



WORLD MOVEMENT
OF CHRISTIAN WORKERS
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JULY 2016

World Movement
of Christian Workers
WMCW

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EDITORIAL

Star and light of nations

Antoinette and Victoire are two of a team of migrant women, and members of the ACO movement. Antoinette from Congo, and Victory from the Democratic Republic of Congo, explain how within their grassroots group they have realised the real benefits of teamwork. Pleased to be part of an ACO team, they enjoy complete mutual trust.

A shelter on the edge of the desert operated by Father Anselm Mahwera speaks of the importance of the Church's work. The Catholic parish operates a migrants' centre – the 'Maison du Migrant'. The goal of its volunteers, Christians and Muslims alike, is to help inform and assist the migrants. Their commitment is tied to the religious preference to serve the most vulnerable.

A Message for International Women's Day As the WMCW, we believe in God the Father/Mother figure who created woman and man in his own image and who created them to be companions within creation. The struggle for the recognition of women's rights is over a century old and embraces the struggle to build a more inclusive society.

Abrahan Canales and José Luis in an interview with Mariléa Damasio - General Secretary of the WMCW: "We must address worker insecurity and the lack of workers' rights. - I would like to see a more energised and stronger movement, founded on simplicity and peace, and working together at all times. Grassroots level groups must feel that the movement is united and understands their situation. The world can appear very distant, and that distance has to be reduced to create a worldwide mechanism of solidarity amongst workers".

Enrique Martín Serrano -. How can we resolve the 'new phenomenon of impoverished workers?' To understand the origins of worker insecurity and such issues, we can highlight two main causes. By the same reckoning, it is a scientifically dubious belief that this is just a means of pushing for the reduction of wages.

Cida Casares and Father Bernard Hervy in collaboration with the activists of the San Paulo regional MTC reflected on the spiritual crisis and the threat to democracy in Brazil during a two-day spiritual meeting of See–Judge–Act.

This was focused on workers and based on the WMCW May 1st communication to all workers worldwide - male and female alike. - Today we live in a divided world and migrations are widespread around the globe. Capitalism has its ideas for dealing with the crisis. But the WMCW promotes solidarity of the working class –

Paix fruit de la justice. At the MTC movement in Quebec, the issue of decent work is seen as an important de-

mand when it comes to improving the living and working conditions of working men and women. This is important as regards: non-standard working conditions in northern lands; the many forms non-standard work takes; the characteristics of non-standard work; work for migrants.

The national executive of the LOC / MTC in Portugal has written an essay based on cross-diocese fact-finding meetings, and denounces a clear and deliberate policy of undervaluing work. Work is a fundamental dimension of a human being, and direct involvement in transformative actions is essential.

Sylvain Knittel and Pierre Yves Bulteau have written Migrants: dare to meet the other - Let's do away with immigration misconceptions. Today immigration is at the heart of political debates. Has immigration capacity been exceeded? Is it a good societal idea? Is there a shortage of work? Overcoming popular misconceptions is essential inasmuch as they can condition people's views of migrants by creating inward-looking perspectives.

Christine Lander of the 'Collectif Immigrés du Montar-gois' has written a history of immigration to Chalette. It tells the story of a town of 14,000 inhabitants, composed of scattered and isolated neighborhoods. Vésines is the most working-class neighbourhood.

Sylvain Knittel - The face of migration - The questions to ask to better understand the reality of human migration. Who is migrating? What is the social profile of those who migrate? Do we have new faces and new situations as a result of human migration? What is at stake for the migrant? And what about the link to their country of origin? What has been the role of the workers' movement as regards migrants?

There is a lack of any organised strategy addressing the needs of a society hit by a very serious economic crisis and its consequences, and these include unemployment as a main cause of significant migration.



Mariléa Damasio. General Secretary of the WMCW

ACO | Star and The Light of Nations

Blois (France). Antoinette and Victorine are part of a team: teams of female migrants; teams of members of the movement.

Antoinette

Originally from Congo-Brazzaville, I arrived in France in order to join my family. Without documents or means I managed to join my daughter who lives in Blois. My applications for residency always fell through and deportation letters regularly demoralised me. In the parish of the northern neighbourhood of Blois I was contacted by Françoise who, with Francine, invited me to book-sharing meetings. There was a meeting each month. From this small group Francine decided to start a team called Monde populaire – Mission ouvrière, (Working Class World – Workers' Mission) which led to the creation of the Etoile (Star) team. These are people from the local area who speak about their lives, who speak and who dare to openly express their ideas and feelings. It was the people working as home carers who made the integration

of Etoile into the ACO (French Catholic Workers' Action) possible, who raised our awareness of the working world, the employees and the working class. In this small group I found great similarities with the pryer group in my country.

As I had moved, I offered to form a new team: Lumière des Nations (The Light of Nations). Immigrants going through difficult times, as I did, came along. From the 'C' in ACO, I understand that I am a child of God because I was baptised, that I need God and that I am a member of a community where we are all brothers and sisters. I had the chance to go to Angers for the National Meeting. I was there with 800 other members of the Movement. I was a representative of a whole community, of a whole world.

To occupy myself, I do a little secretarial work on a voluntary basis. I have discovered the world of volun-

tary associations by participating in tenants' associations and meetings about living conditions.

Victorine

I fled from my country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and arrived in Paris. My request for political asylum was refused; it was as if I was living on the streets. I was told that I had to leave the country. I am currently staying at the reception centre for asylum seekers in Blois. Brigitte, who is asking for asylum and who is in the ACO team, introduced me to a team support worker and a member of the French Association for Consumption, Housing and Living Conditions. I was neither surprised nor at a loss to be in a group. I had already been in this situation in my country. With the ACO, I wondered how and why Catholics, aware of the world of the worker, could be interested in me. I

thought that being in this movement was going to help me with my requests for asylum. In fact, I realised that there was a link between my life, my human experience and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Lumière des nations is about having meetings, becoming aware of our lives and of the lives of others, praying, reading and discussing the gospel and sharing together.

I have good sewing skills, and was asked to teach sewing, on a voluntary basis, at a social centre. With the team I have become aware of how 'lucky' I am to have this skill, to work towards building something, like Joseph taught Jesus to be a good worker and to work well for others. I am happy to be in the ACO team and ready to share.

Interviewed by Antoine Boudisseau



ACO | The History of Immigration in Chalette

Chalette, in the French department of Loiret, is a working-class town greatly influenced by almost a century of migration. It is a town like many others.

Chalette is a town with 14,000 inhabitants made up of five scattered neighbourhoods all separate from one another. Vésines is the most working-class neighbourhood due to the construction of the Hutchinson factory founded by Hiram Hutchinson in 1851. This factory attracted a huge foreign workforce.

A different year, a different nationality

From 1852 onwards Americans came to start up the rubber factory. In the First World War a great number of men were killed, which forced Hutchinson to hire Laotian, Vietnamese and Cambodian workers from among the colonial troops.

The first Russians started to arrive in 1919, but it was mainly between 1921 and 1926 that they settled in great numbers, together with the Ukrainians. The factory manager's wife had lived in St Petersburg and spoke Russian, so she helped to hire and search for housing for the White Russians seeking to go into exile. They settled in Vésines, housed in huts near the factory. On a cultural level, the Ukrainians created the Zaporogue and Hopak ballet and the Kobzar choir, which is still going today.

The Chinese, a bourgeois

elite, arrived between 1920 and 1927 convinced that major reforms were going to take place in China. They came to work at the factory, began to learn French and some studied at the Chesnoy Agricultural College. All of them returned

the first to really settle.

At the same time, the Armenians, who had escaped the genocide, arrived and also settled in Vésines, in the La Folie neighbourhood known as "Little Armenia".

Next were the Italians, fleeing from unemploy-

The Yugoslavs and the Albanians arrived around 1965, the Turks in 1966, and then the North Africans around 1968.

And finally, the Mauritians, Senegalese and Malians arrived. We know that some of them came from the same villages and that families helped to send their sons to work in France, which therefore helped their village when they sent a portion of their salary home.

There were up to 35 nationalities recorded, all people hired by Hutchinson's. In some instances, factory managers went to their villages to hire them! All of them contributed to the development of the town of Chalette, bringing their uniqueness, culture and traditions with them, which continues to this day.



Spanish refugees in France (1939) | Photo Robert Capa.

«Everyone contributed to the development of the town»

home and became high-level dignitaries¹.

Then it was the Polish, fleeing destitution, who arrived with contracts to work in the mines of Northern France or in the fields. Having learned that Hutchinson's was hiring, they came to Chalette. It was not better paid, but the work was easier. They were

ment. They worked mainly in the building trade.

Between 1939 and 1945 many Spaniards escaping the dictatorship moved to Chalette, and others would arrive for economic reasons around 1950.

One of the highest immigration rates was that of the Portuguese from 1960, fleeing dictatorship and poverty.

¹Among them was Deng Xiaoping, who led the People's Republic of China, and who worked at Hutchinson's making shoe soles.

Christine Lander
Deputy Mayor of Chalette,
Immigrant Communities of
Montargois

How to resolve the «new» phenomenon of the working poor

The economic crisis and economic policies linked to what has come to be called "austerity" (although mainly treated as a linear measure to cutbacks of the welfare state that has little to do with the "austere"), have been the focus of public perception of the seemingly "new" phenomenon of the working poor.

Although clearly we cannot say that the phenomenon is strictly new, the truth is that as it coincides with a new economic situation, the volume of people that currently suffer because of it has grown in an especially intense manner.

The concept of the "working poor" has been the subject of intense scientific debate since the early twentieth century when sociologist Seebom Rowntree constructed one of the first definitions, calculated as a monetary value through a basket of products consisting of all goods and services considered essential to meet the minimum needs of household livelihoods at the time.

Today there is a consensus around the idea that those who should be considered in a situation of 'poverty risk' are those whose incomes are below 60% of the median income in the country where they reside. Among those considered in a situation of "severe poverty" are those with incomes below 40% of this same measure. It is no coincidence that the European Social Charter has established its objective minimum wage reference precisely at 60% of the median income



in each country.

Referring this to the case of Spain, according to the latest data published in 2015 by the INE¹, the median wage (which divides workers into two equal groups, those with a lower salary and those with a higher one) is located at 19,029 euros per year. Therefore, this would establish that the poverty threshold for a wage paid in 14 payments for full-time employment is around 815 euros per month, a figure which in any case is quite far from the monthly 655 euros established as SMI 2016.

Historically, Spain has a proportion of workers who do not meet these thresholds which is higher than surrounding countries. The

crisis and economic policies have done nothing but increase it, and the OIT notes that between 2000 and 2014 the growth of this group in Spain is triple that in the rest of Europe. Specifically, the "working poor" have increased here by 4.2 points in that period (from 18% to 22.2%), while the European average has grown by 1.6 points (from 15% to 16.6%).

When establishing the roots of the precariousness of this work, we can point to two main causes. On the one hand, the strictly formal case relating to recruitment and the type of employment (working part time, generating lower wages), to which we could add further weight if we were to use es-

timated figures (involuntariness, underpaid work, submerged employment, etc.); and on the other hand, those related to the production model (low production of goods and services, generates little wealth and low wages.)

Certainly a logical way to deal with the phenomenon from the perspective of social justice is through an assurance measure of sufficient income for all people. However, there are alternative ways to achieve this goal that currently focus on political and social debate.

Although this is not a new concept, the intensification of the phenomenon of the "working poor" has made the public agenda erupt with renewed propo-

sals for public benefits that top up any type of revenue, including salary, until a certain limit is reached.

There are examples in this regard such as the EIC (Earned Income Tax Credit) employment bonus program, originally launched in the US in 1975, and linked mainly to the existence of dependent children. We can also refer to the Universal Credit, created in the UK in 2013 as a monthly financial benefit that has replaced the previous combination of benefits that existed for several decades (housing assistance, unemployment assistance, tax credits, etc.). Furthermore in the case of France, a similar objective has been launched in 2015 known as Prima Activity, to unify the relatively recent (2007) RSA (Revenu de Solidarité Active), PPP (Prime pour l'emploi) and other existing tax credit measures.

What most attracted the attention of those who promote these types of salary supplements is not so much the defence of their virtues

(which they certainly have), as the widespread assumption of the idea of job scarcity as inevitable, structural and growing. This comes with an almost implied resignation about realistically aspiring to change the macro economic reality and therefore far from the ability to influence individuals.

Who promote these types of salary supplements is not so much the defence of their virtues (which they certainly have), as the widespread assumption of the idea of job scarcity as inevitable, structural

On opposing sides are those who in general aspire to the guarantee that peo-

ple's income should come by way of worthy, stable and quality employment. For this, they promote the transformation of the production model to be based on the factors of quality and added value and the establishment of a regulatory framework (recruitment, inspection, minimum wage,

poverty and child poverty, although its effect on the risk of poverty is relatively lower.

Similarly, it is scientifically debatable whether they have actually acted as a factor in reducing wages (there are investigations with mixed results, as the effect is probably found in turn to be conditioned by socio-economic contextual factors), the degree of mobility / inclusion acquired by ordinary users, and questions about how they would act in a labour market such as the Spanish for example.

It would certainly be naive (or extremely bold) to want to close here with a conclusion about the matter, but common sense would seem to point to the idea that in any case the solution to the phenomenon of the "working poor" has to involve creating a response that is capable of drawing a line between the synthesis of both views.



collective bargaining) that can ensure the adequate and fair distribution of wealth.

The second group tends to point out that wage supplements act in practice as mere "patches" without addressing the real root of the problem, condemning those who suffer to eternal insecurity and acting as a factor in salary reduction, especially in the sectors of retail productivity.

In all likelihood neither of these two views is completely wrong. Without a doubt the salary supplement programs have served specifically to reduce severe



Enrique Martín-Serrano
Sociologist and Doctor
in Labour Law

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¹Survey of Wages, 2013 Structure.

WMCW Message of Labour Day

Workers of the world

I want to sing a new song of joy
At dawn that day of arrival in our land!
With my people celebrate the dawn
My people set free!
Struggle has not been in vain...

Christian songbook of Brazil

Today we live in a divided world

Widespread hatred divides countries, continents, social classes, trade unions, politics and cause the criminalization of social movements.

These situations lead to revolt and despair. Workers see inadequate response to the loss of their fundamental rights: wages, health, education, land, housing and work. This has been evidenced in the two meetings of Pope Francis with leaders of social movements including WMCW-World Movement of Christian Workers, held at the Vatican and later in Bolivia, when he visited the countries of South America.

Migration - a widespread fact in today's world

Widespread poverty in some countries because of different disasters: the madness of internal fights and wars has led to mass migration in several regions of the world, resulting in the breakdown of families, deaths and so much suffering.

Therefore we highlight the causes of migrants, displaced people and refugees. We are facing a situation of oppression of the poorest, by those who accumulate more and more wealth at the expense of the suffering



of the poor, the visible face of Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth (Mark).

Capitalism has its proposal for ending this crisis

Throughout the world capitalism has a clear plan for overcoming the crisis: lower prices of raw materials (agricultural, oil, etc.) and reduced salaries and workers' rights to ensure a rate of profit.

The way out of the crisis for capital is for the workers to bear all the sacrifices so that capitalism is working again. This increases the social crisis, because only unemployment increases and the rights of the working class decreases.

Moreover, the economic crisis develops in other ways:

1- with the reckless destruction of the environment;

2- with the "every man for himself" view dominating, goods are seen as being more valuable than human life.

WMCW proposes solidarity of the working class

WMCW- The World Movement of Christian Workers, an organization of workers present across all continents, has collaborated in the struggles of the labour movement for the last fifty years. Their perspective is that it is only with the cooperation and joint participation of all the Working Class that the existence of a society where PEACE and the FRUIT OF JUSTICE can

reign. The foundation of the Kingdom of God begins here and now, and it will last forever because of the Incarnation of the Son of God.

Therefore, we urge the governments of all countries to oppose those rules that discriminate against the working class, especially the most vulnerable and exploited. We also call on them to establish laws to eliminate forced labour, people trafficking and child exploitation.

We also urge all workers, and organizations of the working class, to act both individually and collectively in order to build a fair, equal, fraternal and sustainable world.

WMCW-World Movement
of Christian Workers

8th March

Message of International Women's Day

The day for the recognition of women's rights is long and secular, in the struggle for building a more inclusive society.

The day for the recognition of women's rights is long and secular, in the struggle for building a more inclusive society.

In the charm of life, the woman is the light that should never be obscured: its absence is a darkness in which no power source can make you to see, even in daylight.

This charming woman is the mother; the lover and the beloved, and without doubt, the greatest creation of nature.

However, women are still looking for space in the world, a political activity carried out with great efficiency because she is, above all, a human being, with arms, legs, head, and the ability to think like anyone else on the Earth.

For these conditions and values, she does not get discouraged, does not give up:

- When she suffers all kinds of exclusion and oppression;
- When her child cries of hunger, cold, or the absence of maternal affection and a hug;
- When she leaves home in order to earn her daily bread by sweat and blood.
- When she leaves to organize with other women in the fight against prostitution and social neglect, to end violence against women - most often caused by the opposite sex, often frequently husbands and partners - and thus to contribute to the building of a more just, supportive and fraternal world, where girls (infants) and youth (teenagers) can live their

Women are still looking for space in the world, a political activity carried out with great efficiency because she is, above all, a human being

childhood and adolescence safely, welcomed and loved.

We recall here the worrying situation of women in the poorest countries. In the 21st Century, African women are 175% more likely to die in childbirth than women in developed countries according to the UN report.

In 2000, of the 529,000 maternal deaths in childbirth recorded, 95% were African women. Many of the deaths are caused by the delay in recognizing that there is a problem, the difficulty of the mother to get to a hospital, or to receive a quality service.

As the World Movement of Christian Workers, we believe in the Father-Mother God who created woman and man in her-his own image and created them to be partners in creation.

We pursue firmly our mission as Church, alongside working women who devote themselves every second of their lives in the name of justice.



WMCW-World Movement of Christian Workers

Immigration, putting an end to the misconceptions

Nowadays, immigration is at the centre of political debates. Certain parties often use untruths to justify their proposals for the rejection of migrants.

The book “Enfinir avec les idées fausses propagées par l’extrême droite”¹ (Putting an end to misconceptions disseminated by the far right) written by Pierre-Yves Bulteau, tries to provide a response to the ideas disseminated among other things, about migrants. Some passages of the book have been reproduced here, with the author’s permission.

Intake capacity exceeded?

The first misconception is that France’s capacity to take in migrants has been exceeded. “Since 1994, France has welcomed about 200,000 migrants to its soil every year, while, at the same time, 100,000 others travel in the opposite direction, often returning to their country... French net migration is therefore 100,000 people a year. This is a very low figure for a country that has 66 million inhabitants, even more so if we look at the period from 1994 to 2012 and compare the average net rate of migration in France with other European countries. We can then see that it is six times lower than Germany’s and eleven times lower than Norway’s”.

An attractive social system?

Another popular topic of discussion is that of migrants being attracted by the

French social system. A good example is the RSA (French welfare benefit) for which “EEA citizens must meet the conditions that will allow them to obtain this, a residence permit and they must have lived in France for at least three months at the time of their application. Others will only have the right to apply for this if they have had a residence permit allowing them to work for at least five years or if they have refugee status.” The same applies to public healthcare, which people think should be discontinued because it would attract immigrants seeking free healthcare. This idea should be rejected because “only 5% of migrants entering France when they are ill are aware of the illnesses they have²... To benefit from free health care, foreigners who are in France must show proof of having lived in France for at least three

months, and that their income does not exceed 716 euros a month, which places them below the poverty threshold”.

Not enough work?

The question of work also generates popular misconceptions, especially the idea that there will not be enough employment and that “foreigners would take jobs from French nationals. [...] However, a wide variety of sectors are unable to hire enough workers to meet their needs, due to information and training problems, and the unacknowledged demands of certain jobs, as well as inadequate wages”. Furthermore, it is often forgotten that, in order to work, foreign nationals have to pay a charge of 260 euros for the first work permit, and then pay 106 euros each time they renew their card. In addition, if “an employer wis-

hes to hire a foreign worker, they also has to pay charges to the French Immigration and Integration Office”.

Overturning the misconceptions that circulate is becoming a necessity, because they condition the way we think about and see migrants nowadays, by establishing a tendency to narrow parochialism.

¹ “Enfinir avec les idées fausses propagées par l’extrême droite”, by Pierre-Yves Bulteau, published by Editions de l’Atelier, 2014, 168 p., 5€.

² According to a report by the French National Assembly’s social affairs committee.

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and Pierre Yves Bulteau
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Illustration: Serbie Monte Kosov 5 SK (10)



Migrants: Daring to meet the other

Immigration is the main theme of the current political debate. Often, some parties are served falsehoods to justify its proposed rejection of immigrants.

“I thought that before I approached someone I needed to know their culture. It was an unrealistic goal and I quickly realized a questionable one. I wasn’t meeting cultures, I was meeting individuals: Ramesh the Tamil, Aiman the Arab... It wasn’t their differences that first caught my attention but who they were, unique individuals right in front of me”¹. This quote from Joseph Debès recounting his experience at the Plaine St-Denis illustrates the path we must take to avoid reducing migrants to their origins, to their migration and to see them instead for who they are: unique individuals.

Through the representations perpetuated by politicians and journalists we’ve become accustomed to thinking of migrants only as a problem. Yet many members of our movement, as

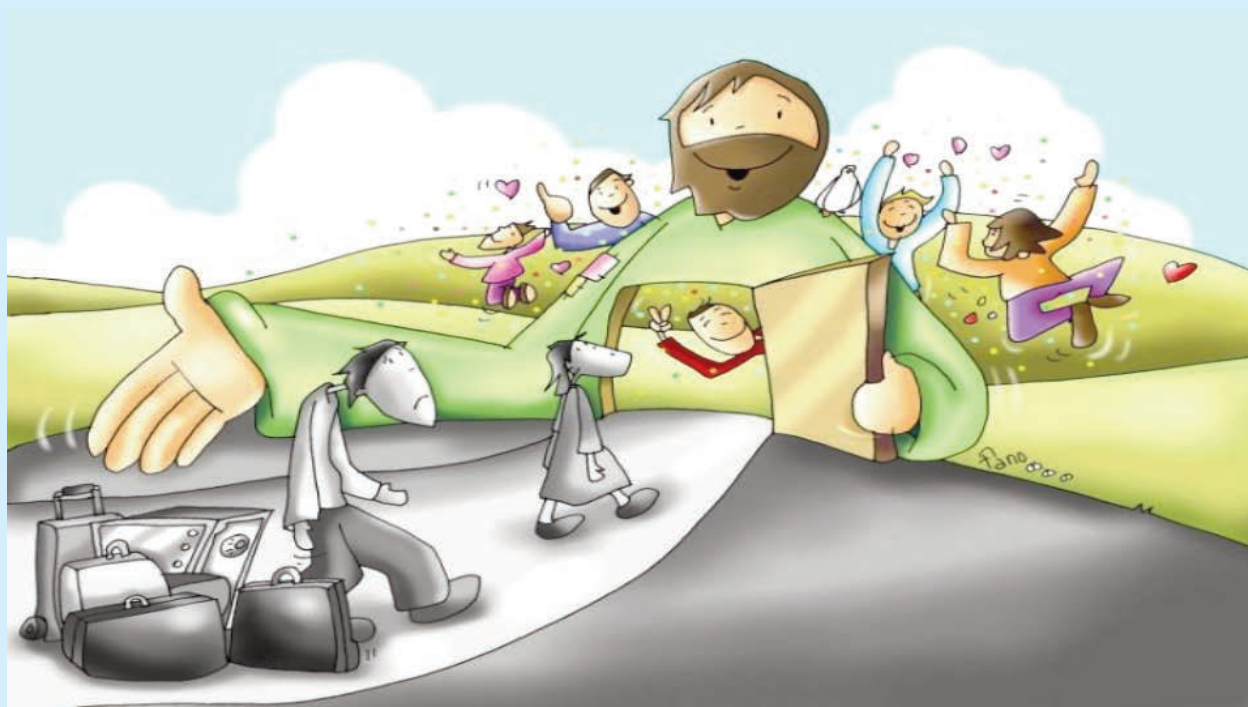
well as others, feel personally concerned by this issue, be it out of solidarity because of their own family’s situation or simply because they themselves are migrants.

This special issue offers you the opportunity to better understand different dimensions of migration – social, international and historical. By delving into this topic, with its social and personal implications, our special issue also seeks to renew our perspective; to open us to new encounters and to build the CWM together.

It wasn’t
their differences
that first caught my
attention but who they
were, unique individuals
right in front of me

¹ Lévinas, *l’approche de l’autre*, Joseph Debès, Editions de l’Atelier (published in France).

Sylvain Knittel
ACO



A few key words

Foreigner: a person who lives in France but doesn't have French citizenship. A foreigner is not necessarily an immigrant and can have been born in France.

Migrant: a person living temporarily or permanently in a country other than his or her country of birth, and who has developed strong social ties with the country.

Refugee: a person who has been forced to leave his or her country of origin and cannot return.

Asylum seeker: a person who has left his or her country of origin and is seeking refugee status.

Undocumented immigrant: a foreigner who has entered or who lives in the country without a residence permit.

Online resources

migrations.catholique.fr

The Pastoral Care for Migrants site offers information, personal stories, useful reference materials, and discussion and training resources to address the issue of migration.

www.gisti.org

The website of the Group for Information and the Support of Immigrants (GISTI) focuses primarily on the legal aspects of immigration. It highlights three sections: Practical Resources (form letters, advice...), Law (applicable legal texts) and Ideas (information about debates



and collective action). It's an important website for anyone working with migrants.

Further reading

“Sociologie de l’immigration”. Andréa Réa and Maryse Tripier, Edition la Découverte, November 2003, 123 pages, 10€.

This book examines the ways in which civil societies and countries incorporate immigrants, and highlights the broad similarities in the issues that arise and the diversity of responses from one society to another.

“Accueillir ou reconduire. Enquête sur les guichets de l’immigration” (only available in French). Alexis Spire, Raisons d’agir, 2008, 124 pages, 8€.

A study of men and women working in different immigration services as low-level employees under pressure to meet their targets.

“Où est ton frère? Roles sur les migrants et les réfugiés” Pope Francis, Bayard, 2015, 200 pages, 13.90€

This is a collection of different texts from Pope Francis who calls on us to resist “the globalization of indifference”.

Reflecting on our priority

Starting point:

Dare to open a dialogue in order to promote our values and to take apart and combat the arguments of those who promote hatred, exclusion and racism. People in precarious circum-

stances are their first targets.

–What values can I call on to combat those who spread ideas promoting exclusion and racism against migrants?

–In what way has my understanding of migrants changed after reading this special issue? How has it helped me open a dialogue?

–How am I attentive to the lives of migrants around me?

–How can I introduce them to the CWM and work with them?

Atypical work in the North, informal work in the South: two sides of the same coin

Having a decent job is an important issue when it comes to improving the working and living conditions for workers, whether they are male or female. It goes without saying that the reality of work has changed a lot in recent years, with job instability and migration occurring on a global level, in societies where social and economic rights are increasingly disregarded.

Only 50% of the world's jobs are salaried. Less than 40% of salary-earning employees have a permanent full-time contract. Job insecurity is on the rise around the world. It differs according to a country's history and individual regions as well as the economic and social structure of their political system and job market¹. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), 'In countries where data is available, three quarters of workers are employed on a temporary basis or on fixed-term contracts, are working in informal jobs often without a contract, are self-employed workers, or are doing unpaid family work'². In Quebec, insecurity translates as non-standard jobs within the formal economy. There are, however, common traits of job insecurity: a lack, or even complete absence of rights and protection at work, and workers

experiencing economic insecurity.

Atypical work in the North

Industrialised countries have become used to a system of work centred on regular, long-term employment and guaranteed access to social protection, including labour laws. Since the 80s, we have witnessed the establishment of a neoliberal regime, which rests on four fundamental pillars: liberalisation, deregulation, privatisation and a reduction in social policies³. The new standard is gaining ground. Atypical work, poverty and job insecurity are taking hold.

Competition between workers is emphasised in order to reduce the costs of the workforce and subjugate the latter.

Between 1987 and 2007, the percentage of temporary employment in OECD countries reached 12% of all paid work, com-

pared to only 9.4% in 1985. During this period, permanent paid employment rose by 21%, whereas the proportion of temporary work rose by 55%.

The various types of atypical work:

- Involuntary part-time;
- Casual or temporary contracts;
- Work via an employment agency;
- On call without obligation to be available outside the statutory working period;
- Seasonal workers;
- Telework;
- Self-employment;
- Invisible work (illicit or undeclared work, family workers and work under special arrangements carried out inter alia by seasonal migrant workers)⁴.

The characteristics of atypical work:

– There is a wide variety of characteristics according to whether the person has

a contract for an expertise tied to specific needs or a non-skilled contract on the fringes of the job market;

– Indirect or ambiguous working relationship between the employer(s) and employee. Who is the actual employer: the subcontractor, the franchisee, the agency?

– Exemption procedures for labour laws and union agreements within workplaces:

- Differences in treatment according to employment status within the same business;
- Employer arbitrariness and unlawful dismissal;
- Little or no access to security programmes, income replacement or pension schemes;
- Insufficiency or absence of union rights, especially the right to unionise and bargain;
- Difficulties relating to internal solidarity in workplaces.

¹ International Labour Organisation (2011). Policies and Regulations to Combat Precarious Employment. Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV). <http://www.ilo.org/>

² ILO, (2015). World Employment and Social Outlook 2015. (19th May). <http://www.ilo.org/>

³ Idem.

⁴ Noiseux, Yannick (2008). "État, syndicalisme et travail atypique au Québec: une sociologie des absences et es émergences" [State, unionism and atypical work in Quebec: a sociology of absences and emergences], Doctoral thesis in sociology, University of Quebec, Montreal, p. 21-25.

In Quebec

- Atypical employment has reached almost 40%;
- 25.4% of women work part-time, compared to just 12.3% of men;
- 13% of workers have an insecure job status and 46% of these have access to sick leave, but not pension schemes;
- There are 550,700 workers registered as self-employed.

In the public sector:

- 35% of employees have an insecure job status, for example:
 - Schools: 59%
 - School boards: 46%
 - Civil service: 28%
 - Health and social services: 25%

Migrant work

Globalisation has unfortunately allowed the most

developed countries to draw from an extremely mobile source of labour: migrants.

-In 2013, almost 232 million people (3.2% of the world's population) were living outside their country of origin;

-A large proportion of these live in situations of extreme hardship, in which their working rights and human rights are not taken into account;

-Women represent almost half of international migrants, up to 70% or 80% in certain countries;

-They often have low-skill, low-paid jobs in secondary or tertiary sectors or unregulated sectors, where gender discrimination is widespread, particularly in domestic work.

We have a responsibility towards them, as, aside

from experiencing the decline in our working conditions due to businesses relocating to their countries for a cheaper workforce, here, they become a source of cheap labour. They experience numerous injustices that we must condemn, whilst increasing our support for groups whose mission it is to welcome migrants.

Job insecurity is not in itself an inevitability. It is up to us to roll up our sleeves and take action, alongside others, to demand fair working conditions for everyone. Our outrage will lead us into finding what is deemed 'vital' in order to preserve the common good: the distribution of goods, solidarity, justice, equality, integration and non-exclusion, the humanisation of society, chan-

ging overpowering structures, changing the rules of the game, reducing our consumption, implementing decent working conditions and a guaranteed minimum wage for everyone, so that together, we can develop our shared hopes and calls to action for building a more just and friendly world, with a view to sustainable development.

Louise Paré
Canada

Sections of text taken from Paper 1 October 2015 'Job instability is not inevitable: raising awareness for decent working conditions!' - paper created by the Centre International de Solidarité Ouvrière (CISO) [International Workers' Solidarity Centre.



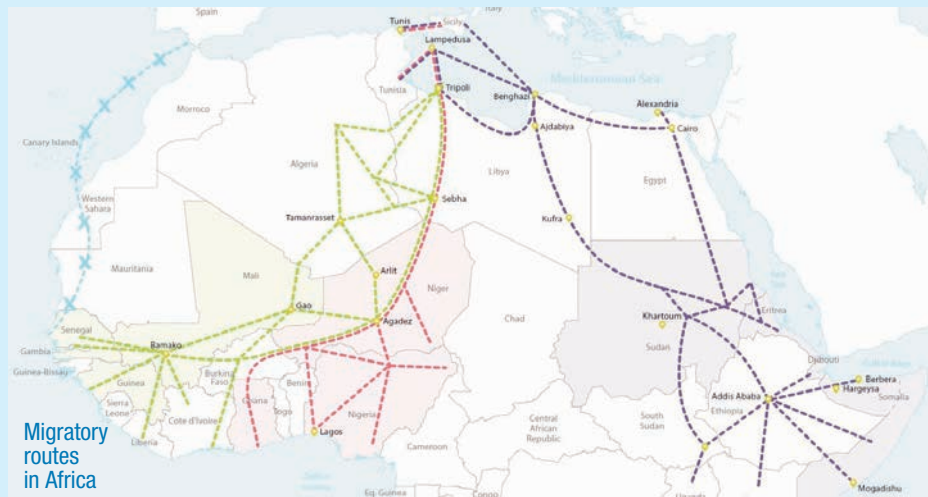
The inn on the edge of the desert!

Mali | Since 2005 the Catholic parish of Gao¹ has provided a space for the Migrant House. Currently, seven volunteers both Christian and Muslim, including one woman, manage the Migrant House and have spoken with us about it.

At the Migrant House, we consider a “migrant” to be anyone living outside of his or her home country, either permanently or temporarily. This definition therefore includes all migrants: refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants. The Migrant House has chosen to focus on migrants in distress, people who, for one reason or another, aren’t able to provide decently for themselves. They could be stuck in Gao, people simply travelling through (Gao is a main stop on the road to the Maghreb countries and for some to Europe) or migrants living in Gao who come from elsewhere. In addition, we provide assistance to young Malians who are considering migrating or who have returned, often having encountered failure.

Helping through information and training

Most of these migrants have been sent back from the Maghreb countries and often arrive in terrible condition; many have mental health issues, some have been imprisoned. The Migrant House provides for their needs and helps them to integrate into society, helping them to learn the language, the local culture and a trade. We also help them to manage their legal and administrative formalities,



It is our duty to help them make their dreams a reality

ties, and make a point of providing them with accurate information about migration and explaining their rights and their obligations.

Our commitment stems from our choice to serve the most vulnerable. Like God in the Book of Exodus (3, 7-8), we have seen and heard the cries of migrants in distress, we have decided to go to them, and to do something for and with them. We live in a city where the majority of the inhabitants are poor, but we believe migrants are among the most vulnerable. They know no one, they’re targets for traffickers and security agents,

they have no legal or social protection (since they often have no papers); they don’t know the area, the language, or the culture, and often have no way of finding a job. Surviving decently in Gao is extremely difficult for them.

Seeking a better future

We are committed to acting for and with them, because we are convinced that these are good and honest people who have not accepted misery but who seek to improve their lives. They are often the victims of decisions and events beyond their control, like war, climate change, or unemployment. As

Pope Francis says, they are seeking a better future, they have dreams to achieve. It is our duty to help them make their dreams become a reality because we believe in God who became man so that men and women could live and live abundantly. Unfortunately, these migrants feel they must leave their homes, migrating in conditions that often violate their human rights, in order to achieve their dream of an abundant life.

¹ With help from CCFD-Terre Solidaire, the Cimade, Catholic Relief Services, Caritas Germany and the CIRC, through the Malian Red Cross. The Gao Migrant House works with a mandate from Caritas-Gao.

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Portugal:

Conclusions Inter-Diocesan Formation Meetings

The COL/CWM (Catholic Operation League/Christian Worker's Movement) promoted four formation meetings in March 2016 on the following days.

The 12th in Braga for the Diocese of Braga; the 13th in Aveiro for the central zone; the 13th in Setúbal for the south zone; and the 20th in Porto for the Diocese of Porto. These meetings, in which around 200 members and supporters of the movement participated, sought to debate and deepen the Synthesis of the Review of Life, recently accomplished by dozens of COL/CWM base teams with the goal of preparing for the 16th National Congress, which was to be held from the 10th to 11th of June, 2016.

In order to help analyze the situation in which the majority of workers, the unemployed, the retired and families live, and in order to discern the challenges and paths that can contribute to the existence of meaningful work for all (one of the foundations of human dignity), we had with us Américo Carvalho Mendes, José Manuel Pureza, Manuel António Ribeiro, and Manuel Carvalho da Silva.

From the synthesis of The Review of Life, the reflection presented by the aforementioned speakers, and from the debates that ensued, the following topics stood out:



Interdiocesan meetings training in Portugal.

A clear and deliberate policy regarding the devaluation of work

Over the last 3 years, in which the COL/CWM has assumed “A Just and Sustainable Society, with work for all” as a priority for action, there have been many changes in the lives of workers and their families, unfortunately, in general, for the worse.

A clear and deliberate policy of devaluation of work has developed in a process of destruction of social contracts with a progressive strategy of transferring earned income into capital by lowering salaries and pensions, and infringing upon

workers' rights.

The supremacy of mercantile relationships has spread into all aspects of human life, creating inequality and dehumanizing workers in that the commodification of labour, which is socially considered and accepted as merchandise, alienates people's rights and dignity from the working world.

Emerging from the analysis grew the idea that risks generate various scenarios of fear: old fears of colleagues, of management, of asking questions, of losing one's job, of lack of a future (especially for youth); and new fears of climate change (which we did not think about for

decades), and of offshore accounts (places for legally hiding profits and avoiding taxes).

This situation, which offends human dignity, has serious consequences for families, as many have lost their homes, their work and other basic human needs, leaving them unable to secure access to education, culture, health and justice, all of which are fundamental human rights.

Pope Francis identified three fundamental tools for social inclusion of the most needy: education, access to health care, and work for all.

Work, a fundamental dimension of humanity



Interdiocesan meetings training in Portugal.

Over the last few years the COL/CWM has fought hard to obtain work for all. Pope Francis, the Bishop of Beja, and all of those who haven't yet lost their capacity for indignation, continue to insist on the requirement for "work for all". Will this turn out to be merely an illusion?

Work is one of the fundamental aspects of a human being, and unemployment is so humiliating that it affects one's own perception of human dignity, turning unemployment from a marginal worry to a fully-fledged issue. Workers have to realize their value and continue to affirm and defend their right to meaningful work through the organization of workers in their trade unions, and through the reactivation of the Collective Hiring of Work.

But, the unemployed, the needy, and the poor are out there! They are a growing reality that we cannot hide. And we, Christians, are forced to ask the question: "What have you done to

your brother or sister?" We should recognize that we too have let ourselves be carried away by the god called "consumerism" and that we need to change to search for another lifestyle, to look out for and attend to those who don't earn a livelihood for lack of a job. The face of suffering must be placed at the centre of our Civic and Christian Duty thus acting against all obstacles in defence of labour and in favour of creating relationships, of the reshaping and reduction of working hours, of the valuing of workers' pay, of the management of knowledge and of the appropriate use of technology.

Uncertainty and insecurity cannot be the norm. By valuing work it is possible to diminish suffering, to have more creativity, dignity and happiness, to have one's own life and participate in civic duty. Fighting for "work for all" is also a battle cry. Is it possible for all new technology to also re-imagine, re-organize and distribute work

in a new way and to be placed at the service of the common good?

We need to revitalize organizations and the COL/CWM Congress, for which these meetings are preparatory, should affirm this starting from the exceptional teachings of pope Francis.

Being dedicated to transformative acts

More immediately, we need to stand together with people and institutions in difficulty, but also be spokespeople for choices and decisions that humanize work, demanding that every person who works has a contract with conditions that respect their life and that of their family.

It is necessary to promote a culture of holding meetings between people and between generations as well as investing in educating, evangelizing and humanizing workers in the sense of justice through the Gospel and through what

the Social Doctrine of the Church teaches about work, the economy, the universal destination of all goods, and human rights.

It is also necessary to be conscious that today's questions are global ones, as everything is global, be it the economy, work relations, or the poor. It is imperative that we bring the questions of the "Common Good" and "Caring for the World" to the public stage, as well as into our own homes, just as Pope Francis tells us in his encyclical *Laudato si'*.

We will not remain indifferent and we will be dedicated and active in this transformative act, creating pressure, together with unions and other organizations, so that new laws are created, ones that put an end to poverty and safeguard the dignity of all people.

National Executive Team
of COL/CWM

Mariléa Damasio, General Secretary of the WMCW:

“We must answer to the insecurity and lack of rights for workers”

Seeing a woman crying over the death of her son, caused by the absence of sanitation in the favela where he was living, turned her into a local activist. To be present at the daily injustices in her place of employment convinced her to work with the Movement of Christian Workers of Brazil. This is the new General Secretary of the World Movement of Christian Workers, a woman who is not indifferent to the pain of others.

The interview takes place one year after her appointment and on her visit to our country to attend the International Council of the World Movement of Christian Workers, which has been celebrated in Avila. Since she was very young, her life has been dedicated to family, work, and the Church. Now, she is involved "body and soul" in a task that she considers goes beyond the technical position that she occupies.

What was your life story before taking charge of the General Secretary post at the WMCW?

For the previous 20 years I organized the life of the favela because there was no health centre, there was no sanitation, there were no schools, at that time I was working for Catholic Action for Workers, today called the Movement of Christian Workers. I have always worked with the community; we have taken part in all the reflecting and all the actions jointly. I have been helped a lot by the review of life method that the YCW gave me. It was fundamental in order to understand my mother and



my parents and to be able to raise my five brothers.

In 2001 I left the favela, my brother became ill and I had to decide if I was going to study in Switzerland with a scholarship or help my family. I stayed behind, because my father had died after a violent accident, and then my brother fell ill. Also, the work in the favela became complicated; the violence associated with drugs began. When one has fought so much for life, this situation overwhelms you. I could not speak, I could not do much and my brother, who had recovered, needed a better, healthier house. In

15 days, I got the government to give us a house outside the favela.

The WMCW of Brazil has always supported me and when, for the third time, they proposed that I assume responsibility in the world movement, I could not refuse. The last proposal came to me in a moment when I was asking God what he wanted for my life. Naturally I cried a lot, thinking about the path I had travelled. Why me? I spoke with my family, with the activists, with my husband, with my mother. My mother did not like that I had to travel, but she said that if

it was what God wanted I had to do it.

One year has passed since your appointment: what vision do you have for the organization?

On becoming the General Secretary, I thought: what have I got myself into? I started in January 2015, working alongside Betina Beate who remained until June to facilitate the transition. I am still getting to know the organization. The vision from the foundation is not the same as the one that you perceive when you are in the structure. What I have discove-

red is the fragility of the movement, especially in its foundation. If the foundation is fragile, the whole organization is. One of the big challenges is to help to organize the Continents, the movements in every country and see what they are doing for workers.

How do you assess the current work situation of the world?

Earlier we were talking about Latin America and Africa; today we talk about the difficulty of all the workers on all the Continents. I remember the help that the organizations of the more conscious workers in Europe provided for the workers of Latin America. Latin America has somewhat improved the life of these workers, it had leftist governments, and there was some change in the general situation in which we were living, at the time that the workers in Europe began to suffer. Unemployment in Europe is very high, especially, for the young people. Latin America runs the risk of losing the advances it has made. The economic forces are very strong and they are doing all they can to destroy the conquests of the 80s and 90s.

Is the impulse that Pope Francis is giving the world Church noticeable?

There was a moment in which we did not know what the Church was doing, where it was. Many priests were only devoting themselves to prayer and

praying, forgetting to take action. Francis is now saying everything that we had been saying about caring for human life. We cannot leave aside people's lives. The question is how to do this now. In Brazil, it is true that the Evangelical Church is very strong and they are working in a very different way. Now the Pope is giving a very strong impulse so that the Church is coming out of itself. He does not condemn, but on the contrary, he promotes compassion. As WMCW, we also have a commitment to take the words of Pope Francis and make them real. It is a big opportunity. One challenge is the advisers who must work with the foundation. In many parishes, there are big celebrations in which there is no mention of life. We know that we cannot solve everything, but we can recapture the ways to make the foundation grow.

One of the big challenges is to help to organize the Continents, the movements in every country and see what they are doing for workers

Is the current papacy an opportunity for the Christian workers' movements?

What I have lived since my adolescence is the mission that Pope Francis speaks about. Many Christian workers' movements feel more affirmed. Pope Francis is the master key to show the side of the Church that

has a commitment to the most excluded and that there is also a momentum to continue advancing in gaining insight into the lives of workers who suffer from injustice.

The WMCW has taken part in two popular world movement meetings. One of our greatest desires is to promote the mission of the



Church in the world and the WMCW has a very important role in doing this. We already have a document that recognizes our movement as an organization of the Church. We have been in the Vatican speaking about our role, our mission, the need for a strong foundation that could be present in the world of work. We are part of the church and now, with this Pope, we have to live together through that mission. The door is open to keep on talking about these matters and to make commitments. But our daily work will be what defines the scope of our action. We must fight for a fair life for all.

What challenges do you consider to be most important for the international organization?

The first step is to form a team around the regional continental coordinators. We must see what we do and why we do it. The previous team did a good job of reorganization and the current team must reinforce the international coordination. It is true that the Continents are very big, but now, with air travel, in two or three hours you are in a new country. And it is very important that the coordination of every area is committed to the foundation and promotes concrete actions. The General Secretary must boost this coordination and be aware of establishing the appropriate channels.

With new technologies, we now have many tools at our disposal. We must reinforce the training of those involved, by means of actions designed for that, and finally, reinforce the coordination structure. The work to be undertaken is group work, teamwork.

Unemployment is also violence. We must think that God has placed us with the workers

In relation to the next world assembly in July of 2017: what are your expectations?

In the council of 2015, it was decided to hold the Assembly in Spain, with the support of HOAC, which will be the host. It will be something different from the previous ones because there are fewer people who are going to take part and it will be more operational. We have to do what we can do as a movement to help to change the situation of complete insecurity and lack of rights that workers are experiencing. Another one of my worries is the attack against workers' organizations and the discrediting of the political parties, together with the violence that shakes the world and strikes the weak. Unemployment is

also violence. We must think that God has placed us with the workers. Without trade unions to organize us, without parties to represent us and in which to trust, with weak social movements and with young people unemployed: how can we change the situation?

Is there dialogue with the world's trade unions, with the World Confederation of Trade Unions?

It is important to begin high-level relations. I have attended international meetings focussed on work, where in fact the voice of the workers was represented by NGOs and not by trade unions. The WMCW, for example, in many international forums is considered to be an NGO, when we are not exactly that. Our mission is to help to form the sensibility of workers in the world and to understand that work is fundamental for development. When we talk about child poverty, we must think about the mothers and the parents who have no work, or have insufficient work. We have a

foundation of activists who are in trade unions who have relationships with them. Not only is it my work as General Secretary, but also the work of all the members of the WMCW. The trade unions are very important in workers' lives, they are essential for changing the current situation, loss of rights, and destruction of the support networks of hard-working families.

What characteristics would you like to bring to the movement?

I would like a more energetic and firmer movement based on simplicity and tranquillity, always working in a group. Workers have to feel that the movement is united and is concerned about their lives. The word "global" sounds very distant and we must reduce this distance to create a real tool for solidarity between the workers of the world.



Abraham Canales and José Luis Palacios
Director and editor
of Noticias Obreras,
respectively

Interview published in Working News magazine, 1580, feb2016.

The face of migration

In order to better understand the reality of migration, we interviewed Maryse Tripier, an immigration sociologist.

Who are the migrants?

Migration to France has historically been migration for work. During the first Industrial Revolution it was Belgians, Luxembourgers, Germans, etc., who came. The majority, especially between 1850 and 1960, were Italians. In the 1960's French businesses made the choice to pursue a policy of cheap labour over technological investment. Contrary to the pre-war period migration was no longer organized only by businesses but by the National Office of Immigration. This immigration was considered to be tem-

porary by almost everyone. All that changed after the first oil crisis; at this time tensions regarding the labour and housing markets started. From then on the problems of integration began. Before this the word used was that of adaptation: "Have they adapted to industrial work? Will they be able to adapt to the factories?"

After the 1990's the language changed referring to groups "without-papers" which also coincided with the closing of the borders. This closure happened at the same time as the pressure to migrate was gro-

wing because North-South problems had never been resolved and regional conflicts were multiplying in the world; problems of political, social, and climatic insecurity. Currently, there are still no legal paths for immigration other than

family unification, paths for studies and a few of immigration for work in well-targeted sectors. It is thus necessary to arrive via other means. They enter as best they can and then try to gain a legal status.

The majority of migration occurs between nearby countries and within countries of the South



Serbia Montenegro Kosovo 5 SK (14)

What is the social profile of those who migrate?

Every category is represented but what everyone says is that it still takes money to make these journeys and that it is not the poorest who leave. Those who have a little money will go to neighbouring countries, it takes much more money (sometimes provided by the rest of the family) to make the journey to Europe. A large portion of the migrants are skilled workers, but not exclusively; it varies and depends on the countries from which they travel. The majority of migration occurs between nearby countries and within countries of the South. It is estimated that almost 12% of migrants are going to Europe; the migrant population in the world represents 3% of the global population.

Has the composition of migrants changed?

One of the biggest changes in characteristics is feminization, either because of family reunification or, and this is new, the migration of single women or heads of families who are doing what the men used to do. Filipino nannies, who work for [European] families, can thus put some money aside to send home, etc. This migration of women recalls the era of internal migration, when women left to work as maids, for example the Breton woman who went to Paris.

The other category is that of the replacement worker; those who come to work employed by European companies. This is outsourcing that competes with the 'indigenous' economy of Europe.

There is always the question of competition; I have worked with CGT and what was interesting in their practices was that

that they face here. Displacement and relocation is particularly difficult for exiles, people who are obliged to leave.

In what psychological state are refugees?

They have to wait to obtain papers, to learn French and those who are at Calais are waiting to leave. They are in state of an-

their family if they have the means. But, at the same time, this flow which has been created and which unifies is shackled by the fact that they cannot move.

What has been the role of workers' movements regarding migrants?

For a very long time trade unions were almost the only legal channel of expression before foreigners gained the right to associate in 1982. But weakened trade unions can no longer play as strong a role in the defence and integration of migrants. Things are more difficult for the trade union movement because they too are having difficulties. At the same time immigrant unions are developing. For example, after the strikes by illegal immigrants, some formed trade unions. Migrants from different countries of origin are very different and have a very different experience. For example, the Tunisians in France are a real community, they know each other, they follow what's happening in Tunisia, they are in human rights organizations, etc., and they are also tied to activists in their country of origin.

The road is very long and sometimes very painful

they didn't deny competition, didn't turn against the "competitor", they fought for equality.

What does a person go through over the course of migration?

There is one common thing for all people who migrate permanently, uprooting. They pass from a familiar world into one they do not know. We know that the road is very long and sometimes very painful. Serious things can happen during the journey. Many believe that afterwards it will be the Promised Land, many have illusions, and some migrants create these illusions by sending gifts and masking the difficulties

xiety. Waiting for stabilization is very important. What's more, since asylum seekers do not have the right to work, they just wait "without anything to do"; they receive a small stipend, which contributes to them being viewed badly elsewhere. In other countries, they would have the right to work.

What about ties with the country of origin?

Transportation and telecommunication technologies are transforming ties with their country of origin; they can be closer now than in the past. This coming together appears at odds with the slowness of bureaucratic administration. People can speak to

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The spirit of God fills the universe, he is with us in the fight for justice

Remarks on a period of spiritual crisis and of the threat to democracy in Brazil. Starting with a summary of 2 days regarding Spirituality for the working class, that took place at the beginning of Holy Week, in our regional MMTC seat/SP, at Santo André, in partnership with la Pastoral Ouvrière de l'Etat de SP [the Pastoral Workers of the State of SP].



TO SEE

A world torn: generalised indignation and hate which divide, trade unionists, political parties, and social movements are accused as if they were criminals, and they are disgusted at the working world because they see their fundamental rights diminishing little by little: ground, roof, work, salary, public transport, health and education.

Manipulation of information about the current crisis in Brazil, which happens because of the way this information, is communicated in most cases – slander about corruption is used in order to intoxicate the minds of workers of all ages and professions. This misinformation started in the age of the colonisation

of Brazil in the 16th century. More recently, in the last few decades since the dictatorship, we have freedom of expression, but not of the disclosure of facts. Information is centralised and directed through 6 powerful families, considered to be owners of the main part of the media in the country: TV channels, radio stations, newspapers, magazines; the method of presenting the facts as simple silences reveals that they manipulate the truth which they have an obligation to present to the public. For example, they spread a ‘Unique Thought’ which says that ‘the market economy’ will be able to resolve the great inequalities between the citizens of the country. We call this ‘fundamentalism’: that is to

say they impose their ideas on others, they refuse to open a dialogue with others, they do not accept different opinions, they also accentuate, both in this country and in other parts of the world, the division between the classes, the indignation of the populations, a collective hate which is shown in violence to ‘crush’ others, falling ultimately to a leader, a recently elected government, a political party, an economic project which has already produced considerable advances, especially in reducing absolute poverty...

Who profits from this grave, anti-democratic situation?

Today’s confrontations are signs of the continuing battle between the classes of 2 centuries ago, where numerous workers, especially from Latin America, died. Manual work loses more and more of its value, affecting its dignity. Machines and robots produce more wealth and have lower costs.

What value does the system of ‘the market economy’ have on a global level (it’s the current name for capitalism), where money, on its own, makes more money, anyone who

has it can work the stock market; speculation is more important than anything else. However, unemployment threatens to reach a new generation of workers, there is little training available for the vast majority of the young, there is prejudice against black people, female workers receive less pay, many people are on a low salary, public health is in a bad state, criminality is a threat, repression does not help at all with the rehabilitation of convicts...on the other hand, a very small minority protects itself and becomes richer.

Institutional spaces should defend democratic rights for citizens, without exception, conforming to our constitution of 1988 and they should vote on the laws or decrees of public protection which are there for all members of society and should not give privilege to an elite which already has power and wealth. One of the causes of the population rebelling against corrupt politicians is partly that a radical political reform is being avoided and suffocating deadlocks are not removed. People of the general population do not feel as well represented as they should

be, by: national congress, deputies, senators, judicial powers, public ministers as a whole, repressive political action and executive power, in Brazil, their Federal States or their municipalities as in each of the Federal States, in each municipality. Corruption exists everywhere, in large businesses as well as in small ones; it's like a 'cancer' that also threatens certain popular institutions, associations or organisations. The demand for democracy leads us to follow an enquiry that condemns this case, as the proof is irrefutable and the parties have not given it any consideration, part of this is finding a place for everyone, the same judicial criteria of impartiality and respecting the law.

Lots of Brazilian citizens, workers on low pay, as well as intellectuals, artists, singers, student unions, evangelical churches, CNBB, other religions and atheists, are threatened by the 'Judicial Coup d'Etat'. They demonstrate their indignation for certain illegal and anti-democratic procedures of certain 'Indoctrination Operations' on the part of the magistrates, politicians or other representatives of the state. We have confidence that they will be an example to follow, as defenders of the Democratic State of Right and not as 'upholders of the law'.

TO JUDGE

As the Movement of Christian Workers (the current name for the ACO¹ in Brazil) is immersed in the suffering experienced by the whole working class, we must look deeply into our conscience as campaigners (politicians should do the same) as is set out by the Project of

We must look deeply
into our conscience
as campaigners
as is set out by
the Project
of the Celestial Father

the Celestial Father. The 'Kingdom of God' is like a society of love, justice, sharing and peace, qualities that Jesus said he found 'already within us' and we are called to build this Kingdom, working with him, during the earthly phase of our life. There is a project for societal solidarity which has guided us for over a decade, calling for the coming together of the population, in towns and in the country, including workers, the poorest in this country. And lots of good things have been

done for the population, but this could all be lost. Among the fundamental questions are: "why are current leaders allowed to distance themselves from their roots? Into what wrongs and illusions have the powers of today fallen, at a municipal, state and federal level?" Earlier governments wanted to 'take

...remember the origins of our story

—Moses helped the workers, reduced slavery, left Egypt and formed a free people, conquering an earth where everyone will be able to work

—The Prophets have called all the citizens to union, when the country is cut in two: those of the north against those of the south

...“it is true that some women have surprised us, by saying that Jesus was alive... (the place of women in this combat for justice)

...“our heart was burning with hope, when he spoke to us of the long journey ahead

...“we recognise Jesus in his method of sharing bread

...“Rest with us”.

During the last Easter Triduum, 25-27 March 2016, we were reborn in church, along with other evangelical churches. The final phase of the earthly life of Jesus, a victim of the battle that encircled him, culminating with his violent death on the cross, but also opening the door to a Full Life for him, his body was brought back to life for everyone, human beings, in this marvellous togetherness of the universe in constant evolution.

Pentecost, irrespective of the tragic changes that could happen in the weeks

back power' supporting the same situation of global economic domination, for example privatising Petrobras in order to profit large foreign companies. We must redefine what the political, economic and social project will be, that Brazil needs for the future.

In this vision, set out here, an evangelical passage: read Luke 24, 13-35.

Some extracts from the text:

...how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken

¹ ACO, french acronym for Action Catholique Ouvrière.

to come, we need to reinforce our convictions: each one of us has our place in the job of creating a new universe, a new world and a new society, where everyone will have their place, where they will be able to live in peace with the others for the Common Good, so hate and greed will disappear and death will be wiped out. To fight the good fight, it's worth it.

2nd bible reference: from the book of Wisdom 1:7 and 5:20.

.../... *“el Espíritu del Señor Dios llena el Universo ...y el mundo entero estará a su lado contra los insensatos*

TO DISCUSS

Some suggestions by our MTC in Brazil:

- Never separate faith and politics
- We will approach Popular Movements with whom we can work at a regional, national and global level – for example the Minimum Wage defended by the MMTC. Partnering with social pastorals, those who have a common objective: political, spiritual and biblical training. For example, PO, CEBs, Pastorals – Pastoral or Workers Mission
- Pastorals of prisons... ecumenical Movements MOFIC, CONIC... of Human Rights... of others
- We will approach trade unions to confront the threats to the right to work
- To take the approaching municipal elections seriously. Communicating

with neighbours and friends, in order to discern and select the candidates that give priority to the Common Good in each municipality

- The fundamental role

vel a project of training, Spirituality and Politics following the style of our campaign and research from the year

- To use the social and digital tools of communica-

***In union with
the New Great Migratory
Invasion which looks
for refuge in Europe today
Escaping repression,
unemployment, death ...
I want to raise
a new song of joy
seeing the day
of his return to
our earth dawn!
the spirit of God fills
the universe**

of women in these confrontations (deepening the faith, the capacity to transmit the merciful love of God, availability within the links, etc.)

- Correcting our lives, with our companions inspiring us [Gospel, the road to Emmaus, a village on the outskirts of Jerusalem (see also: Luke 24, 13-35 where we note that Jesus employs on a daily basis the pedagogy: to see - to judge - to discuss and to Celebrate)
- To finalise and systematise, in each regional MTC, and at a national le-

tion, to value and divulge the work of free journalists, artisans of an alternative, indispensable press

- To discover within ourselves, the necessity of conversation, deep within our conscience and collectively; to discover behaviour, use, solidarity, respect for nature, merciful attitudes between companions, even if they are on the other side, family life, our compromise with the bigger House: the working class
- In order to facilitate a battle together, we will look for a radical political

reform, to make locally a Map of relations with popular Movements which already exist, and with others: Popular Brazilian Front, Trade unionists, defenders of nature, MTS, Movements that defend the rights of man/DH, those in the parish who want an open church, those who are outside the Church, even atheists, those who already work in building a world of solidarity and democracy, safe in the knowledge that without the union between us, it would not be possible to confront the differences between classes.

- In union with the determination and humility of Pope Francis who recalls: through Jesus, more alive than ever, during his earthly passage to Palestine, we came to know the merciful face of the Father; with us, he develops, leaving a discrete, faithful companion who becomes part of the same Divine family; the Spirit that fills the universe, like the breath of life, like a powerful energy positively charged with love, until the final Victory.

Cida Casares Araújo and father Bernard Hervy, With the collaboration of the activists of the MTC – regional SP, who have participated with the Meeting between PO and MTC

*Biblical references:
Luke 24, 13-35
In the Book of Wisdom
1:7 and 5:20
Hymn reference: 'The Emigrant*

The Celebration of International Women's Day by ACO Haiti

Of the five foundation movements comprising the National Movement affiliated with the MMTC (Mouvement mondial des travailleurs chrétiens – World Movement of Christian Workers), the ACO (Action Catholique Ouvrière – Catholic Worker Action) branches in Azile and Gonaïves have been the most active regional branches in recent years. This is demonstrated by the results of the activities initiated by these two branches through small projects financed by the MMTC. This was possible thanks to donations collected through diverse sister organisations in different countries to come to the aid of campaigners in Haiti after the devastating earthquake of 12th January 2010.

It is through these two branches that ACO Haiti was able to mark International Women's Day on 8th March this year.

Azile is a small municipality with an area of 1,268 km² for a population of around 50,000 inhabitants, situated in the Nippes department, over 200km from Port-au-Prince. The Nippes and Grande-Anse departments are at present the most beautiful areas of the country, which is as much thanks to the diversity of their natural produce as the charm of their landscape. Such assets make these two territorial entities the richest in Haiti. It is therefore unsurprising that the women of ACO Azile, for the most part with the support of their spouses, made the best contribution to the celebration of International Women's Day on 8th March 2016.

On that day, ACO Azile succeeded in mobilising more than half of its 45 members, men and women alike, in their usual meeting place. Before an audience consisting predominantly of young women from nume-



rous regional socio-political associations and groups, several female campaigners proved themselves by painting the picture of the area from all points of view. They put the emphasis on agriculture, which has the potential to be the region's main sector, were it not neglected by national and local authorities.

This aspect of the celebration refers directly to paragraph 9 of the document 'Responses to the preparatory questionnaire of the In-

ternational Seminar of Haltern Am See'. Therefore elaborating on the SEE concept of the revision of life, ACO Haiti said the following:

"We are very concerned by certain problems that face our country and that are consequences of a political regression brought about by a series of governments over decades. It is this policy that has set the Haitians against each other, with a divide between rich and poor and a middle class ero-

ded by these two extremes. It follows that the country is losing more than it is gaining: chronic unemployment, unemployment tax continuously being raised (65 to 70%), high cost of living, extreme poverty. And, as often happens, the perpetuation of a bad situation has consequences affecting others, meaning we have an excessive birth rate, a demographic explosion, an increase in slums in urban areas, etc. To all this is added the aftereffects of the



catastrophe of 12th January 2010 and those that each year continue to destroy our agriculture and affect the living conditions of the most vulnerable populations.

“Many of this country’s problems can only be resolved by creating a just and fraternal society through projects and campaigns with sustainable effects by governmental and non-governmental institutions.

“As far as the functioning of our own movement is concerned, all movements must remain united with the MMTC and the other organised forces that work to promote fundamental rights for the people.”

If the MMTC has not already done so, we hope that it will go on to consider this with the aim of better directing the campaigns whose initiation on the ground may fall to the movement.

Many of this country’s problems can only be resolved by creating a just and fraternal society through projects and campaigns with sustainable effects

The revision of life is active and dynamic. It forms an axis of three concepts (SEE, JUDGE, ACT) which are all closely interlinked.

The second focal point of the celebration of International Women’s Day was in Gonaïves, 160km from the capital and 99km from Cap-Haitien. It is the country’s fourth city.

In comparison with cer-

tain previous events organised by ACO Gonaïves, for example to celebrate 1st May and the end of the year to name just a few, members were not sufficiently mobilised. The absence of certain influential members was very noticeable.

Fortunately, OKAFA, a women’s organisation, joined ACO Gonaïves to cele-

brate the occasion. In all, the event went well and the programme was executed to the satisfaction of the guests, the majority of whom belonged to one of the city’s teachers’ unions.

International Women’s Day has suffered a considerable decline in importance compared with that which it was previously afforded in Haiti, where politics dominates all sectors at all levels. It seems that politics cannot be too involved in this movement which has so far been ignored by the majority of women. This explains the increasingly evident lack of interest in the celebration of 8th March from Haiti’s men and women alike.

Adelet Jean-Gilles
Regional Representative
ACO Haiti