

## WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS & REFUGEES MESSAGE 2006 Discussion Guide

### SUMMARY

*Pope Benedict XVI begins this message by recalling the Second Vatican Council's efforts to read the 'signs of the times'.*

The Council analyzed the complexities of the world in order to seek the best ways of bringing the Gospel message to contemporary people. Benedict states that migration is one of the 'signs of the times' today.

Migration has taken on 'structural characteristics', becoming part of the labour market internationally under the influence of forces such as globalization.

The message notes the phenomena of national and international migration, forced and voluntary migration, legal and illegal migration, and what the Pope calls 'the scourge of trafficking in human beings'.

Foreign students, women migrant workers, trafficked persons, and asylum seekers and refugees are given special mention in this brief message.

Pope Benedict stresses that  
"Hope, courage, love and 'creativity in charity' (*Novo Millennio Ineunte* n 50) must inspire the necessary human and Christian efforts made to help these brothers and sisters in their suffering."

The full text of this message can be downloaded from:  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/messages/migration/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_mes\\_20051018\\_world-migrants-day\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/migration/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20051018_world-migrants-day_en.html)

### FOR REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

*You might choose one of two of these questions as a focus for discussion, or work through several questions on a series of occasions.*

- How is the movement of people today different from migration during the 1960s? Compare the experience of people who migrated to Australia in the 1960s with that of people arriving in Australia today.
- What might the Pope mean when he says that migration has taken on structural characteristics and is an important factor in the labour market internationally?
- Why might foreign students, women migrant workers, trafficked persons, asylum seekers and refugees be the focus of special concern? Does our pastoral planning reflect these priorities?
- Have you ever studied abroad? What was it like? How did you benefit from the experience, and what challenges did you face? How can we better support foreign students in Australia?
- The number of women working abroad to support families in their home country has been increasing in recent decades. Why might this be? What are some of the consequences? Why are they especially vulnerable and how?
- Did you know that people are trafficked into Australia? To find out more visit the Trafficking in Persons Clearinghouse at <http://www.goodshepherd.com.au/justice/trafficking.html>
- Pope Benedict asks us not to stop at the question of the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers without considering why they left their homeland. How can we better address causes of flight?
- How might we show more 'creativity in charity' in our responses?