

## Press Conference

### **Presentation of the Message of the Holy Father For the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2019**

The core message and overall theme of the Holy Father for the celebration of the 105th World Day of Migrants and Refugees carries the title "It is not just about migrants".

With this choice, Pope Francis intends to emphasize that his repeated appeals in favour of migrants, refugees, displaced persons and victims of trafficking must be understood within his deep concern for all inhabitants of the existential peripheries. The hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the prisoner who knocks today at our door is Jesus himself who asks to be met and assisted.

As the Holy Father himself emphasized in his homily on Friday 15 February 2019 in Sacrofano: "It is truly [Jesus], even though our eyes find it hard to recognize Him: with His clothing in rags, His feet dirty, His face disfigured, His body wounded, unable to speak our language...".

To further clarify the title of his Message, the Holy Father has developed it into seven sub-themes. These were first introduced in the communication campaign that the Migrants and Refugees Section of the Dicastery for the Service of Integral Human Development launched last March. This campaign offers monthly reflections, information and diverse multimedia aids that support a deeper appreciation of the theme of the Holy Father's Message.

I will now present the first four sub-themes and leave the remaining three to Fr. Michael.

*It is not just about migrants: it is also about our fears.* The fears we feel in the face of today's migratory challenges are real, but we cannot let them deprive us of the desire and ability to meet the other, and in others to meet Jesus Christ.

*It is not just about migrants: it's also about charity.* Today our migrant brothers and sisters offer us the opportunity to live the highest level of charity, that which is practised towards those who are unable to reciprocate and perhaps even to thank us.

*It is not just about migrants: it's also about our humanity.* The encounter with the other and with our neighbour's needs offers us the opportunity to restore the humanity of others, to grow in our own humanity and to contribute to building up a true human family.

*It is not just about migrants: it's also about not excluding anyone.* The little ones, the poor, the most vulnerable are those who pay the price of wars, injustice and exclusive development. We are

called, instead, to include everyone in our journey of global growth, so that everyone has access to integral human development.

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