

**MIGRATION, DISPLACEMENT AND CARE: THE CHRISTIAN IMPERATIVE
(MATT 25,34-40)**

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ABSTRACT: *Man is always on the move for better life. The history of humanity could be said to be a chronicle of migration. Migration has made history and history has created the circumstances for varied and complex forms of migration. Every culture, every tribe has a story regarding how they settled in their location, though some may sound only mythological. America owned originally by the Red Indians is today a country of mixed races. Early colonization of Africa and other parts of the world are all forms of migration. In the bible the story is not different. After the fall in Gen 3, Adam and Eve migrated from the Garden of Eden. Gen 12,1 begins with God's call to Abraham to leave his homeland and move to a strange land. The eventual Exodus experience all attest to migration as a necessity. In the New Testament, the parents of Jesus had no option than to migrate to Egypt in the face of danger. In Acts of the Apostles, the disciples dispersed to many places because of persecution. Migration is therefore part of man, but the border line is that migration comes as a necessity. Today, the world especially the Western world sees it as a taunting problem yawning for solution. The author of this paper believes that migration flows have been and continues to be important vectors of social, economic and cultural changes. He argues that Matt 25,34-41 challenges us with care as the ultimate solution to the issue of migration. The paper adopts exegetical lens to challenge the world leaders to eschew racism, nepotism and see every person as one. It is the belief of the author that if we see ourselves as one and take good care of every person, migration will no longer be a burden but a blessing. It also calls on world leaders to address the remote cause of migration than attacking migrants.*

KEYWORDS: Migration, Displacement, Care, Christian Imperative, History of Humanity

INTRODUCTION

Castles and Miller (2013) believe that we are living in an age of migration. The truth value of this assertion remains questionable as history has proven that migration has been part of man. People especially in the Western hemisphere discern what they call migration crisis. The big question is whether the crisis is really with people migrating or with our attitude towards the migrants. The fact that different countries are constituted by a mixture of people from different parts and the indubitable truism that civilization owes its feats to migrants who struggle to make their new abode a home casts a big doubt to the fear of migration crisis. The big issue is with our attitude to migrants which is not unconnected with human egocentric mentality and fear of the unknown. Survival trait is in human nature. Thus, wherever he finds himself, he must work to survive. Work perfect man. Man, perfects nature. Thus, as he works, he perfects himself and his surroundings. This means that with greater immigration, the propensity is more developments as the migrants influence one another to greater improvements. As we shall see shortly, great feats and successes in history trace underscore the power of migrants in aiding the development of their different new abodes. Wong (2011)

made a study at the international level. In his analysis of 160 countries from 1990 to 2008, he found that human rights treaties that require states to extend fundamental rights to noncitizens are among the most poorly ratified treaties. But more than that, as immigration into a country increases even liberal democracies become less likely to ratify, as doing so may encourage more immigration. This made him move to a comparative analysis of immigration control across Western democracies, focusing on deportation and immigration detention. The dissertation is among the first to analyze contemporary trends in these critical indicators of immigration control across countries and over time. He was convinced that economic and migration factors only partially explain trends in deportation and detention. Rather, it is the legislative representation of the far right that significantly increases the restrictiveness of immigration control. In examining how the far right "matters," he found out that the political opportunities created by electoral rules explain the impact of the far right more so than public demand for more restrictive policies. Moreover, while there is no clear evidence that more immigration control means less immigration, there is some evidence to suggest that it does result in less asylum inflows. Lastly, he examined the micro-foundations of immigration control using in-depth interviews with immigration enforcement officials and irregular migrants. He introduced a theory of selective immigration control that views immigration enforcement as a suboptimal outcome that is constrained by institutional and individual-level factors that make certain categories of migrants more or less deportable. As a result, those who are "easiest" to remove become disproportionately the targets of immigration enforcement; these are often the most vulnerable migrants. Thus, the problem is not necessarily immigration for while brain drain is encouraged by Westerners, they are the same people who shout and make laws against migrants. All we need is to change our attitude towards migrants and not just deport and dump them as if we have the earth on our as ours. The pericope under study, Matt 25,34-40 gives us care and concern as the unique solution to the so-called migration crisis. Juss (2016) sees migration as an aspect of global change development.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Migration and Displacement

There could be several definitions of migrations as both animate and inanimate objects can indulge in migration. Contextually, Readers Digest (1975) traces migration to its verbal root to mean moving from one country or region to settle in another. It is changing one's place of abode. Migration could be immigration or emigration; in-migration and out-migration; net-migration and Gross migration; and internal migration. It could be international or intra-national. Many people choose to migrate. These are voluntary migrants. Many are economic migrants. Other voluntary migrants include older dependents who want to live somewhere warm and sunny in their retirement. However, many other people have no choice and are forced to leave their homes. These are involuntary migrants. Their lives and homes may be in danger due to war or a natural disaster. These people are also called refugees. Gonzalez (1961) identifies five (5) types of migration: seasonal, temporary, non-seasonal, recurrent, continuous and permanent. Her conclusion is based on her research on Caribbean region. Later in 1989 she added what she calls "conflict migration".

This paper takes displacement to refer to forced migration. Ochucho (2015)¹ holds that in the literature and in common usage, “migration” signifies voluntarism, even if implicitly, while “displacement” entails the influence of forces beyond movers’ control. Yet students of voluntary migration, drawn from a wide range of social sciences, are hardly unanimous about the phenomenon they study and thus underline aspects that are consistent with the epistemological stances of their respective disciplines. The International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) describes forced migration as “a general term that refers to movements of refugees and internally displaced people (those displaced by conflicts) as well as people displaced by natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine and development projects”. The study of forced migration, very much like that of voluntary migration, is multidisciplinary, has both internal and international. Internationally, the Population Division of the United Nations (1982, 1998) identified four categories of both voluntary and involuntary migration as permanent; labor, refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented (clandestine migration).

Historical Excursus into Human Migration

From the pre-modern Homo Erectus who first migrated from Africa over the Levantine Corridor and Horn of Africa to Euraisa about 1.8 million years ago to Homo antecessor and not excluding the great ancestor of the modern man and Neanderthals – Homo heidelbergensis, his has demonstrated that pervasive culture of migration is part of man. Going back to our villages, every town has story as to how they came to settle in their present location. Stückradt (2015)² throughout the history of mankind, there has always been migration. Looking for work, getting away from war, persecution or disasters, searching for a good place to live, the desire to enjoy freedom of worship—there are plenty of reasons why people leave their homelands. International organizations estimate that between 175 and 185 million people are currently living, either temporarily or permanently, away from their home countries. That is between 2.5 and three percent of the world’s population. In this subsection, this paper is confined itself in the main to exploring human migration in history. The essence is to shape our human experiences of the past. This section gives us a neat and narrow road map with sharp turns, unambiguous starting to show that migration is part of man. It reminds us of how numerous and diverse the experience of history and its events make up the experience of living men and women. Attempt is made to cover the Ancient Near East (ANE); The West including Europe and the United States; Asia; Australia and Africa. Since this paper is not structured to be a study of history, it limits its scope to only the tip of the iceberg while leaving detailings to books of history but of course not leaving off notifications of important dates and events. Based on Grun (1972) records, humanity has known migration from the beginning as we can see below. Facts studied also demonstrate that what we call civilization today is grandfathered by migration. Migrants do not migrate only to milk the host, they, for survival traits also aid in the economic advancement and development of the host regions.

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² Dr. Michael Stückradt is Deputy Minister for Innovation, Science, Research and Technology at the State Government of North Rhine-Westphalia.

A. Pre-Christian Era

4000-3501: End of Paleolithic period along Mediterranean coastlines. The Sumerians migrated and settled on the site of the city of Babylon, reaching its peak in 3500-3001. Sumerian writing done on clay. The cuneiform writing came to be known at the cradle of its civilization. Sumerian Temple of Janna was also erected. Copper alloys used by Sumerians and Egyptians. There was also smelting of gold and silver. First year of Jewish Calendar – 3760.

3000-2501: Semitic tribes occupy Assyria in Northern part of the plain of Shinar and Akkad. Phoenicians settle on Syrian coast, with centres at Tyre and Sidon. Sumerian poetry lamenting the death of Tammuz; first epic tales of Gilgamesh; Sumerian cuneiform writing reduced to pictographs. Major religious festival in Sumeria celebrating the victory of god of spring over goddess of chaos. Brick temples with colored pillars in Uruk and Sumeria. Earliest Trojan culture Glass beads in Egypt; Cheops pyramids at Gizeh. Sumerian medicine discovers the healing qualities of mineral springs; beginning of astronomical observations in Babylonia, India and China; manufacture of first iron objects.

2500-2001: Settlement of Aramean nomads from Euphrates area and of semitic Canaanite tribes in Palestine. First libraries opened in Egypt. Script changes from Sumerian style to semitic right to left vertical style. Isis and Osiris cult in Egypt; Snake and Bull religious symbols in early Minoan culture in Crete; Ishtar is worshipped as goddess of love. Building of Sakkara Pyramids; Painted and black pottery in China; Indus civilization in India; Scandinavian Neolithic age. China music has five-tone scale.

2000-1501: The Hittites, Indo-European tribes from Asia Minor join together in one single kingdom; Greeks moved from Caspian Sea toward the Eastern Mediterranean; the Hyskos drive the Egyptians south and form a kingdom in the Nile Delta. Beginning of Egyptian 24 alphabet signs; the oldest form of a novel “the story of Sinuhe” written in Egypt; beginning of semitic alphabet. Marduk becomes god of Babylon; Stonehenge, England is centre of religious worship; Hammurabi of Babylon sets laws of kingdom and provides first of all legal systems; Thutmose builds first tomb in Valley of Kings. Bronze age in Britain; Huangho culture in China; Elaborate royal tombs in middle Europe. First trumpet played in Denmark; Religious dances in Crete; Instruments added to Egyptian orchestra.

1500-1001: The Phrygians migrate; from Thrace to Asia Minor; Chiapa de Carzo, earliest known settlement in Mexico; the Phoenician reach Malta; the Israelites led by Moses left Egypt and reached Canaan. Beginning of primitive Greek alphabet; Ikhnaton’s “Hymn to Aton” and correspondence with neighbouring states; library in Hittite capital has tablets in eight languages; Gilgamesh epic recorded; first Chinese dictionary with 40,000 characters. Vedic religion assigns different powers to the separate deities of the heavens, the air and the earth; Age of the judges elected from the 12 tribes of Israel. Beginning of the blooming of Cretan-Mycenaean culture; Ganges civilization in India. Mural in Thebes shows female musicians entertaining at festive gathering; Hittites have religious dances; instruments include guitar, lyre, trumpet, tambourine.

1000-901: Phoenicians already established at Tyre continue westward expansion into Cyprus western Mediterranean; Ionians dispossessed of their homeland in Greece found 12 cities on west coast of Asian Minor including Miletus and Ephesus. Greek script based on semitic-phoenician characters with addition of vowels, uses only capital letters; Chinese script fully

developed; Hebrew alphabet as opposed to early semitic alphabet developed; beginning of Hebrew literature: song of Deborah, later collected in song of songs. Classic paganism in full bloom in Greece; Pantheistic religion develops in India. Brush and ink painting in China; Temple of Hera; Temple in Jerusalem has main aisle with vestibule, three storied wings; gold vessels and jewelry in use in Europe. Professional musicians sing and play at religious ceremonies in Israel; water supply system through reinforced subterranean tunnels built in Jerusalem.

900-801: Phoenicians settle in Cyprus. Iliad and Odyssey the Greek epics, Leather scrolls with translations of Old Babylonian text into Aramaic and Greek. Samaria becomes religious center of Israel; earliest Jewish prophets; the bull, bull's horns and animals shown with wings worshipped in most Eastern Mediterranean countries. Bronze doors and black obelisk at palace in Balawat. Iron and steel production.

800-701: Greeks settle on coast of Spain; Etruscans migrate into Italy; the nobility of Attica settles in Athens; Celts migrate into England. Oldest Chinese poems; Egyptian fable "battle between Head and Belly"; Syrian language changes from Phoenician to Aramaic; collection of the sayings of Solomon. Apollo worshipped in Delphi; Legendary laws of Lycurgus at Sparta; Hesiod defines the five classic ages. Arts and Crafts flourish in Asia Minor; Ivory carving practiced in Egypt; Music becomes part of daily life in Egypt; choral and dramatic music develops. Sledges with rollers in use for heavy loads in India medicine becomes divorced from priesthood; medical training use anatomical models; Babylonian and Chinese astronomy understands planetary movements, new calendar confirmed.

400-351: Carthaginians occupy Malta. First theatrical performance in Rome. The five books of Moses receive definite form, dialogues of Plato. Trumpet playing competitions in Greece. Use of catapults as weapons of war.

350-301: Gauls leave France and settle in Northern Italy. Earliest extant Papyrus written in Greek. Heraclides disciple of Plato teaches heliocentrism. Erection of the Greek theatre – Epidaurus. First Roman coins.

250-201: Iron age people invaded Britain; Carthage begins conquest of Spain. Andronicus first performed in Rome. Erection of a 40 feet high column by Asoka of India with his laws inscribed on it. Eratosthenes suggests that the earth moves around the sun; Eratosthenes suggests that the earth moves around the sun; maps out the course of the Nile and estimates the earth's circumference.

150-101: Syrians expelled from Jerusalem by Simon Maccabeus. Heron founds the first College of Technology at Alexandria.

100-51: Caesar invades Britain.

B. Christian Era

Military conquests lead to lots of migrations. For instance, Mongol empire started South West of China reaching deeply into Afghanistan, Persia, Asia Minor, Syria and Eastern Europe. Ottoman Empire that came later lead to migration from Central Asia, through Asia Minor to the capture of Constantinople. In Africa, the Bantus left Central Africa to the West and even as far as South Africa. Between 1875 and 1914, one hundred and twenty thousand (120,000)

Jews fled the pogroms of Russia for asylum in Britain. Also, many from Poland and Ukraine went into Germany as agricultural workers.

Apart from military expedition, voyages by the Europeans some five hundred (500) years ago lead to the discovery of new worlds like the Americas and Asias and development of colonial endeavours for mercantile and economic strategies. Large numbers of men migrated to America, Asia and Africa to take advantage of these. Little wonder most cities in the USA are named after cities in the British Europe and the citizens are evidenced mixtures of different races and blood. Imposition of foreign languages on the Africans are all in effort to accommodate the interest of the white colonial masters and migrants.

Further, shortage of labour lead to new migration system, namely, slave trade. Later abolition of slave trade in the 19th century lead to another system of labour migration called contracted labour.

Recent industrial revolution displaced many contracted labourers but gave hope or new jobs and so many still migrated in search of greener pastures.

In the contemporary times, the World War II displaced many people. Many found new place of residence in Europe. Example, Britain offered work permit to ninety thousand (90,000) workers from refugee camps.

C. Real Facts on Migration in Recent Times

News about migration is hitting the skies because of the erroneous belief that people from the so-called third world countries especially sub-Saharan Africa are flocking to the Western World. Against this belief, studies by the Bonn International Centre for Conversion in Peter (2015) have proven that:

Contrary to the still prevailing belief caused by sometimes one-sided media coverage that a large share of African migrants relocates to Europe or the developed states in the North, research has shown that this is not the case. Only 1.5 percent of all Sub-Saharan Africans, living outside their country, live within the European Union. More than two-thirds of all migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa, however, migrate to other countries within Sub-Saharan Africa (approximately 16.3 million). Sub-Saharan Africa is also a region characterized by high numbers of forced migrants. It has the world's highest concentration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and hosts approximately 20 percent of the world's refugee population. In the region, we find both sending and receiving states. We also find states that are both, or that are transit countries. Tanzania, Chad and Uganda are amongst the top ten refugee-hosting countries worldwide. Cameroon, Sudan and Kenya are amongst the countries in Africa that hosted the highest number of new refugees in 2007. 17 African states have refugee populations of more than 50,000 persons each (p. 4).

In fact, much of African international migration is intra-regional, although African countries are starkly unaware of this because they rarely share figures on the migrants exchanged, largely due to either lack of data or absence of bilateral arrangements, or both. Out of a total

of 14.5 million migrants originating in SSA, 10 million (or 69 percent) move within the region (IOM³, 2008, quoting Ratha and Shaw, 2007).

Witteler-Stiepelmann (2015)⁴ identifies some reasons for migration. According to her, the main reasons are poverty, lacking employment opportunities, war, environmental degradation, and climate change. Let me illustrate this: • Poverty and lacking employment opportunities: 41 percent of all Africans still live on less than one dollar per day and 487 million laborers don't earn enough to feed their families. Yet another 1.3 million earn less than two dollars a day—they need to work under humiliating conditions with no labor rights and social standards to protect them. • Armed conflicts: Another reason for high migration and refugee numbers in Africa are wars. 40 percent of all wars of the last decade were fought in Africa. Multiple inter- and intra-state conflicts witnessed forced displacement, so-called ethnic cleansing, and severe violation of human rights. • Environmental degradation and climate change: These deprive humans of their resources for survival. UNDP estimates that more than 100 million people in southern Africa alone are severely threatened by desertification and drought.

Remote Causes of Migration in the Recent Times.

In as much as migration is part of the human history, it is also a fact that the rate of migration in the recent times is on a geometrical increase. This cannot be for no reason. The author among other possible reasons believe that the following are the major remote causes:

War, Violence and Insecurity

Records show that Central America's Northern Triangle region is among the most violent in the world. According to police statistics, El Salvador's 2015 national murder rate reached approximately 103 homicides per 100,000 people, a level of violence not seen since the end of the country's civil war. Last year's 6,650 homicides are an approximately 70 percent increase over 2014, following the unravelling of a truce between rival gangs and an aggressive crackdown by security forces. While El Salvador received the unwanted designation of the most violent country in the hemisphere, violence levels remain high in neighbouring Honduras and Guatemala.

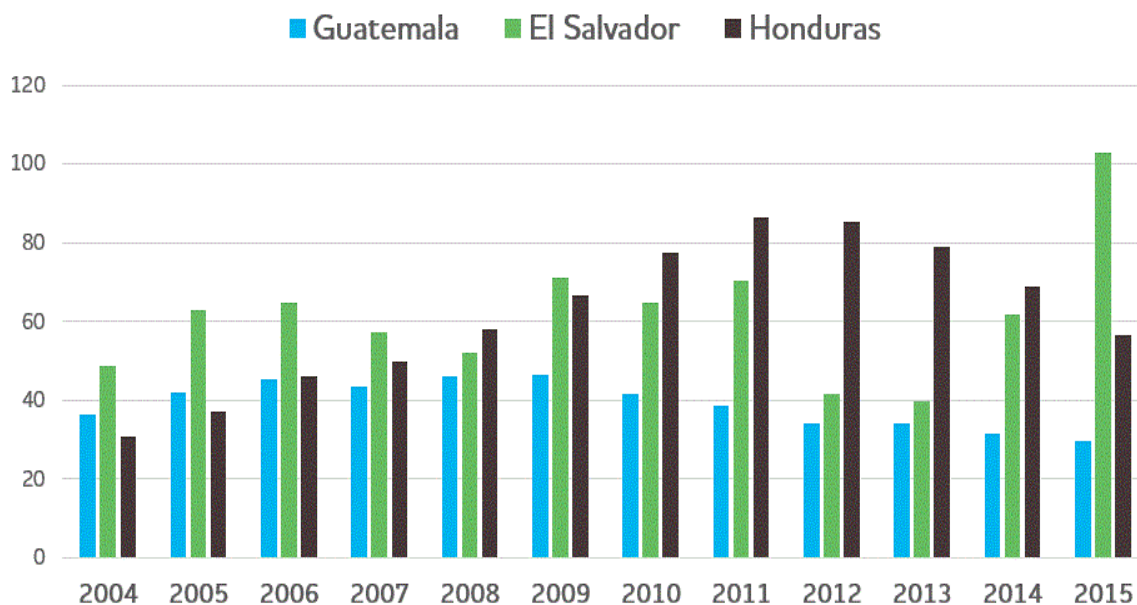
Honduras' homicide rate was 57 murders for every 100,000 people in 2015. Though this was a drop from 69 homicides per 100,000 people in 2014, the rate remains among the world's worst.

In Guatemala, the homicide rate slightly decreased in 2015 from 32 to 29.5 violent deaths per 100,000 people. With a total of 4,778 homicides in 2015, Guatemala saw an estimated 13 murders per day, according to the country's national police.* To put these numbers into perspective, the murder rate in the United States is around 5 per 100,000 inhabitants. This is one seventh of the rate in Guatemala, and one twentieth of the rate in El Salvador.

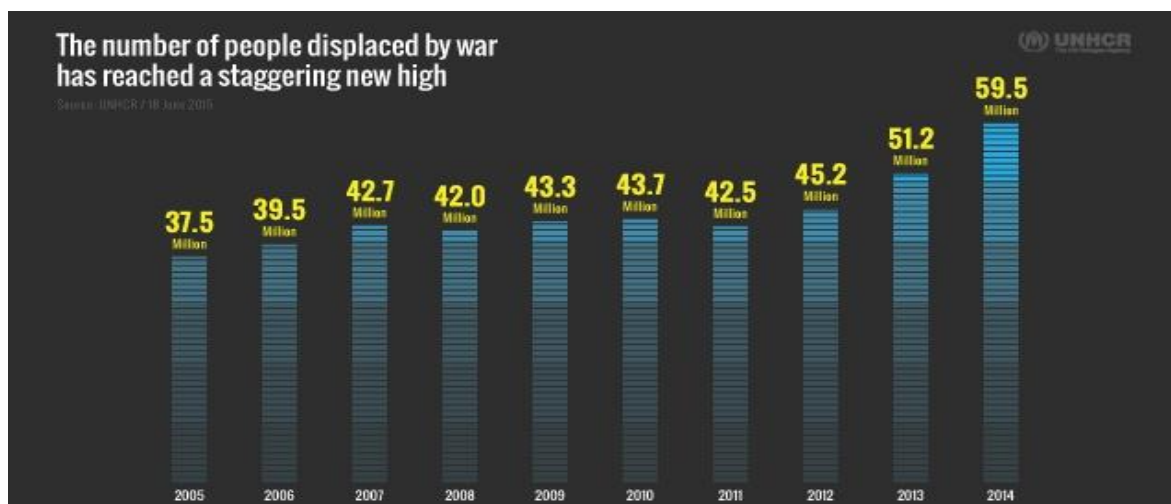
³ International Organization on Migration.

⁴ Dr. Doris Witteler-Stiepelmann is Head of Division Federation/ Lander cooperation; export credit guarantees; migration; reintegration; CIM at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Homicide Rates in the Northern Triangle (per 100,000)



Sources: Instituto Universitario de Opinión Pública and Prensa Gráfica (El Salvador), Central America Business Intelligence, CABI and Policía Nacional Civil (Guatemala), Instituto Universitario en Democracia, Paz y Seguridad and El Heraldo (Honduras)



Source: Global Trends 2014 © UNHCR

Economic Hardship

This is another major cause of shift in demographic settlement of peoples. The message one may take from the latest tragedy in the Mediterranean, where more than 300 Africans died

trying to cross to Europe is to look at it in the context of European migration policies, which have become more restrictive of late. A better way to look at the issues of migration is in the context of globalization. Milanovic (2013) holds that certain things have changed since approximately the 1980s, and they are what is driving the most recent migration wave.

Firstly, there is the disintegration of the world, wage-wise. Countries' per capita GDPs have diverged. While rich countries have, until about 2007, experienced higher growth rates, poor countries have continued to be on a geometrical decline. The extraordinarily fast rise of China, and more recently India eclipsed this fact until recently. However, the fact that most of these poor countries depend on natural and unrefined resources underscore their economic collapse with the sharp decline in the prices of these resources like oil.

The talk of the global middle class made us forget that ten African countries, with a combined population of 150 million and counting, currently have per capita GDPs lower than at the time of independence. We are also unaware that in the 20 years between 1980 and 2000, Africa's average per capita growth rate was zero. Thus, today the gap between rich countries like the United States and poor countries like Madagascar is 50 to 1. That is up from a ratio of 10 to 1 in 1960.

Large gaps in mean incomes and wages are obviously a magnet for migration. Using the U.S. New Immigrant Survey, which records current and past wages of recent U.S. green card holders, Mark Rosenzweig documents not only the gaps between U.S. and migrant countries' wages but also between migrant countries' themselves. A South Korean high school graduate earns ten times as much as an Indian, while a Mexican college graduate earns three times as much as one in Indonesia.

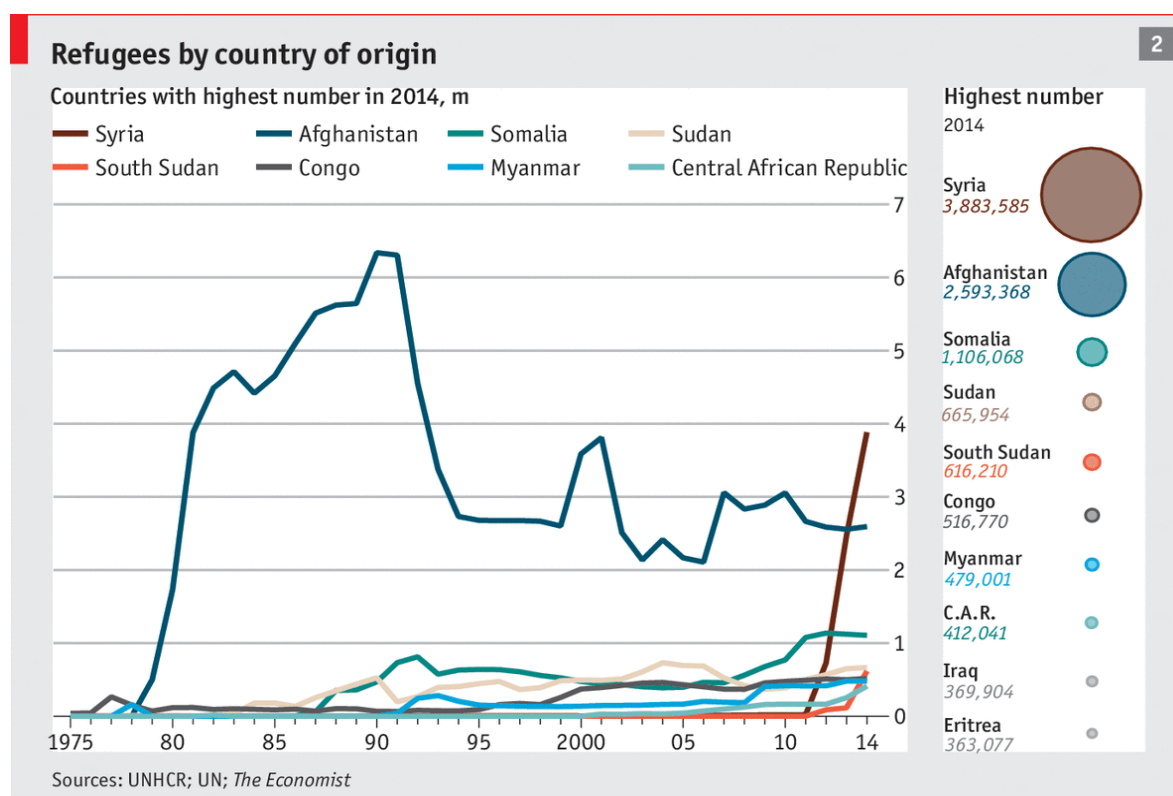
It does not require huge sophistication to realize that one can multiply one's standard of living several folds by migrating to a richer country. Moreover, even an informal job, not covered by official wage rates, will yield to many people from poor countries much higher income than they can expect at home. Naturally, one would opt to do any job in Europe than be a lecturer in Nigeria when 1 Euro changes for 401 naira. If he can make 1000 Euro in a month, he is sure to buy plots of land in Nigeria with that money.

Information Technology

Large income gaps would not have just easily necessitated the recent mass exodus if not that people now know about it. They are able to access immediately what is obtainable here and there. Everybody now knows about the income gaps. Global awareness has changed since 1980s. This is not only the product of globalization itself (TV, internet and social media). It is also the result of greater political openness of countries like the former Soviet bloc, China and Burma. People today know much better the difference in living conditions they and their children can expect in the rich world compared to their home.

Politico-Socio-Religious Problems

The rising wave of terrorism in the world is a global concern. Many have lost their homes through political, social and religious upheavals. In a situation where one is not sure of his safety in his home country because of his religious belief and practice, his only option is to seek for safety in another country. This has been the case in most countries in the Muslim world.



In conclusion we allude to Suliman (1994) position that people begin to move “whenever land degradation is coupled with political pressure, armed conflict, ethnic tension, growing poverty, deteriorating services and infrastructure”. Socio-economic and political factors accelerate the chain of processes leading to migration and conflict

CARE AS CHRISTIAN SOLUTION TO MIGRATION CONCERN: AN EXEGESIS OF MATT 25, 34-41.

The Greek text of Matt 25,34-41 reads: o,te evrei/ o` basileu.j toi/j evk dexiw/n auvtou/(Deu/te oi` euvloghme,noi tou/ patro,j mou(klhronomh,sate th.n h`toimasme,nhn u`mi/n basilei,an avpo. katabolh/j ko,smou. 35 evpei,nasa ga.r kai. evdw,kate, moi fagei/n(evdi,yhsa kai. evpoti,sate, me(xe,noj h;mhn kai. sunhga,gete, me(36 gumno.j kai. perieba,lete, me(hvsqe,nhsa kai. evpeske,yasqe, me(evn fulakh/| h;mhn kai. h;lqate pro,j me. 37 to,te avpokriqh,sontai auvtw/| oi` di,kaioi le,gontej(Ku,rie(po,te se ei;domen peinw/nta kai. evqre,yamen(h' diyw/nta kai. evpoti,samen. 38 po,te de, se ei;domen xe,non kai. sunhga,gomen(h' gumno.n kai. perieba,lomen. 39 po,te de, se ei;domen avsqenou/nta h' evn fulakh/| kai. h;lqomen pro,j se. 40 kai. avpokriqei.j o` basileu.j evrei/ auvtou/j(VAmh.n le,gw u`mi/n(evfV o[son evpoi,h,sate e`ni. tou,twn tw/n avdelfw/n mou tw/n evlaci,stwn(evmoi. evpoi,h,sate. 41 To,te evrei/ kai. toi/j evx euvwnu,mwn(Poreu,esqe avpV evmou/ Ioi`D kathrame,noi eivj to. pu/r to. aivw,nion to. h`toimasme,non tw/| diabo,lw/ kai. toi/j avgge,loij auvtou/.

The researcher considers delving into some textual difficulty’s observable in the periscope an unnecessary exercise for a work of this nature. The paper limits its interpretation to the text as presented above by Nestle-Aland. The paper gives a simple exegetical turn beginning with a

delimitation of the passage. This is followed by verse to verse interpretation and finally an hermeneutic application to reflect the plot of the paper.

Delimitation

The passage is delimited from its precursor, Matt 25,14-30 by the theme. Whereas the latter deals with a parable concerning fulfilling one's responsibility, the text studied in this paper is concerned with a parable dealing on the last judgement. It is the final section of the eschatological discourse ending fittingly in a great judgment scene. It formally marks the end of Jesus teaching in the gospel of Matthew. It is concerned with the return of the Son of Man, the immediate judgment with the blessing of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked. Hagner (1995) commenting on the passage says of it that "...the message concerning the importance of the disciples conduct toward others can hardly have been made more poignantly" (p. 740). The passage following is on the plot against Jesus.

Appreciation of the Literary Form of Matt 25,34-41

The passage is particularly unique to Matthew. Only partial parallels are noticeable in the opening and closing sections of the text. In terms of content presentation, it appears to have come from the evangelist's special source. Mark 8,38b and Luke 9,26b both refer to the coming of the Son of Man in glory with his holy angels. The concluding sentence with its division between doers of good and evil is similar in content to John 5,29. "Depart from me all workers of iniquity" seen in Luke 13,27-28 is close to Matt 14,41. The pericope especially the content of the opening verses is anticipated Matt 16,27 and in 7,23.

Unlike most other parables, one notices an efficient use of epidiegesis. Bullinger (2005) defines this as a kind of prosapodosis. It is a repetition made not for the purpose of explanation, but of kindling emotion, provoking indignation or evoking comparison. The pericope is artistically constructed and makes use of extensive repetition for effect and possibly for ease in memorization. Its adoption of future tense gives it an apocalyptic nuance such that it could be categorized as apocalyptic discourse (Friedrich, 1977).

Hagner (1995) documents the listing of the six (6) needs as the most striking structural feature of the passage. This occurs not less than four (4) times. Hagner notes that it occurs three (3) times with corresponding list of remedies (vv. 35-36; 37-39; 42-43) and once with the summarizing remedy *dihkonh,same,n soi* "we ministered to you". It is observable that in all four lists the words and their order do not change: hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, in prison. Commenting on the number six (6) Johnston (1990) explains that it denotes manifestation of evil. It falls short of the numeral of perfection, seven (7) and thus indicates incompleteness, and so is the symbol of man without Christ. To have let it occur four (4) times which itself is a symbol of weakness, the author very carefully used numerology to pass on a message that a failure in the duties mentioned is characteristic of man without Christ and to be without Christ is damnation.

Brief Exegetical Interpretation

The switch from ... *o` ui`o.j tou/ avnqrw,pou* in v. 31 to *o` basileu.j* in v. 34 is of striking importance. Allen (1907) describes the switch as abrupt and unexpected. It appears to be an adaptation of a parable in which the King is the central figure but now applied to the Son of Man. This is a simplistic way of putting it. The parable is about what will happen at the Parousia. Matt 24,3 in which the disciples asked a question concerning the end of the age

comes to mind here. The central issue here as in other references to the Son of Man (Matt 24,27.30.37.39.44) is not necessarily the time but the significance of his coming and the consequent need to be prepared. This is because as in indicated in other pericopae the coming of the Son of Man would mean judgment. The fact of judgment could be a major reason for the switch from οὐ οὐρανὸν αὐτοῦ / avnqrw,pou to οὐρανὸν βασιλείου since judgment belongs specifically to the King. In other words, as Son of Man, he acts as saviour but at the close of the age, he comes for judgment and so acts as King. The same person and no other is at the same time the Son of Man in v. 31 and also the King in v. 34. This is evident from the reference in v. 33 to “those at his right hand” (dexiw/n autou/). Already in Matt 16,27 and 13,41-43, the Son of Man is identified as the judge who hands out eschatological blessing or punishment. Here again, he is presented as a judge to indicate that the judgement seat of God (Rom 14,10-12) is not different from the judgment seat of Christ (2Cor 5,10). The author of the gospel is able to switch easily because of his high Christology. Such technic is evident in other parallel passages. In Matt 16,27 for instance he talks of the Son of Man coming in the glory of His Father than in his glory as in this passage. The same alteration in language is seen in Matt 19,28 and 24,30. The language is close to Dan 7,13-14. It signals the great judgment scene in which Jesus as the Son of Man functions as judge – a role restricted to God in the O.T.

sunacqh,sontai ... pa,nta ta. e;qnh in v. 32 is very revealing. It indicates the universality of the judgment. It is not just about the Jews only but about the whole world. It points to the universality of the kingship of Christ. The comprehensiveness matches that of the mandatum magnum of Matt 28,19 that the believers should preach the gospel in the whole world. The passive form of the verb sunacqh,sontai implies that the gathering is not dependent on the people. God does it Himself. It recalls the gathering of the righteous in Matt 3,12; 13,30 or both the righteous and the unrighteous in Matt 13,47; 22,10. It includes both the Jews and Gentiles alike. Scholars like Gay (1978) debate on the real meaning of pa,nta ta. e;qnh. Their main point of departure is the parameter for judging non-Christians, whether they would be judged by standards they are ignorant of. Gray (1989) tabulates five (5) different possible meanings of pa,nta ta. e;qnh. This paper settles with universality as the meaning. This is because, the same all-inclusiveness is attested in other texts like Rom 14,10-12; 2Cor 5,10; Rev 20,11-13. It involves a separation of the righteous and the wicked among the nations. Again, in Matt 13,49 the same idea is expressed.

Ta. pro,bata is a common metaphor for the righteous. We see it used in Matt 10,16; 26,31 and even John 10. vEk dexiw/n autou/ (at his right hand) is a common reference to place of honour (Matt 20,23; 22,44; Acts 2,33-34; 5,31; 7,55-56; Rom 8,34).

Verse 34 is laddened with contrasts. The invitation ‘come’ vividly contrasts ‘depart’ of v. 41. The ‘blessed’ contrasts the ‘cursed’. The blessed will now enjoy fully the eschatological kingdom which they already started enjoying by participation in the kingdom. The kingdom is said to have been prepared from the beginning by the Father. In this way, Matthew indicates that in the blessing of the righteous, God’s eternal purpose is being accomplished.

In vv. 35-36 we see six (6) different situations of need all expressed in the aorist except for the imperfect used in the case of reference to the stranger. In each case, the righteous attended to the need of Jesus. This is as opposed to the unrighteous who neglected Jesus in each instance.

The crux of the message is pointedly expressed in v. 40 with the confusion of the disciples at Jesus’ statement disclosed in their questions. This gives rise to the summation of the

astounding principle preceded by the mark of a weighty saying ‘truly I say to you’ that once they do it for others, they have in effect done it for Jesus.

Care as the Christian Optimum Solution to Migration Concern

Nations, especially in the Western hemisphere express increasing concern over migration of peoples from their countries to other countries in search of greener pastures. Stricter policies are made to make sure issuance of visas is not easy for intending travelers. The result is that many risk their lives in the desert and seas to force themselves into the countries of their dream. Lives have been lost in this rather life risking bid. Many more have sought for asylum even when in their own country there is no real bloodshed. This paper submits that making strict laws against people migrating into other countries is only an effort in vain. The remote cause of the exodus must be addressed. One is prone to question why the Western invasion of Africa and the consequent settlement is termed colonization and now the reverse is termed migration. Colonization is not without its own adverse effects on the colonized. Kwazu (2013) economic exploitation and enthronement of capitalism as some of the ill effects of colonization. The fact is that migration is part of the human history and experience and must ever remain so in as much as human need is insatiable. Western countries like the U.S.A as we have it today is nothing but an artificial country created by people from different parts of the globe. They migrated and came into the land that was never theirs. They worked and developed the place. They settled, they came together to enact laws to guide them. Today, it has turned out to be the super power of the world. Take all the foreigners away, America would disappear from the map. It must be noted that when people come in to settle in a foreign land, the trait to survive pushes them to work hard. They develop talents latent in them. Economically, they make their new abode a better place. Technologically, they contribute in making their inhabited places. Taking advantage of the artificial yet life threatening problems in some countries to indulge in modern slavery and treat human beings as animals is not only wickedly but a mere heating up of the polity. The whole hyperbole news about migration crisis is not unconnected with what Lerner (1975) calls ‘political democracy’ in which the wealthy minority nations exercise disproportionate political power by dominating key decision-making posts in the U.N.O. They tag themselves the G8 and a member state can easily veto any issue on discussion. According to Pope Francis, “Rejection is an attitude we all share; it makes us see our neighbour not as a brother or sister to be accepted, but as unworthy of our attention, a rival, or someone to be bent to our will” (*Address to the Diplomatic Corps*, 12 January 2015). The researcher leaves it for other researcher to tackle the remote causes of the influx of people into other countries. This paper confines itself in the main to founding a solution to the already incumbent problems of those in other countries. It upholds the belief that deportation is far from solving the problem. Quarantining people in an asylum, a kind of home imprisonment is not the solution either. Erection of border walls can hardly solve the problem. The European and U.S. examples are the best known, but not isolated. Saudi Arabia has built a fence against Yemen, India is building one against Bangladesh, Spain’s exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, ports on the Moroccan coast, are entirely fenced in against would-be African migrants. The current Superior over Lords must go back on their memory lane to remember that part of their registered successes and wealth were actualized on the back of the hardworking minority whom they colonized, manipulated and cheated for economic gains. We must therefore hearken as an unavoidable imperative, the unique, lasting and peaceful solution to apparent migration burden seen in Matt 25,31-40. We must begin to see Jesus in the poor, in this context, the strangers in our lands. Thus, Toton (1982) submits that world hunger is the

responsibility of Christians. Care is both an invitation and a vocation of all Christians. The author of this paper views it strongly as a *conditio sine qua non* and a panacea to resolving the issue of migration.

In the O.T. the provision of food, drink and clothing is regarded as the work of the righteous. Job 22,7 holds the same teaching. Ezek 18,9 says of such people that they shall surely live. Job 31,32 admonishes believers to provide hospitality to strangers. Visiting the sick is mentioned in Sir 7,35. Also Sir 7,32-34 includes visit to the needy as a moral demand. In the N.T. the idea is not different. James 2,15-17 enjoins believers to live out their faith in good work evidenced in practical Christianity like providing food, shelter and clothing to the ones in need of them. Provision of hospitality to strangers is a responsibility of Christians as seen in Heb 13,2 and 1Tim 5,10. Visiting and looking after the sick is a duty for believers in James 5,14. More works could be listed. But the works mentioned here according to Gray (1989) serve as “parabolic stageprops, as it were, used to convey the primary meaning of the parable” (p. 353).

The Church through her Supreme Pontiffs is not left out in the scriptural message of care and concern for the migrants. In his Message for World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Oct. 1, 2015

In our time, migration is growing worldwide. Refugees and people fleeing from their homes challenge individuals and communities, and their traditional ways of life; at times they upset the cultural and social horizons which they encounter. Increasingly, the victims of violence and poverty, leaving their homelands, are exploited by human traffickers during their journey towards the dream of a better future. If they survive the abuses and hardships of the journey, they then have to face latent suspicions and fear. In the end, they frequently encounter a lack of clear and practical policies regulating the acceptance of migrants and providing for short- or long-term programs of integration respectful of the rights and duties of all. Today, more than in the past, the Gospel of mercy troubles our consciences, prevents us from taking the suffering of others for granted, and points out way of responding which, grounded in the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, find practical expression in works of spiritual and corporal mercy.

In his address in Rome on Feb. 21 to 22, the pope said it is a “moral imperative” to protect migrant workers “and among these particularly men and women in irregular situations” as well as those “exiled and seeking asylum” or “victims of trafficking.”

In his address at the sixth edition of the International Forum on Migration and Peace, the theme of which that year is “Integration and development: from reaction to action”, organised by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the Scalabrini International Migration Network (SIMN), and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, and its aim is to promote innovative collaboration between governmental and international organisations and civil society to develop policies and programmes regarding the principal dimensions of migration, His Holiness reiterated the need to show care and concern to the immigrants. The Papal speech presents us with different ways through which we can show care and concern to the immigrants. This paper depends fully on the provisions of the Papal speech with slight modifications to demonstrate ways through which we as Christians can really help Christ in the immigrants by showing concern and care to them just as implied in Matt 25,31-40. The

Pope expresses this care with four verbs: to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate the immigrants.

We must develop a welcome attitude as the first step toward care. Often immigrants are rejected, exploited and are victims of trafficking. Faced with this kind of rejection, rooted ultimately in self-centredness and amplified by populist rhetoric, what is needed is a change of attitude, to overcome indifference and to counter fears with a generous approach of welcoming those who knock at our doors. For those who flee conflicts and terrible persecutions, often trapped within the grip of criminal organisations who have no scruples, we need to open accessible and secure humanitarian channels. A responsible and dignified welcome of our brothers and sisters begins by offering them decent and appropriate shelter. The enormous gathering together of persons seeking asylum and of refugees has not produced positive results. Instead these gatherings have created new situations of vulnerability and hardship. More widespread programmes of welcome, already initiated in different places, seem to favour a personal encounter and allow for greater quality of service and increased guarantees of success.

Good effort must be made to ensure that immigrants are protected. Pope Benedict XVI (2005), highlighted the fact that the migratory experience often makes people more vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and violence. We are speaking about millions of migrant workers, male and female – and among these particularly men and women in irregular situations – of those exiled and seeking asylum, and of those who are victims of trafficking. Defending their inalienable rights, ensuring their fundamental freedoms and respecting their dignity are duties from which no one can be exempted. Protecting these brothers and sisters is a moral imperative which translates into adopting juridical instruments, both international and national, that must be clear and relevant; implementing just and far reaching political choices; prioritising constructive processes, which perhaps are slower, over immediate results of consensus; implementing timely and humane programmes in the fight against “the trafficking of human flesh” which profits off others’ misfortune; coordinating the efforts of all actors, among which, you may be assured will always be the Church.

Furthermore, protecting is not enough. What is required is the promotion of an integral human development of migrants, exiles and refugees. This according to Pope Francis (2016) “takes place by attending to the inestimable goods of justice, peace, and the care of creation”. Development, according to the social doctrine of the Church (cf. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 373-374), is an undeniable right of every human being. As such, it must be guaranteed by ensuring the necessary conditions for its exercise, both in the individual and social context, providing fair access to fundamental goods for all people and offering the possibility of choice and growth. Also, here a coordinated effort is needed, one which envisages all the parties involved: from the political community to civil society, from international organisations to religious institutions. The human promotion of migrants and their families begins with their communities of origin. That is where such promotion should be guaranteed, joined to the right of *being able* to emigrate, as well as the right to *not be constrained* to emigrate (Benedict XVI, 2012), namely, the right to find in one’s own homeland the conditions necessary for living a dignified life. To this end, efforts must be encouraged that lead to the implementation of programmes of international cooperation, free from partisan interests, and programmes of transnational development which involve migrants as active protagonists.

Integration is yet another very important way of caring. Integration which is neither assimilation nor incorporation, is a two-way process, rooted essentially in the joint recognition of the other's cultural richness: it is not the superimposing of one culture over another, nor mutual isolation, with the insidious and dangerous risk of creating ghettos. Concerning those who arrive and who are duty bound not to close themselves off from the culture and traditions of the receiving country, respecting above all its laws, the family dimension of the process of integration must not be overlooked: for this reason, this paper feels the need to reiterate the necessity, often presented by the Magisterium (John Paul II 1986), of policies directed at favouring and benefiting the reunion of families. With regard to indigenous populations, they must be supported, by helping them to be sufficiently aware of and open to processes of integration which, though not always simple and immediate, are always essential and, for the future, indispensable. This requires specific programmes, which foster significant encounters with others. Furthermore, for the Christian community, the peaceful integration of persons of various cultures is, in some way, a reflection of its catholicity, since unity, which does not nullify ethnic and cultural diversity, constitutes a part of the life of the Church, who in the Spirit of Pentecost is open to all and desires to embrace all (John Paul II 1987).

The four moral responsibilities outline above leaves us with a duty of justice, of civility and of solidarity.

First of all, a *duty of justice*. The moment we begin to see Christ in the immigrants, we can no longer sustain unacceptable economic inequality, which prevents us from applying the principle of the universal destination of the earth's goods. We are all called to undertake processes of apportionment which are respectful, responsible and inspired by the precepts of distributive justice. "We need, then, to find ways by which all may benefit from the fruits of the earth, not only to avoid the widening gap between those who have more and those who must be content with the crumbs, but above all because it is a question of justice, equality and respect for every human being" (Pope Francis 2013:9). One group of individuals cannot control half of the world's resources. We cannot allow for persons and entire peoples to have a right only to gather the remaining crumbs. Nor can we be indifferent or think ourselves dispensed from the moral imperatives which flow from a joint responsibility to care for the planet, a shared responsibility often stressed by the political international community, as also by the Magisterium (cf. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 9; 163; 189, 406). This joint responsibility must be interpreted in accord with the principle of subsidiarity, which grants freedom to develop the capabilities present at every level of society, while also demanding a greater sense of responsibility for the common good from those who wield greater power. Ensuring justice means also reconciling history with our present globalized situation, without perpetuating mind-sets which exploit people and places, a consequence of the most cynical use of the market in order to increase the wellbeing of the few.

Second, there is a *duty of civility*. Our commitment to migrants, exiles and refugees is an application of those principles and values of welcome and fraternity that constitute a common patrimony of humanity and wisdom which we draw from. Such principles and values have been historically codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in numerous conventions and international agreements. Every migrant is a human person who, as such, possesses fundamental, inalienable rights that must be respected by everyone and in every circumstance. Today more than ever, it is necessary to affirm the centrality of the human person, without allowing immediate and ancillary circumstances, or even the necessary

fulfilment of bureaucratic and administrative requirements, to obscure this essential dignity. As St. John Paul II (1995) stated, an “irregular legal status cannot allow the migrant to lose his dignity, since he is endowed with inalienable rights, which can neither be violated nor ignored” (p.2). From the duty of civility is also regained the value of fraternity, which is founded on the innate *relational constitution* of the human person: “A lively awareness of our relatedness helps us to look upon and to treat each person as a true sister or brother; without fraternity it is impossible to build a just society and a solid and lasting peace” (Pope Francis 2013:1). Fraternity is the most civil way of relating with the reality of another person, which does not threaten us, but engages, reaffirms and enriches our individual identity (Benedict XVI, 2008).

Finally, there is a *duty of solidarity*. In the face of tragedies which take the lives of so many migrants and refugees – conflicts, persecutions, forms of abuse, violence, death – expressions of empathy and compassion cannot help but spontaneously well-up. “Where is your brother” (*Gen 4:9*): this question which God asks of man since his origins, involves us, especially today with regard to our brothers and sisters who are migrating: “This is not a question directed to others; it is a question directed to me, to you, to each of us” (Pope Francis, 2013). Solidarity is born precisely from the capacity to understand the needs of our brothers and sisters who are in difficulty and to take responsibility for these needs. Upon this, in short, is based the sacred value of hospitality, present in religious traditions. For us Christians, hospitality offered to the weary traveller is offered to Jesus Christ himself, through the newcomer: “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matt 25:35).

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

Matt 25,31-40 addresses what the situation would be on the judgment day. It is a teaching on eschatology. More so, a teaching that really touches the fabrics of topical issues today, prominent among which is the issue of migration. There is a global concern on migration. The author realizes this concern but believes as seen in our paper that the fundamental causes of migration must be addressed rather than the egocentric and superior mentality-based solutions that are hardly the solutions. The paper after a thorough exegesis of Matt 25,31-40 drew hermeneutically from it to propose care and concern for the immigrants as the lasting solution to the apparent migration problem. The paper draws extensively from the Popes to show that welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating the immigrants are the fundamental aspects of care needed. The paper also agrees with the popes that putting these four into practice would lead to moral duties of justice, civility and solidarity with the immigrants. These aspects of care and concern as outlined by the Pope are not without immediate social gains for the actualizers. It is not just about mercy and compassion. It is above all for the overall good and progress of humanity. Stopping people from migrating raises many uncomfortable ethical questions about the right to stop the free movement of labour, while capital, goods, technology and ideas are supposed to move freely.

The author frowns at the self-centred based solutions to immigration that is in the least inhuman. he believes that a better alternative would be a concerted policy by rich countries to allow much greater and orderly immigration of both skilled and unskilled labour through temporary workers programs. This would involve regularizing the ability of foreigners from poor countries to apply for and get jobs in rich countries, and generally to implement more lenient and targeted migration policies. This evidently, is Matt 25,31-40 in practice. This is

possible only when our view of development itself has changed. It must move away from the “methodological nationalism” that is not suitable for the era of globalization. From a global point of view, whether a person’s income increases while he is in his own country or elsewhere is unimportant because global development is about higher incomes of individuals, regardless of where they live.

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