationship in the construction of intercultural societies, organizations, laws and projects.

In this sense, they cultivate ecological awareness as a way of understanding the environment in its entirety, recognizing the consequences that everyday acts can have on the planet and understanding that the survival of ecosystems depends on everyone. The transformations that

care for our common home generates have a huge impact on living conditions and human mobility all over the planet. It is about understanding that the care for our common home is an urgent and fundamental challenge, because it is not possible “to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded”.³

INDICATORS OF MSCS MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

82 Being involved in direct and indirect service and in the promotion and advocacy articulations, the MSCS Sisters manage their human and financial, institutional and cultural resources coherently with the identity and the parameters that identify and configure the MSCS Congregation itself, the affiliated organizations and their members.

A cross-cutting analysis of the elements shared by the MSCS Sisters on the style of resource and process management they adopt, points to some characteristic features. Such elements are progressively configured in a way of being, doing and knowing/recognizing the many nuances and that is consolidated and updated in the dynamism that marks human mobility, the charism and their own consecrated religious life.

The various contexts - cultural and linguistic, ecclesial and national, sociopolitical and organizational - where the MSCS Congregation carries out its mission and articulates its life and activity have an impact on the configuration and strategic choices that it makes. The vast wealth of experiences, sensibilities, and competencies of its members contribute to determine the *modus vivendi* and *modus operandi* of each mission of the congregation and of the institution as a whole.

Four elements are highlighted as indicators of the management principles that characterize the MSCS way of being and managing the assets and projects of the MSCS Congregation, as well as signaling characteristics of the MSCS way of planning and acting.

83 **The cycle of planning, evaluative processes, systematization, and replanning** is one of the most consolidated management principles that the MSCS Congregation has adopted since the renewal promulgated by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. It is a conso-

3. FRANCIS. LS, n. 13.

lidated feature at all levels, whose patterns determine the internal organizational structure. This element of the MSCS style of institutional management reflects in the ability to think and structure also the concrete action and the search for financial, institutional and even human resources support, especially of volunteers, which strengthens and expands the ability to respond to the challenges of the mission.

Focusing on an organizational style adapted to medium and even long terms, with systematic periodicity and consolidated modalities of participative analysis of the processes engendered from the Strategic Planning and the projects undertaken institutionally, opportunely relies on external expertise, whether in auditing or consulting to qualify and optimize efforts and results.

The MSCS Congregation monitors its internal processes and integrates the results and the knowledge that the evaluations provide in benefit of the processes and the goals it sets itself, always with attention and creative initiatives of participative and propositional involvement of the members, aiming to ensure institutional continuity, corroborated by the systematization and valuation of the experience lived.

84 The centrality of the charismatic identity as a determining factor of being and acting is imposed as a principle and criterion, especially in the management of human resources, but also of goods and other institutional resources of the MSCS Congregation.

Together with the relevance of the Scalabrinian Charism, in the administrative and strategic choices and processes, the Congregation of the MSCS Sisters is configured by its ecclesial dimension in a primordial way, in the sense that it receives its mission from the Church and always carries it out on behalf of and in the bosom of the local churches, with which it is integrated and in which it places itself at the service of communion moved by faith, vocation and mission.

Particularly in the ecclesial context, the MSCS Sisters nourish their missionary spirit by sharing life, talents, knowledge and competence, in order to convoke ecclesial actors and organizations, mobilizing them for the mission to which the Charism calls them and sends them, with all that they are, all that they have, all that they know how to do and teach.

It is from their identity as Scalabrinian religious and missionaries that they interact and seek support and contributions from strategic actors for the mission, in the public sector and in civil society.

85 **Caring for people and human relations** as an ethical principle and indicator of responsibility, especially in the management of people and processes important for the fulfillment of the mission of the MSCS Congregation. In their actions and in human and inter-institutional relationships, they seek to improve themselves with a professional approach that aims to integrate the learning that comes from their experiences and competencies. The MSCS Sisters value social co-responsibility towards society and the environment, attracting and valuing contributions from internal and external human resources.

It consists of a dynamic of constant and persistent efforts of recognition, respect and listening to the actors involved in the relational and institutional processes, which includes attention to the professionals and volunteers who join the MSCS Sisters in the commitment of welcoming and service, focusing on valuing each person with their specificities, needs, abilities, culture, ethnicity, vocation or religion. Therefore, solidarity is cultivated, making knowledge, talents and diverse potentialities converge for the common good and the achievement of the goals to which the MSCS Congregation proposes to reach.

These principles of management, transverse to all work, internal or focused on the world of human mobility, contributes to the formation of people, including many migrants and refugees, who take leadership in roles and opportunities capable of social transformation and the promotion of integral and sustainable development for all.

86 **The Synodality, with multilateral commitment in participatory processes.** Synodality leads to listening in the community, where interpersonal relationships and institutional functions are guided by welcome, humility and openness, which value and integrate the plurality that enriches. Synodality “indicates the specific *modus vivendi et operandi* of the Church, the People of God, which concretely manifests and realizes being communion in walking together”⁴.

4. INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL COMMISSION. *Synodality in the life and mission of the church*, 2018, n. 6.

To the MSCS Congregation, the participation of each and every one in the processes and events that constitute the dynamics of its own institutional life and mission is inspired and strengthened by the dynamics of the Church of communion, in the image of the Church family of God, united to Christ and in a constant state of mission. Therefore, in the management of human and material resources, of deadlocks, processes and projects, the focus is on walking together, of “being with” and “staying with”, in common journeys.

Synodality puts individuals and the organization as a whole in humble interaction with those who are different, in the community and in the world, especially with those excluded by the Churches and society. It is about constant movements of compassion, solidarity, and openness of mind and affectivity, institutional and cultural in a horizontal sense, without privileges or discriminations, overcoming divisions, in the sense of Scalabrinian spirituality and missionary spirit.

With participatory processes in the sense of synodality, the commitment of vocation and mission converges to transform internal structures and to influence the transformation of ecclesial, socio-cultural and public structures, in the defense and protection of life, and in the promotion of the rights of migrants and refugees.

Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all and in all. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put-on loves, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Col 3,11-17)

VI

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VIII

Prayer of the Pilgrims of Hope

*Lord,
make us bearers of hope, so that
where there is darkness, your light reigns and
where there is resignation, there will be
a rebirth of confidence in the future.*

*Lord,
make us instruments of your justice, so that
where there is exclusion, fraternity may flourish
where there is greed, sharing flourishes.*

*Lord, make us builders of your Kingdom
together with migrants and refugees,
and with all the inhabitants of the peripheries.*

*Lord, make us learn how beautiful it is to live, all of us,
as brothers and sisters.*

Amen.

Francis 1

Rome, Saint John Lateran, May 9, 2022.

1. FRANCIS. *Message for the 108th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2022.*



CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARY SISTERS
OF ST. CHARLES BORROMEO – SCALABRINIANS

Via Monte del Gallo, 68 – 00165 – Rome, Italy

www.scalabriniane.org

