

ASIAN CHURCH'S CARE FOR THE MIGRANTS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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Introduction:

Some years back, I was one of those representing the sending Church in Asia whom the Church in Taiwan has invited for a Conference on the situation of the migrants here in Taiwan. It was a very concrete program for the receiving Church in Taiwan in giving appropriate pastoral care for the migrants. Then at a later date, this same Church hosted the meeting of the Asia Working Group (AWG) of the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), which discussed relevant issues of migration in Asia and some possible measures to address some issues and gaps in this social and ecclesial phenomenon. And now, with this 2nd Asia Pacific Congress, the Church in Taiwan continues to proactively show her Pastoral Care of Migrants and their families not only in her jurisdiction but also for those in Asia and the Pacific. We therefore congratulate the Church in Taiwan for showing the Church in Asia that the migrants, or the people on the move, urgently need our attention and care; that we should come together to face the situation and find common ways of providing the love and care of our Mother, the Church.

1. MIGRANTS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

What is the situation to which the Mother Church in Asia is addressing and should continue to respond to? This 2nd Asia Pacific Congress on Migration, Family and Mission must have refreshed and even repeated the scenario which several gatherings in the past may have already painted. The great importance and relevance of this matter deserves repetition and more committed discussions. Let us bring out some salient points, which show how human mobility impacts on the human person, the society and the Church. This section is sourced from the paper of Mr. Johan Ketelers, Secretary General, ICMC presented at BISA VIII, FABC-OHD. 1

1.1 Continuous societal changes – composing and de-composing society

History records the fact of human mobility that brings a new society, de-composes a society and re-compose society. These social processes go through conflicts, cultural evolution and/or revolution, which at times contribute to human progress. In fact, progress involves adaption or renewal of social groupings. Migration clearly broadens and hastens these social changes and processes from small social units to larger ones and to the whole global society.

Technology and modern means of communication also bring rapid social changes. Our social and communitarian relationships also are affected, which in turn bring us to examine continuously our moral bearings, values and beliefs. These societal changes which will result in new community/society models which will integrate moral values is certainly a concern especially of the Church; the kind of societies that will emerge across generations and all over the globe is a great challenge for the Universal Church as well as the Particular and Local ones.

1.2 Negative impact on the family.

This Congress is a clear testimony to the fact that family is adversely affected by human mobility. The break-up of family of migrants was one of the topics discussed in one of the Plenary Session of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care for Migrants and Itinerant Peoples. “The family, the natural community in which human social nature is experienced, makes a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the good of society” said, St. John Paul, II (Letter to Families, 1994). But, this cornerstone of our communities is continuously de-uniting because of migration and the lack of protective frameworks surrounding it.

Doctor Suarez-Orozco, Professor of Globalization and Education at the Steinhardt School New York University assessed the total number of families in the world left behind from both international and internal migration to be around 500 million.²

In the Philippines, UNICEF estimates that some 9 million Filipino youth – more than 1 out of every 4 - are children left behind. There are of course much more in reality than in the statistics.

Many families decide or are forced to decide to migrate for survival or for material future of the family and the education of the children. But, paradoxically and tragically, the separation between spouses and between parents and children often result in estrangements and/or divorce and children left to be brought up by grandparents or neighbors and who eventually miss essential elements for proper growth in maturity. Moreover, what kind of future societies will these children form when they themselves grow up?

The consultation meeting ICMC organized in Manila in 2009, uniting representatives of all Bishops Conferences in Asia, clearly identified six major gaps in this specific issue:

- A gap in respect for families and family unity as a first value:
- A gap in recognizing family unity as essential for social cohesion
- A gap in supports for fragile families
- Gaps in research on the trends, effects and alternatives regarding the de-uniting of families in countries both of origin and destination
- Gaps arising in the context of marriage migration.

It was understood that the fragilization of families is amongst the highest social costs of migration and that this cost is almost ignored in the international and national debates and decision-making processes. Pope Benedict XVI invited us to “look at the difficulties that every migrant family lives through, the hardship and humiliations, the deprivation and fragility of millions and millions of migrants and internally displaced peoples”.

Worldwide frameworks and legal procedures that protect family unity in contexts of migration and mobility are either lacking or not sufficiently implemented. The UN Convention for the protection of Migrant workers and their families, which merely suggests - not requires - state parties to provide for family reunification in their national immigration policies regarding migrant workers has been ratified by only 43 countries. Even in the case of refugees, re- unification of refugee families very often appears to be a cumbersome process. ³

Even remittances keep couples and families separated, because countries of origin have a vested interest in family members staying in the country of origin in order for that country to secure the steady inflow and multiple economic benefits of remittance income from their spouses or parents working abroad.

1.3 Migration invites existing societal structures and mentalities to adapt to new realities

Increasing human mobility makes most policy makers of societies defensive and inadequate in dealing with it. Existing policies in society and its structures need to adapt to the new realities. The attitude of extreme cultural or national identity could create mechanisms of excluding others even to the extent of aggressive denial of the human identity and dignity of others. This is no longer sustainable; policy decisions towards better integration of foreigners should be drawn up. However, a mentality of denial of the fact of increasing mobility and inadequate societal structures continue to be obstacles to integrating migrants into a receiving society.

The political and economic realities in one country affect the others. The economic crisis of one country affects economic and social realities of another. Some kind of global governance is needed; but political hesitation to building international governance structures or frameworks is well known. Likewise, for migration issues, which cannot be dealt with at national level only, the need to develop international mechanisms is the reasonable alternative.

1.4 Increasing mobility draws xenophobic and racist feelings and attitudes

Xenophobia and racism are clearly wrong understanding and responses to migration. Catholic social teaching upholds that "...the dignity of every person before God is the basis of the dignity of men before others." "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:32). Thus, policies in society may not exclude people, denying them of their dignity. The centrality of the human person must be the core of all forms of societal development. This pro-active focus on the positive value and dignity of every human person should prevail over simply corrective or even reactive measures against xenophobia and racism. This may not be easy, but the Church should be courageous to recognize all possible differences and respect religious freedom. But, at the same time Catholic Social Teachings promotes the search and strengthening of unity in diversity.

1.5 Increasing human mobility calls for greater vigilance in the defense of human dignity

In Day of Migrants, Pope Benedict XVI stated, "the migrant is a human person with inalienable fundamental rights always to be respected by all". That is a clear appeal for all Christians to become aware of the social and pastoral challenges inviting each of us to act accordingly and in societal responsibility.

From the experience of Church workers/ministers in migration and development settings worldwide, human rights are a way of organizing justice and equity; they are a way forward in the protection of people, societies and global development. But migration response mechanisms in many countries show a denial of this simple truth and reluctance in recognizing rights as possible solutions. Moreover, in some political debates bear a tendency "to corrupt some of the existing

rights through new interpretations and definitions which raise huge questions on the quality of the implementation levels.” (Johan Ketelers)

The Church played a prominent role in the preparation of the 1951 Refugee Convention and has repeatedly taken up an advocacy role in the defense of human dignity and human rights. She needs to continue this work and contribute to filling the gaps and building new perspectives and effective policies at all policy-making levels: intergovernmental, regional and national. Caritas in Veritate calls for a rights-based approach and invites all to reconsider the link between justice, truth and charity. It also raises the need for political commitment to establish global order and global governance respectful of human rights.

1.6 Labor migration

In Asia, a consequence of uneven economic growth and distribution has been the increase in the scale and scope of cross border emigration and immigration. Approximately 50 million worldwide are migrants from Asia, sending about US \$114 billion home in remittances each year. Within Asia, there are some 22 million migrant workers (which the ILO suggests is a little over 1 of every 4 migrant workers in the world. 4

In recent years, both in Asia and more widely, there has been significant change in the extent and character of undocumented, cross border movement of women and children. From invisible and often reluctant dependents simply accompanying or joining male relatives in migration, women have increasingly become independent service workers, and many forms of low-skilled contractual arrangements involving irregular women migrant workers have appeared in recent years. This feminization of migration is a not just a change in net numbers, which is still roughly 50% worldwide, but also a change in the nature and circumstance of women migrating: now more for work, independent and not accompanied by men, a phenomenon that is increasingly evident in movement to and from the region.

The Holy Father Benedict XVI described in his Message on World Migration Day 2006: “Today... female emigration tends to become more and more autonomous. Women cross the border of their homeland alone in search of work in another country. Indeed it often happens that the migrant woman becomes the principal source of income for her family. It is a fact that the presence of women is especially prevalent in sectors that offer low salaries. If, then, migrant workers are particularly vulnerable, this is even more so in the case of women. “

Across the region (as well as globally), female migrants are even triply vulnerable - because they are (1) foreigners; (2) women in cultures that for the most part continue to be heavily male-oriented, and (3) often working in domestic or other jobs that are out of view. Many are exploited and abused.

Such vulnerabilities extend as well to the rising number of women in the region who migrate as brides.

These enormous movements of people within and from Asia in a time of increased global concern, commitment and support for maximizing economic benefits and minimizing social costs present

opportunities and challenges to States, international organizations, and to civil society, including the Church in Asia. Given the ethnic, cultural, racial, religious, political and economic diversity of these movements, the structure of migration varies within Asian countries, often demanding country-specific solutions within the transnational phenomena of mobility and migration policy.

“Economic and social imbalances in the world must be addressed by restoring a just hierarchy of values and placing the human dignity of workers before all else” Economy is indeed to serve the person, not the person to serve economy.

There is enduring fear among migrant workers and their families throughout the region, especially where even a member of the family is in undocumented or irregular status, among those who were victims of trafficking, torture, trauma or violence while they migrate; fear indeed of being further exploited, of being caught, of once again facing forced separation from loved ones, of being imprisoned and deported under at best unpredictable conditions.⁵

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHURCHES AND CHRISTIANS IN THE FIELD OF MIGRATION

The whole world, beyond any kind of division by nationality, convictions or faith, is invited to act and respond adequately to the “epoch making reality” of migration. The Church, in the midst of these pluralities is called to respond with the respected “brand” of its Catholic identity.

The whole of Catholic Social Teachings continued in the various documents define the Churches’ mission as an action defined by charity. “Charity is the heart of the Church’s social doctrine. Every responsibility and every commitment spelt out by that doctrine is derived from charity, which according to the teaching of Jesus is the synthesis of the entire law. (cf Mt 22:36) The Catholic Social Teaching is a proclamation of the truth of Christ’s love in society. “The doctrine is a service to charity but its locus is truth.” All we do in the social commitment needs truth. “Without truth, without trust and love for what is true, there is no social conscience and responsibility, and social action ends up serving private interests and the logic of power, resulting in social fragmentation in a globalized society at difficult times like the present times”.⁶

These responsibilities in terms of commitment to migrants could include, according to Johan Ketelers, the following:

- a better preparation and valorization of the many Church actors (training and deployment of action),
- improved relations between Churches in the countries of departure and of arrival (unity),
- the need for a new approach to respond to the specific needs of the young (future oriented thinking),
- the reduction of the growing mutual mistrust between migrants and receiving communities (human dignity, development, justice and equity)

- the relations to be built with governments, civil society and local authorities (methodological approach).

Ketelers, continues to identify some very practical areas in which the Church can meaningfully contribute and commit:

- - Deepen and better articulate the theology of migration. There is a need to develop and communicate on these issues from a Catholic perspective
- - Continue to speak as a missionary Church with an evangelical message, to respond to migrants, their families and the societies they have left, they transit through and to which they migrate.
- - Contribute to a correct analysis of the causes of increasing human mobility, also to better combat poverty and thus reduce the need to migrate
- - Contribute to the protection and the human dignity of all people
- - Promote policies of inclusion and not of exclusion
- - Accompany policy making bodies in preparing effective integration procedures at national and global levels (migration is too important to be left to politicians only: it involves all societal actors including the Church and faith based organizations) -
- Well beyond a strictly economic or utilitarian lens for migration, promote a relational view point in which the human dignity focus and the family focus remain prevalent (this is another way of highlighting the need for maintaining and further developing the longer term vision instead of the present short term political approach)
- - Provide guidance in relational values at societal and community level to increase social cohesion, solidarity and the pursuit of the common good
- - Advance the connection between family unity and social cohesion in countries of origin as well as in countries of destination
- - Contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction in countries of origin as a means to enforce the right not to migrate
- - Contribute to counter the present xenophobic approaches and movements
- - Contribute to the better interpretation of human mobility as a potential rather than as a sociologic phenomenon to be contained; a truth, including all people on the roads and those they meet.

3. THE FEDERATION OF ASIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCES (FABC) is a voluntary association of episcopal conferences in South, Southeast, East and Central Asia, established with the approval of the Holy See. Its purpose is to foster among its members solidarity and co-responsibility for the welfare of Church and society in Asia, and to promote and defend whatever is for the greater good. The Federation is composed of all the bishops in Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia – from Kazakhstan to East Timor. What does FABC do in response to migration?

The then Archbishop Orlando B. Quevedo, FABC Secretary General shared the following:

3.1 According to the 7th and 8th FABC Plenary Assemblies, the situation of itinerant and migrant workers is one of the major pastoral priorities in Asia

3.2 The themes that FABC uses to reflect on the pastoral situation include the following:

- in the light of the Asian pastoral situation the mission of announcing the Gospel of Jesus is by way of a triple dialogue: dialogue with the peoples of Asia especially the majority poor, dialogue with the various cultures of Asia, and dialogue with the different religions of Asia;

- for the common task of social transformation in the Asian situation of religious pluralism, a common basis for action is the universal Reign of God;

- the local church is the acting subject of mission;

- international collaboration is necessary to face the challenges in the common journey to God's Reign;

3.3 The pastoral response suggested may be summarized in the following way: In the light of the universal mission of the Church to announce the Gospel of Jesus, relevant family ministry should be set up in every local church with the task of building communion and solidarity among members of families, among families and local churches. Such ministry should have a perspective of the Reign of God. It should respond to the needs of families in special situations, such as the families of migrants and itinerant peoples.

3.4 Solidarity and Collaboration at the International Level. Beyond decent and humane working conditions is a mutuality and reciprocity of rights, especially of the fundamental freedom of religion, based on the universal golden rule – “Do unto others what you want them do unto you.” To promote this reciprocity of rights and to ensure that peoples of different faiths practice their religion freely and safely everywhere would be a paramount responsibility of international decision makers. It needs dialogue, solidarity, and collaboration between States. It would also be necessary for the United Nations to act determinedly on this issue in accord with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

3.5 Dialogue towards recognizing and practicing reciprocity of the freedom of religion is a task needing the utmost mutual respect, openness, persistence and determination. For if States do not

recognize such freedom for their own citizen-minorities, how much more difficult it would be for States to recognize the same freedom to migrants and itinerant workers.

Dialogue, solidarity and collaboration at the international level should also address another burning issue – the issue of reuniting the families of migrants and of recognizing their rights as families, according to them the same protection as other families (see the Holy See's Charter of the Rights of the Family, 1983, Article 12).

3.6 Granted that there are many obstacles that prevent effective resolution, including concerns about internal security, economics and demography, the obstacles are not insurmountable. The pastoral care of migrants and itinerant peoples would call for local and international advocacy on these issues regarding family unification and family rights. Advocacy is part and parcel of pastoral care and strives to press forward ethical decisions on migrants and their families in accord with the teachings of the Church.

The common basis of action for such solidarity and collaboration is the universal journey of all peoples towards the Reign of God, a journey towards justice and truth, peace, freedom and love.⁷

4. FABC, OFFICE ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (OHD)

The FABC has the Office on Human Development, which among other issues, migration is one given greater importance recently. According to H. E. Archbishop Charles Bo, this office has taken up the issue of migrants as part of the response of the Church in Asia, through various programs such as the Asian Institute of Social Advocacy (AISA VIII) and the Bishops Institute of Social Action (BISA VIII). The former, held in July 2011 in Thailand was meant for the Justice and Peace Commissions of the Episcopal Conferences and for the Religious Congregations and laity groups involved in Social Issues focused on Socio Pastoral Advocacy of Indigenous Peoples and Migrants in Asia. While the latter, held in 2012 in Thailand was mainly for the Bishops on the themes on migrants, indigenous peoples, women and children, laborers and ecology.

The BISA VII participated by delegates of the Commissions for Migrants from the various Episcopal Conferences of Asia, with four Bishops of Asia, discussed the ways and means of social advocacy and pastoral ministries to the migrants of and from Asia by the Episcopal Conferences and Church Based Organizations and reliable NGOs.

In this particular program, labor migration has been specially chosen under priority for immediate attention with the following action plans:

Protecting migrant workers in the existing gaps (Human Rights and Rehabs, educations, health, social welfare), informing and alerting bishops' Conferences and providing them with guidelines on this protection

Bridging the socio/cultural/legal gaps between sending and receiving countries

Playing a mediating role and engaging in social advocacy

Developing pre-departure and post-arrival guidance/assistance

Becoming more pro-active in labor migration in terms of social analysis, strategies, planning and implementation

Preventing victimization of migrant workers in Asia by organizing some structures in deployment and employment

Promoting for the ratification of international conventions and other Human Rights instruments related to migrants

Through these actions and programs, OHD is focusing on concrete activities for Episcopal Commissions to materialize at the Asian level. Recognizing the importance of migrants in Asia, OHD is requesting the Bishops Conferences of Asia to pay special attention to migrants within the FABC.

Archbishop Bo highlighted the importance of the AWG and its role to take concrete actions in relation to the family issues of migrants. He believes that “the Church has the special duty of building, bridging and empowering migrants in equality, justice and social equity auditing in order to serve the poorest, the least and the lost in the society.”⁸

5. ICMC, AWG

Created in 1951 by the Holy See, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) is an international operating organization of the Catholic Church serving and protecting uprooted people - refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants - regardless of faith, race, ethnicity or nationality. It advocates for rights- based policies and durable solutions directly and through a worldwide network of member organizations.

ICMC is composed of representatives appointed by the Catholic Bishops Conferences and Episcopal assemblies of similar juridical status worldwide, particularly of those countries concerned with migration and refugee issues. In June 2008, the Vatican granted ICMC canonical public juridical status, testifying to the strengthened relationship between the Secretariat of State, the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, the Bishops Conferences and the organization.

In September 2001, Pope John Paul II in a message to ICMC said: “We live now in a globalizing world in which peoples and cultures are being drawn into ever closer and more complex interaction. Yet, paradoxically, we see greater ethnic, cultural, and religious tensions, which severely affect migrant peoples, who are especially vulnerable to the prejudice and injustice, which often accompany these tensions. That is why the Commission’s advocacy with governments and international organizations and its promotion of laws and policies to protect the less powerful are important aspects of its mission.”⁹

5.1 ICMC in ASIA

In order to exchange experiences and to better respond to these and the many other challenges, the International Catholic Migration Commission regularly consults its members, the Bishops Conferences worldwide. In August 2009, ICMC invited its members in Asia for a consultation meeting, which was considered by all participants to be an important step in exchanging useful information and achieving better analysis of identified focal points.

This consultation focused on a more regional reading of the current challenges related to labor migration, human trafficking and the need for protection, the well being of migrants and their families, migration and development and the modalities to enhance collaboration. The bird's eye view of these challenges raised a number of factual elements and challenging statements, which can be read in the ICMC publication, *Dignity Across Borders*.

Three main areas for intensified collaboration were discussed:

5.1.1. Increased information sharing and awareness rising activities. It was felt that a continued process of information sharing would greatly contribute to a better understanding of the challenges and solutions and to a better preparation of national, regional and international policy building activity. Better networking with relevant commissions or committees of bishops responsible for pastoral and policy areas of migration, as well as with other groups and individuals active in the field of migration and refugees, is of the essence. The Church in Asia will therefore consider organizing a process to look broadly and more systematically at migration in the region. Such a process would look at the movements of people from a sociologic viewpoint as well as with pastoral concern, to identify critical factors, characteristics and needs within migration where the various structures of the Church, from the national bishops and parishes to regional and international bodies, could play a greater part in offering assistance and protection to people already on the move, as well as to promote long-term solutions for those and others who may otherwise feel compelled to migrate.

5.1.2. More and intensified policy building and advocacy. It was agreed that well targeted advocacy was of growing importance in these matters and that the efforts should focus on emphasizing the fullness of human dignity within economic frameworks that tend to alienate the human person when they lack holistic approaches. A strong, united Asian Church voice to be heard in the international debates on migration and development would therefore focus on human dignity, the protection of family unity, the identification of the root causes of forced migration, irregular migration and human trafficking; and advocating for the right to stay home, for legal avenues of migration, and for genuine, targeted, sustainable development and co-development, especially as alternatives to forced migration of all kinds. It was understood that many national, regional and international actors, including in Asia, recognize, welcome and even expect the very specific role of the Churches in these matters.

5.1.3. Capacity building. It was noted that the key to effective work in these areas is specialization and competence in both operational programming and policy-building. The need to build capacities to not only serve present and immediate needs but to cure to the greatest extent possible the situations that create need calls for developing the capacity of partners at all levels to think and collaborate pro-actively. Front-line capacity itself naturally resides and is most to be strengthened in national and regional structures of the Church and other actors. It was recognized that a broadening and deepening of relationships among those structures, with and/or within the ICMC network, would add concrete opportunities to increase that capacity.¹⁰

5.2 ASIA WORKING GROUP (AWG)

Among other things, the Consultation was an effort to raise the Asian voice on migration debate. It was also the start of the Asia Working Group (AWG), which organized regular meetings among the representatives of the Asian Bishop Conferences. The first AWG meeting was held in September 2010 in Bangkok uniting representatives from the various regions in Asia. The list of participants has been sent to all Conferences since. The second meeting was held again in Bangkok, followed by a third held in Taipei.

The fourth meeting of the AWG following the Consultation meeting, was held in Manila last June 2013, where most Asian Bishops Conferences were represented, and were reminded about the major purpose for the AWG to deepen the analysis, improve awareness on the many migration related issues in support of the bishops Conferences. This meeting focused on the “Social cost of Migration in terms of Families.” In this very important issue, below are the concerns and recommendations reached:¹¹

5.2.1 Fragilization of families: The lack of respect for family unity constitutes in the longer term a menace to social cohesion of communities, nations and the global community. The social costs are almost ignored in the international and national debates and in the decision making process related to migration.

Recommendations:

- Efforts should be made to orient return migration when jobs are available;
- Cultural agreements allowing recognition of studies and accreditation of degrees and diplomas should be promoted;
- Social security conventions between countries should be extended to include the transfer of benefits and recognition of years of work
- Priority should be given to educational problems faced by migrant children with a dual socio-cultural identity; and
- Assistance should be given to countries in carrying out empirical studies on reintegration problems and measures to solve them.
- Need for networking and implementation of laws as well as for a change in attitude.
- Responsibility sharing is an essential step in building social cohesion.
- Need to be working with families for the promotion of Family.
- FABC to promote and support the small Christian communities.

5.2.2 National legislation, worldwide frameworks and legal procedures that protect family unity in context of migration and mobility are either lacking or not sufficiently implemented.

Recommendations:

- Build good relations with the Government to enable the promotion of social and pastoral work
- Better protect and accompany the process in human mobility and in migrant family life.
- Advocate for the reunification and implementation of the Convention for the Protection of Migrant Workers and their Families.
- The Church, rather than being mainly preventive or prescriptive, should focus on the accompaniment of humanity.

5.2.3 Children left behind and brought up by their grandparents or neighbors implicitly raises fundamental questions on the kind of social identity the grow-upon child with this kind of fundamental disconnection will develop.

Recommendations:

- The need to organize outreach and accompaniment, health services, education and training, family empowerment and pastoral care.
- The need for a transformative approach empowering poor families rather than for a charitable one only.
- Develop a prophetic voice and take moral stands
- Organize Gospel value based trainings for community workers and state officials
- Diocesan programs to include Child Protection Committees
- Challenge social evil
- Empower poor families
- Involve children in the family decision to migrate and if left behind in choosing the programs that are or can be offered.
- Kindergartens should organize on the basis of a mix in cultures
- Advocate for or create a 24 hour hotline service for children to get proper data
- Children left behind should obtain the support from the community, schools, CSO's, the Church and Governments

5.2.4 Remittances are a blessing but they also keep couples and families separated and in case of failure or abuse the stakes and the reimbursement of debt prove to further affect the family even beyond the period of migration

Recommendations:

- Work out multi-sectoral plans and present them as alternatives to be presented as alternatives to the dominant economic approach
- Advocate for legislation to protect migrant workers and better inform receivers of remittances of building ways to use this new income in escaping structural poverty.
- Educate migrant workers how to save money to start their own business in their own country
- Strengthen cohesion of communities on other values than material wealth only.

5.2.5 Migration is a family composing and a family decomposing reality

Recommendations:

- Help families prepare for immigration and follow up on the families left behind.
- Contribute to the contacts to be maintained between the migrant worker and the family in case this is not happening easily.
- Prepare for welfare services and counseling centers in dioceses.
- Organize various activities (religious activities, sport, social activities, summer camps for children, shelter, educational services) where families left behind can find some support for their needs and meet to find support in each other.
- Organize to assist the returning migrant workers: help find jobs; help reintegration in family roles.
- Advocate for the recognition of the educational levels obtained in other countries
- Help establishing data for empirical studies on reintegration.
- Advocate upon the retirement benefits not to be lost when returning.
- Accompany children of parents working abroad in their specific behavioral issues and educational needs.
- Promote the human rights of the migrant worker
- Use the media of your country and act prophetically.

6. CONCLUSION.

The Asian Church as a good and vigilant mother has exercised and continues to exercise her maternal care for a very special sector of her children and of humanity—the people on the move. The Church at all levels (local, particular, national regional and universal) is responding in varied manner and intensity to the ever-growing concerns of migrants in Asia and Pacific, and in the whole world. The Church response certainly needs continues renewal through sustained efforts of discernment, dialogue, collaboration and action. The various recommendations, both general and specific listed above from a number of initiatives meant to respond to the migrants' issues in Asia, need further deepening and eventual concerted actions by the Church in all levels and all other social agents for change and transformation.

This Conference will certainly come up with some action points, which would rally the Asian Church anew for the welfare of migrants from and within Asia. It would be inspiring for all of us to remind ourselves that the God of love and mercy continues to care for His creatures and children and that our efforts are our share and participation of such great love.

1 Ketelers, Johan, Church's Concern for Migrants and their Families of and from Asia in the Light of the Catholic Social Teachings, Paper presented in BISA VIII, FABC OHD

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Dignity Across Borders, ICMC Publications

5 Ketelers, John op.cit.

6 Ibid

7 Quevedo, Orlando, www.fabc.Org/offices

8 Bo, Charles, Message, Final Report, Asia Working Group Meeting June 2013, Manila

9 Dignity Across Borders, ICMC Publication

10 Ibid.

11 Final Report, Asia Working Group Meeting June 2013, Manila

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