

See, Judge, Act: Migration in Theology

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Introduction

“What do you think is the most important problem facing America today?” The question has been asked to Americans by the Gallup polling organization since January 1939. Under the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt and in the midst of World War II, the most frequent answer was “war, keeping out of war”. Under John F. Kennedy and during the Cold War, Americans’ most frequent answer was “communism”. Following the attacks of 9/11/2001 under George W. Bush, it was “terrorism”. Under the George Bush Sr. and Bill Clinton administrations, the answer was “drugs”. In today’s presidency – a presidency won upon the nationalistic slogan “Make America Great Again” and the xenophobic mantra “Build a Wall” – the most common answer is not related a war with Nazis, communists, terrorists, or drugs. It is related to a war with immigrants. In this war, United States soldiers fortify the US/Mexico border as caravans of migrants flee from violence in Central America. White supremacist groups swell as political propaganda depicts immigrants as collections of serial killers and rapists. America’s president, Donald J. Trump, enables the separation and detention of migrant children, some of whom come from “shithole countries”, while his government simultaneously shuts down and investigates his office’s legitimacy.^{1,2} When asked in the polarized America of today, *“What do you think is the most important problem facing America today?”*, Americans’ most frequent answer besides “dissatisfaction with government” is “immigration”.³

¹ Trump, Donald J. Tweet, Jan. 13, 2019. 10:45am.

² Trump, Donald J. Tweet, Oct. 31, 2019. 3:18pm.

³ Aisch, Gregor, and Parlapiano, Alicia. “What Do You Think Is the Most Important Problem Facing This Country Today?.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 28 Feb. 2017, www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/02/27/us/politics/most-important-problem-gallup-polling-question.html.

Yet immigration is not simply a problem in the minds of Americans under President Donald J. Trump. It is an event that affects humanity the world over. In the modern global sphere, over 230 million migrants – a population greater than that of any European country – are scattered about the world away from their countries of origin. By the year 2050, the number of international migrants is predicted to balloon to 405 million – a population that, if consolidated, would comprise the fourth largest nation of our future world.^{4,5} Virtually all countries in today’s world are affected by migration as countries of origin, countries through which to migrate, or countries of destination. As a result, the unique knowledge, culture, and genetics of the world’s peoples are intermixing at a rate never seen before in human history, rapidly progressing our species to a homogenous one. Migration is not simply an American “problem”. It is a defining sign of today’s times.

Migration can be viewed even more broadly, beyond the current times and global context, for the event has been integral to humanity since our beginnings. The habitational expansion of our species out of eastern and southern Africa, the unification of our first civilizations in the Near East, and the cross-fertilization of human knowledge and culture across the continents have all involved the migration of people. But migration not only transcends time; it transcends space itself. Socrates, the father of western philosophy, is perhaps the first to articulate migration’s metaphysical properties. Upon his imminent execution and drinking of poison hemlock, Socrates requests of his grieving friends, “pray to the gods that my *emigration*

⁴ “World Migration Report 2018.” *International Organization for Migration*, 9 Feb. 2018, www.iom.int/wmr/world-migration-report-2018.

⁵ “World Population Prospects - Population Division.” *United Nations*, United Nations, population.un.org/wpp/.

from this world to that world should be a fortunate one".⁶ This metaphysical application of the word *metoikesis*, meaning "one who moves from this place to another" in Ancient Greek, also appears in a discussion on death in Plato's *Apology*.⁷

"For the state of death is one of two things: either it is virtually nothingness, so that the dead has no consciousness of anything, or it is, as people say, a change and *migration* of the soul from this to another place."⁸

Socrates' understanding of a discarnate migration nearly 2500 years ago expands the sociopolitical understanding of migration of today. Migration is more than the movement of people from one place to another. It is the movement of souls, spirits, and other noumena between and within the layers of reality. This metaphysical application of migration permits the possibility of an immortal soul, an archetypal idea that continues to underpin philosophical and theological thought structures both East and West.^{9,10} In Christianity, Danish polymath Søren

⁶ Plato, *Phaedo*. trans. by Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, Eric Salem. Focus Philosophical Library. Section 117c.

⁷ Translation provided via email with Professor David O'Connor of the University of Notre Dame. January 21, 2019.

⁸ Plato, *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, Vol. 1. trans. by Harold North Fowler; Introduction by W.R.M. Lamb. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1966.

⁹ The *hijra*, a migration of Muhammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina in 622 AD, is the event that Islam bases its calendar on. The term has since been adapted by Islamic writers to refer to one's spiritual inner migration to God in this life and a metaphysical migration of the soul to God after death. For more on the *hijra* both in physical and spiritual terms, see: Raven, Wim. "Hijra". *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three*. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson.

¹⁰ The idea of a migrating soul after death is shared by many ancient belief systems. The druids of Gaul taught that at death, the soul left one body to enter another body, either human, animal, inanimate. Pre-Christian Irish legends suggest that souls leave the body, but only in the case of heroes. Australian Aborigines believe that an infant holds the soul of a deceased ancestor. Tribes in Indonesia and the Amazon think that certain animals hold human souls which later enter human bodies. Hindus believe in reincarnation, the idea that the soul passes from one body (human, animal, insect, or plant) to another in a continuous cycle of life and death. For more on the metaphysical migration of the soul in ancient belief systems, see: "Transmigration of souls." *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed.

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/reference/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/transmigration-souls>

Kierkegaard is perhaps the first thinker to draw upon a metaphysical understanding of migration as the ancient Greeks did. In *Fear and Trembling*, he depicts Christ as an eternal migrant who existed with Abraham, the foundational migrant of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

“By faith Abraham emigrated from the land of his fathers and became a foreigner in the promised land. He left one thing behind and took one thing with him. He left his worldly understanding behind and took faith with him. By faith he was a stranger in the promised land, and there was nothing that reminded him of what was dear to him, but his soul was tempted to wishful nostalgia by the novelty of everything. And yet he was God’s chosen one, in whom the Lord was well pleased. In fact, had he been a castaway banished from God’s grace, he could have understood it better, but now it seemed like a mockery of him and his faith. *There was also in the world one who lived in exile from the ancestral homeland which he loved.* He is not forgotten, nor are his songs of lamentation when in sadness he sought and found what was lost.”¹¹

In my estimation, the unnamed migrant who accompanies Abraham in the world is Jesus, the one who lives away from his ancestral homeland, i.e. his Father’s domain, to make God known on earth. Stephan Evans and Sylvia Walsh, the editors of this Cambridge text, suggest the unnamed exile to be either Jeremiah who was banished from Jerusalem in 587 BCE or the poet Ovid who was banished from Rome by Caesar Augustus in 8 CE. Not only is this interpretation chronologically incongruous with Abraham’s lifetime, it neglects Kierkegaard’s allusions to the Parable of the Lost Sheep, Christ’s lamentation on the Cross, Matthew 12:18 and 17:5, and Isaiah 42:1.¹² In this excerpt, Kierkegaard overlays the figure of Abraham with the figure of Christ, referring to the former as a migrant in the modern day sense and the latter a migrant in an eternal, trans-dimensional sense. Kierkegaard, to my knowledge, is the first Christian to think of Christ as a metaphysical migrant, as one who crosses the border between the infinite and the finite to exist with every migrant across time – including Abraham.

¹¹ Kierkegaard, Søren. et al. *Fear and Trembling*. Cambridge University Press, 2006. p.14.

The same image of the incarnation as a migration, of Jesus's exile from His homeland, patterns the work of Fr. Daniel Groody, CSC, a modern-day apostle who has laid the chief cornerstone of a theology of migration. This field of study has become a holy temple for me who once felt as a stranger and foreigner amongst members of the household of God.

“No aspect of a theology of migration is more fundamental, nor more challenging in its implications, than the incarnation. Through Jesus, God enters into the broken and sinful territory of the human condition in order to help men and women, lost in their earthly sojourn, find their way back home to God. As noted in the Gospel of John, migration shapes Jesus's own self-understanding: ‘Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end... Jesus knew that the Father had given everything into his hands, that he had come from God, and that he was going back to God’ (Jn 13:1, 3).”¹³

Like Kierkegaard, Fr. Groody understands the Incarnation as a migratory event. Jesus is not in an inaccessible realm. He is here and now in this time and place, eternally present regardless of whether one feels distant or far from Him and regardless of whether or not one believes in His existence. Through Fr. Groody's written and spoken word on migration in spiritual, archetypal, and Christological senses - paired with encountering migrants on the ground - I have come to understand God as ever-present and personal. He is my God, and He never abandons. I am grateful for the guide Fr. Groody has been to me during my time at Notre Dame. I leave Our Lady's University with heightened awareness of God in the present, deeper self-understanding, and a vision to set spiritual fire to the earth.

Before I leave, however, I wish to write down my understanding of migration in a theological sense. After all, I have spent the last three years thinking about it and working with migrants and refugees around the world. Further, my last name “Doran” is an Irish surname meaning “exile, wanderer”. Migration is in my DNA, as it is for all of humanity, and it is time to

¹³ Groody, Daniel G. “Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees.” *Theological Studies*, vol. 70, no. 3, 2009, p. 649.

tell my story. Maybe someday, perhaps today, it will help say something about our collective story. In this thesis, I recall my *metanoia* through *metoikesis*, my conversion through migration, in section I “See” by focusing on the global reality and personal stories of migrants and refugees. In section II “Judge”, I correlate the flesh and blood reality of migrants today with the Abrahamic traditions by drawing upon the sacred scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In Section III: “Act”, I present St. Francis of Assisi and Pope Francis as models of action for Christians in today’s age of migration. After a short exposition of the historical development of migration theology, I move through these three verbs of “see”, “judge”, and “act” to help promote the Church’s ultimate vision for the world as “a civilization of love” and “a culture of life”.¹⁴

Historical Development of Migration Theology

Before embarking on this tripartite endeavor, it is important to understand why migration is a theological – and not solely sociological, economic, and anthropological – concern in the first place. According to the Second Vatican Council, “the Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel.”¹⁵ This teaching means that the Church, as an institution, is to be perceptually aware of and methodically reactive to the world it exists in. Shortly following this dogmatic promulgation at Vatican II, the bishops of Latin America met in Medellin, Columbia and looked not further into

¹⁴ This is the articulated social vision of Popes Paul VI and John Paul II. See: Kerwin, Donald, and Jill Marie Gerschutz. *And You Welcomed Me: Migration and Catholic Social Teaching*. Lexington Books, 2009. p. 23. Cross-reference: Paul VI, *Regina Coeli Address*, May 17, 1970 and *Evangelium vitae* nos. 21,28,50,77,82,86,87,92,95,98,10.

¹⁵ “Gaudium Et Spes.” *Vatican*, www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html. Paragraph #4.

clerical hierarchy but out and away from it. This is what they noticed, “A deafening cry pours from the throats of millions of men, asking their pastors for a liberation that reaches them from nowhere else.” While looking at this poignant sight, the Latin American Bishops also looked at the Gospel and noted, “Christ, our Savior, not only loved the poor, but rather ‘being rich he became poor,’ he lived in poverty.”¹⁶ The bishops of Latin America then called themselves and their subordinates to imitate Christ, express utmost solidarity with the poor, act as pastors not ladder-climbers, share not only their superfluities with the poor but also their necessities, and renounce honorable titles that belong to a different era. Through taking seriously the teaching of Vatican II, the conference at Medellin catalyzed a new way of theologizing, one that begins with and centers on the experiences of the people whom the Church pastors.¹⁷ Such a way of theologizing persists today, but in a different context.

With a change in the times, so too comes a change in the signs. When looking at the world today, “the attentive observer of globalization is at least intuitively aware of the centrality of the issue of migration”.¹⁸ In other words, the terms of Vatican II, a sign of today’s times is migration. Theologians of today look at this sign in the same way as the Latin American theologians looked at poverty yesterday, while, interestingly, inverting one another’s terms. Originator of Latin American liberation theology, Gustavo Gutierrez, first published a book including the term “Theology of Liberation”. Subsequently, Juan Luis Segundo published a book including the term “Liberation of Theology”. Decades later and in parallel fashion, originator of

¹⁶ Latin American Bishops. “Medellin Document: Poverty of the Church” Medellin, Colombia. September 6, 1968. Paragraph #2. <http://www.shc.edu/thelibrary/resources/medpov.htm>

¹⁷ For one of the first works to theologize using this methodology, see: Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*. Orbis Books, 1988.

¹⁸ Castles, Stephen, et al. *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. Guilford Press, 2014. p. 1.

migration theology Daniel Groody, C.S.C. published a journal article including the term “Theology of Migration”. Subsequently, Peter C. Phan published a journal article including the term “Migration of Theology”. This parallel of semantically inverted titles becomes perpendicular when one considers the methodology used by both sets of theologians, i.e. to read the signs of the times and interpret them in light of the Gospel. Yet their contexts remain distinct. While Gustavo Gutierrez and Juan Luis Segundo asked the theological question of the 1960s and 1970s, “How do we see God in the midst of the poor and oppressed in Latin America?”, Daniel Groody, C.S.C. and Peter C. Phan ask the theological question of today, “How do we see God in the the complex, global reality of migration?” In accordance with both liberation theology and migration theology, I place one group of the present day’s suffering and forgotten people – migrants and refugees – at the center of the first section of this thesis, “see”.

Section I – See

This section of my thesis, “see”, is concerned with the concrete reality of migration. I “see” as Gustavo Gutierrez understands the verb, “See means seeing reality, not speculating that ‘this would be good’.”¹⁹ In this section, I gather data rather than formulate theory. I do not “rely upon book knowledge or a priori ideas.” Rather, I “see through personal and collective investigations that are well-ordered and verified”.²⁰ In the context of global migration, I ask the questions: “What is happening?”, “Who is involved?”, “What are people doing?”, “What are people feeling?”, and “What are people saying?”. This section of “see” parallels Peter C Phan’s

¹⁹ Cardijn Community International. “Gustavo Gutierrez, Liberation Theology and the See-Judge-Act.” *Cardijn.info*, 7 Feb. 2016, www.cardijn.info/gustavo-gutierrez-liberation-theology-and-the-see-judge-act/.

²⁰ Sands, Justin. 2018. "Introducing Cardinal Cardijn’s See–Judge–Act as an Interdisciplinary Method to Move Theory into Practice." *Religions* 9, no. 4: 129.

first step of a theology of migration which is “a sociopolitical and cultural analysis of migration [...] rooted in the flesh-and-blood stories of migrants themselves as human beings whose dignity and rights have often been trampled upon.”²¹ Seeing is perceiving reality, particularly the human reality of the suffering. The situation for migrants today can be illustrated from an experience-based micro-view and a research-based macro-view. In this section, I do both, beginning with the experience-based micro-view.

Section I.i – See, Experience-based Micro-view

During my time at Notre Dame, I have been given the opportunity to live in the spirit of the third foundation of a theology of migration, “*Missio Dei*: crossing the human-human divide”, through encountering migrants and refugees in Omaha, at the US/Mexico Border, and throughout Europe.²² In this section, I recall these experiences and the transformative effects they had on me, beginning with the work I did in my hometown of Omaha, Nebraska.

In the summer of 2016, after finishing my freshman year at Notre Dame, I worked eight weeks at my local homeless shelter in Omaha, Nebraska, home of the largest South Sudanese refugee population outside of Africa. In this work, I found a deep sense of meaning, so I decided to use my opportunities at Notre Dame to go forth and meet other displaced peoples around the globe. During my sophomore year, I visited the United States-Mexico border, Salzburg, Austria, and the Italian island of Lampedusa, where I met a diversity of migrants and refugees.

²¹ Phan, Peter C. “Deus Migrator - God the Migrant: Migration of Theology and Theology of Migration.” *Theological Studies*, vol. 77, no. 4, 2016, pp. 845–868.

²² The *Missio Dei* is about actively crossing the borders between self and other, especially those who are different than you. For more on this foundation of a theology of migration, see: Groody, Daniel G. “Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees.” *Theological Studies*, vol. 70, no. 3, 2009, pp. 638–667.

My travels began with a trip to the U.S.-Mexico border over winter break with a group led by Leo Guardado, a Notre Dame doctoral student in theology and peace studies. Our meetings with United States border patrol officers and humanitarians highlighted the week, but none moved me more than the stories of the migrants themselves. One man told how he had fled gang violence in El Salvador, a country the U.S. media often dubs “the murder capital of the world.” After weeks traveling north through Mexico on foot and hidden inside farm trucks, his “coyote,” or guide, led him to group of armed men at the U.S. border. Pointing towards four bodies lying on the ground nearby, the group’s leader said to him, “Join them, or carry these bundles.” This kind of burden is often forced upon migrants at the border.

When drug trafficking is not threatening their lives, the Sonoran Desert is. Water is scarce in those beautiful panoramas. Dehydration kills hundreds of people each year. In response, humanitarian groups like Samaritans and No More Deaths hike for miles in the heat to drop water jugs along remote trails. The U.S. Border Patrol, arguing that this water lures migrants, responds by slashing these water supplies. Local white supremacists, motivated by something other than national security, unofficially lend their hands to this effort. It is war at the border, and the weapons used are water jugs and the machetes that slice them.

After these local and national experiences, I set out to meet the displaced in other parts of the world. During spring break of 2017, I joined another group of students visiting Salzburg, Austria, with Notre Dame social ethicist Clemens Sedmak. Best known to many Americans as the setting of *The Sound of Music* and the birthplace of Mozart, Salzburg is now home to over 4,000 Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan refugees. One of them is Ahyan, a 23-year-old fine arts student from the University of Baghdad. Abducted by ISIS militants from his home in Mosul, Iraq, Ahyan was ordered to fight for the terrorist organization. Choosing instead to flee, he escaped

west into Syria, then Turkey. He crossed the Mediterranean Sea by boat to Greece and eventually made his way to Austria — “the only place,” he said, “where the police don’t hit us.”

These days, Ahyan fights his traumatic memories with resilient spirit, finding peace in his art. Inspired by the Austrian Alps, he paints the landscapes he sees around him every day. Yet horrific memories continue to haunt refugees like Ahyan. One man showed me the room where he sleeps at a Red Cross camp. He keeps the blinds closed because the same views that inspire Ahyan remind him of the bodies he saw in the mountains of Eastern Europe. Another young man tightened up as he recalled the mass suffocation he barely survived in a human-trafficking truck, a disaster that claimed the lives of dozens of his fellow itinerants. A third refugee, his voice quivering, expressed concern for his wife whom he’d left behind in Iraq. He had not heard from her in months.

Europe’s version of the Sonoran Desert is the Mediterranean Sea that separates Europe and north Africa. Refugee boat routes resemble migrant trails. Small islands function as border checkpoints. One of these is the tiny island of Lampedusa. Lying about halfway between Libya and Sicily, Lampedusa has been a Mediterranean crossroads since ancient times. Greeks and Romans frequented the island to refill their hulls with fresh water, rabbit meat and wild herbs. Today, the island attracts other kinds of wayfarers. Tourists come to visit Lampedusa’s clear-water beaches. Refugees come to escape the terrors of Middle Eastern and north African societies.

In the summer of 2017, I traveled by myself to Lampedusa, where Professor Ilaria Schnyder von Wartensee of Notre Dame’s Ford Program in Human Development Studies and Solidarity introduced me to refugees from Gambia, Mali, Afghanistan, Liberia, Bangladesh and Sierra Leone. I listened to their hopes of becoming doctors and engineers, teachers and writers,

mothers and fathers in Europe. Their optimism contrasted starkly with the despair I saw in Rome while working at the Joel Nafuma Refugee Center during that same summer. The Lampedusan refugees did not yet know the cardboard dwellings I walked past every morning at Termini.

But all is far from idyllic for these refugees, even on Lampedusa. The alluring blue waters that surround it have attracted international concern. Some 400,000 migrants have landed on the island in the last two decades. Thousands more have drowned when their overcrowded boats or leaky rafts capsized or sank near its shores. The International Organization for Migration has called the central Mediterranean “the deadliest migration route in the world”.²³ Pope Francis called attention to it when he visited the island in July 2013.

Standing behind an altar constructed of wood from a refugee boat, Francis said the human costs of the migration had become “a painful thorn” in his heart. “So I felt that I had to come here today, to pray and to offer a sign of my closeness,” he continued, “but also to challenge our consciences lest this tragedy be repeated. Please, let it not be repeated!”²⁴ Four months after the pope’s visit, the tragedy did indeed repeat itself. A boat carrying nearly 500 refugees capsized off Lampedusa, adding 359 people to the estimated 15 to 20 thousand who, according to the IOM, have died along this route since the year 2014.²⁵ Wrecked refugee boats are often towed to the shores of Lampedusa. Here, an Italian carpenter uses salvaged wood to create sacred chalices. One of these belongs to Pope Francis, another to Father Daniel Groody, CSC, my advisor in this senior thesis. I received a cross from that same carpenter during my

²³ “Missing Migrants: Tracking Deaths Along Migratory Routes.” *Missing Migrants Project*, missingmigrants.iom.int/region/mediterranean.

²⁴ *8 July 2013: Visit to Lampedusa - Holy Mass in the "Arena" Sports Camp | Francis*, w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130708_omelia-lampedusa.html.

²⁵ “Missing Migrants: Tracking Deaths Along Migratory Routes.” *Missing Migrants Project*, missingmigrants.iom.int/region/mediterranean.

visit. It hangs around my neck as a constant reminder of the suffering and forgotten displaced people in our world.

Pope Francis warns us against “the globalization of indifference”, an apathy toward suffering that he perceives permeating society today. Before these encounters with migrants and refugees from Omaha to Rome, I too was indifferent. Christ’s words, “I was a stranger, and you welcomed me,” (Mt: 25:35) held no meaning. But my experiences at Notre Dame have globalized my encounter with human suffering, converting it into a concern for these migrants and refugees. If Thomas the Apostle, my namesake, needed to put his fingers in Jesus’ wounds in order to believe in him, then I needed to put my fingers into the wounds of humanity. We share the same resounding realization, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28) ²⁶

Encountering migrants and refugees around the world facilitated my *metanoia* through *metoikesis*, that is, my conversion through migration. Though I am no refugee or migrant, through this process of observing and immersing myself in the lives of migrants, I have become more than a bystander to their lives. I have come to understand a small yet substantial portion of what it is like to be a migrant. In doing so, I have come to understand Christ in a deeper way. With an awareness of the migrant reality based in life experience, I now turn to a broader, research-based macro-view. I continue this motion of “seeing”, collecting data from the current global context which will later be judged in light of the Abrahamic tradition.

²⁶ These stories of migrants and refugees are adapted from my article in Notre Dame magazine. For the original article, see: Doran, Thomas. “Notre Dame Magazine.” *The Globalization of a Heart // News // Notre Dame Magazine // University of Notre Dame*, magazine.nd.edu/news/the-globalization-of-a-heart/.

Section I.ii – See, Research-based Macro-view

During my time at Notre Dame (August 2015 – May 2019), I have noticed an increase in expressions of explicit xenophobia in global authorities, media, and the general public. Of these expressions, the most striking is United States president Donald Trump’s slogan “Build a Wall”. Though this explicitly anti-immigrant slogan is jarring in a society where ethnic and cultural diversity is championed, its abrasiveness is exactly what garners the attention of the American public whose psychological perception has been molded by sensationalistic media. Donald Trump won his election, in part, by speaking boldly to the dark, unspoken shadow of human nature - in this case, our nature of tribalism and self-preservation. In his presidential campaign, Donald Trump represented the pathologies of America more truly than any other presidential candidate. His lying, narcissism, and anti-otherness authentically embodies the collective lying, narcissism, and anti-otherness that permeates the American public. In other words, he is a relatable president. Donald Trump unapologetically represents aspects of the collective darkness of our human nature, bringing real evil to the top level of America’s government.

In President Trump’s bottom-up model of bringing collective xenophobia to the top level of government, he simultaneously amplifies such anti-immigrant attitudes from the top-down.²⁷ For example, shortly after his inauguration, President Trump enacted a policy that bans foreign nationals from seven predominantly Muslim countries, including Syria, the country from which

²⁷ Réne Flores’ findings show that there is a causal link between a politician’s xenophobic statements and increased xenophobic sentiments in the general population. That link is (1) ephemeral: the effect dissipates after a few days, (2) circumscribed: negative statements are more impactful, and (3) author-independent: it does not matter who created the statements. For more concerning the nature of the top-down effects of anti-immigrant political speech, see: Flores, Réne D. 2018. “Can Elites Shape Public Attitudes toward Immigrants?: Evidence from the 2016 US Presidential Election.” *Social Forces* 96:1649-90.

the most refugees originate in today's world.²⁸ Within a month of this policy's enactment, the United States' government endorsed the separation of migrant children from their families at the US/Mexico border. This policy was defended by United States attorney general Jeff Sessions, "I would cite you to the Apostle Paul and his clear and wise command in Romans 13, to obey the laws of the government because God has ordained them for the purpose of order."²⁹ Following these policies, I noticed an increase in expressions of xenophobia, such as referring to immigrants as criminals, in my peers and classmates. Today, the xenophobic ideologies permeating American society are intensified through anti-immigrant politicians and the adaptation of bible verses at the top levels of government.

Increased xenophobia is not limited to the United States. Shortly following the installment of the United States' child separation policy, Italy's populist government led by Matteo Salvini shut down Italian ports to the migrant vessel Aquarius carrying 629 refugees rescued from the Mediterranean Sea. On the other side of the Euro-Asian landmass, Rohingya refugees flee persecution in Myanmar to safety in Bangladesh where nearly 600,000 – 700,000 Rohingya people already reside.³⁰ In Africa, nearly 2.4 million South Sudanese refugees live away from their homeland in neighboring nations.³¹ In South America, 2.4 million Venezuelans have fled their country and now live in neighboring countries such as Brazil, Chile, Colombia,

²⁸ United Nations. "Figures at a Glance." *UNHCR*, 19 June 2018, www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html.

²⁹ Strine, Casey. "What the Bible's Romans 13 Says about Asylum – and What Jeff Sessions Omitted." *The Conversation*, 19 Sept. 2018, theconversation.com/what-the-bibles-romans-13-says-about-asylum-and-what-jeff-sessions-omitted-98483.

³⁰ Hunt, Katie. "Rohingya Crisis: How We Got Here." *CNN*, Cable News Network, 13 Nov. 2017, www.cnn.com/2017/11/12/asia/rohingya-crisis-timeline/index.html.

³¹ "South Sudan Refugee Crisis." *Definition and Meaning | USA for UNHCR*, www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/south-sudan/.

and Peru.³² Across the world, migration further entrenches itself in the human experience. There are more people living away from their homelands today than at any other point in human history.

Many religious institutions respond to the masses of foreigners and exiles around the world, especially the Catholic Church who helps resettle 30% of the refugees entering the United States.³³ For Catholics, the response to migrants and refugees is centered on *Imago Dei* – the idea that each human being is made in the image of God. From this axiom, a respect for the institution of the sovereign state, and the metanarrative that is salvation history, the Church teaches three principles. (1) People have the right to migrate to sustain their lives and the lives of their families. (2) A country has the right to regulate its borders and to control immigration. (3) A country must regulate its borders with justice and mercy.³⁴ If one ponders these principles, they seem troublesome and perhaps contradictory. How can people have the right to migrate yet countries have the right to prevent migration at their discretion? What does the Church mean a country ought to regulate borders with “justice and mercy”? The Catholic Church’s stance appears as ambiguous as migration is complex. There is no simple answer to migration on a

³² Bahar, Dany. “Latin America Is Facing a Refugee Crisis.” *Foreign Affairs*, Foreign Affairs Magazine, 23 Oct. 2018, www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/venezuela/2018-10-23/latin-america-facing-refugee-crisis.

³³ Berkley Center for Religion, and Georgetown University. “How Religious Communities Are Responding to the Refugee Crisis.” *Georgetown University*, berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/posts/how-religious-communities-are-responding-to-the-refugee-crisis.

³⁴ United States Council of Catholic Bishops. “Strangers No Longer Together on the Journey of Hope.” www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope.cfm.

macro-level in Catholic Social Teaching. Rather, immigration issues are best left to the discernment of a given locality.^{35,36}

While the universal response to global migration is ambiguous and complex, the individual response is simple. For individuals, Pope Francis teaches that Christ is readily found in migrants and refugees. “Jesus Christ is always waiting to be recognized in migrants and refugees, in displaced persons and in exiles, and through them he calls us to share our resources, and occasionally to give up something of our acquired riches”.³⁷ For the individual, the response to immigration is to go out and meet the immigrant. Say hello to them. Recognize that they probably feel out of place in your homeland. Help them feel a little more at home. For clergy, the Church emphasizes a pastoral approach to migrants and refugees. Church leaders are to treat migrants and refugees not as black sheep but white sheep indiscernible from the rest of their flock. Through leading concrete actions such as immigration discussion groups, pastors are to help break-down biases and prejudices that separate their church members. Ultimately, the

³⁵ Personal notes from the academic conference “Creatures: Radical Ecological Conversion After Laudato Si’ - Discovering the intrinsic Value of all Creatures: Humans and Non-human” on March 7th - 8th, 2018 at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, Italy. This idea was articulated by respondent Dr. Anna Rowlands, St. Hilda Associate Professor of Catholic Thought and Practice, Durham University, UK in the session “The Suffering of Creation: Human and Nonhuman Migration”.

³⁶ Two additional principles guide Catholic Social Thought on migration issues: (1) people have the right to find opportunities in their homeland and (2) those fleeing violence have the right to protection in other countries. United States Council of Catholic Bishops. “Strangers No Longer Together on the Journey of Hope.” www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope.cfm. *Pacem in Terris* (April, 11 1963) | *John XXIII*, w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html.

³⁷ *Message of the Holy Father for the 101st World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2015* (3 September 2014) | w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20140903_world-migrants-day-2015.html.

shepherd is to lead their flock to the vision of “a civilization of love” and a “culture of life” that contrasts the racism and xenophobia riddling current times.³⁸

In this first section of “see”, I have fixed my mind’s sight on one core sign of today’s times, migration. I first explored this sign from an experience-based perspective then from a research-based perspective. The synthesis of these perspectives give a holistic picture of the migrant reality today. Now, I turn towards the Abrahamic tradition to correlate the migrant reality of today with our deeper spiritual narrative.

Part II: Judge

The second step of this thesis, “judge”, is concerned with interpreting section I, “see”, in light of the Abrahamic tradition. By drawing upon Jewish, Christian, and Islamic scriptures, I explore the migrant identity in the Trinity, angels, Satan, Adam and Eve, Abraham, and Muhammad in light of the reality of migrants today. This second step of “judge” follows Peter C. Phan’s second step of a theology of migration which is “hermeneutical mediation whereby the life stories of migrants [...] are given a properly theological meaning.”³⁹ Though I will be utilizing both the Judeo-Christian tradition and Islamic tradition in this section, my position is that of a Christian familiar with Jewish scripture who studies Islam. In this section, my central claim is that the migrant identity is a foundational religious identity of the Abrahamic religions. I

³⁸ United States Council of Catholic Bishops. “Strangers No Longer Together on the Journey of Hope.” www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/strangers-no-longer-together-on-the-journey-of-hope.cfm.

³⁹ Phan, Peter C. “Deus Migrator - God the Migrant: Migration of Theology and Theology of Migration.” *Theological Studies*, vol. 77, no. 4, 2016, pp. 845–868.

begin my exploration of the migrant identity through time with the moving of God's spirit above the primordial waters of Creation.⁴⁰

The book of Genesis opens,

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; the darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:1-2 (KJV)⁴¹

Time begins with God's creation of heaven and earth. The former is only named while the latter is described as the book of Genesis unravels. Earth, understood as the materials of which the universe is made, is first described as formless and chaotic.⁴² Above this primordial soup of formless chaos moves the spirit of God. Then, through a sequence of seven “days”, God transforms this empty and confused creation into things that are filled with meaning and order: light, sky, water, land, vegetation, the moon, the stars, the Sun, living creatures, and humankind. Before these meaningful things are formed by God, it is it is the itinerant Holy Spirit moving above an unformed and empty depth that catalyzes their formation. This spirit literally moves as a fowl lovingly flutters over and stirs up her hatching chicks.⁴³ This same idea of a moving or hovering spirit is employed in the Catholic faith when the priest waves his hand over the chalice in the transubstantiation of the Eucharist and when the patriarch hovers his hand over the bishop

⁴⁰ In this section, I use the words “migrant”, “migrate”, and “migration” to explain the movements of Biblical and Quranic beings from one place to another and the ontological movements of spiritual beings from one dimension to another as Socrates, Kierkegaard, and Groody have done as described in the introduction of this thesis.

⁴¹ Islam also claims all life came from water. Allah "made from water every living thing" (21:30). "Allah has created every animal from water. Of them are some that creep on their bellies, some that walk on two legs, and some that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills, for truly Allah has power over all things" (24:45).

⁴² Earth can also be described as “confusion and emptiness” as the same Hebrew words are understood in Isaiah 34:11

⁴³ See Deuteronomy 32:11 which uses the same word for “move” or “hover” as Genesis 1:2 to describe a brooding bird.

at his ordination, both of which signify ordered meaning in Christ.⁴⁴ The word for “move” and “hover” used in Genesis and Deuteronomy that describes traditional Catholic ritual does not diminish the transcendent nature of God’s Spirit, the Holy Ghost. Rather, it provides a powerful image of migration as the movement of God’s itinerant spirit over what is formless and empty, bringing meaning and order to His creation. This same spirit that enlivens what is empty and confused into meaningful beings continues to migrate through history. It flutters lovingly above creation and descends from time to time, inspiring the hearts of many in its migration to and fro.

God’s creative act in these first lines of Genesis can be understood as God’s migration out of the unseen into the seen, from divine reality to temporal reality. In his act of Creation, God crosses the border

“between Absolute Spirit and finite matter, migrating from eternity to temporality, from omnipotence into weakness, from self-sufficiency (aseity) to utter dependence, from secure omniscience to fearful ignorance, from the total domination of the divine will over all things to the utter subjection of the same will to the unpredictable conditions of human freedom, from life to death. In the creative act God experiences for the first time the precarious, marginalized, threatened, and endangered condition of the migrant.”⁴⁵

God, beginning with the first moment in time and space, is a border-crosser. While His identity outside of time and space is omniscient, omnipotent, and and omnipresent, His first identity in time and space is the migrant identity. He is the one who crossed the border between the infinite to the finite to create the universe.

In the first two lines of Genesis and into the rest of the chapter, heaven is only named, not described. Though there are some things God has revealed about this creation to humanity,⁴⁶ we

⁴⁴ Ellicott, Charles. “Genesis 1 Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers.” *Bible Hub*, biblehub.com/commentaries/ellicott/genesis/1.htm;.

⁴⁵ Phan, Peter C. “Deus Migrator - God the Migrant: Migration of Theology and Theology of Migration.” *Theological Studies*, vol. 77, no. 4, 2016, pp. 845–868.

⁴⁶ The little we do know about heaven, according to the Bible, is that Jesus is building up homes for humans who migrate there, the saved will enjoy the works of their hands, the wolf and the

ultimately cannot comprehend what heaven is like as earthly creatures. St. Paul writes, “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). Though we cannot comprehend heaven the place, we can know of the heavenly migrants known as angels who cross the border between heaven and earth to bring messages to God’s people (Luke 1:11-19, Acts 8:26, 10:3-8, 22, 27:23-24), patrol the Earth as representatives of God (Zechariah 1:10-11), carry out God’s judgment by bringing plague upon Israel (2 Samuel 12:16-17), smite the leaders of the Assyrian army (2 Corinthians 32:21), strike King Herod dead (Acts 12:23), pour God’s wrath upon the Earth (Revelation 16:1), and conduct spiritual warfare against the demonic on Earth and in Heaven (Daniel 10:13, Revelation 12:7-8). These heavenly beings known as angels are absolute spirits. At the same time, they have the ability to migrate to Earth and interact with its fleshy beings as earthly strangers. “Do not forget to show hospitality to the stranger, for by doing so some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it” (Hebrews 13:2).⁴⁷ We are warned, however, that these divine migrants, the angels, have a diabolical counterpart in the Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions, the devil who also crosses the divine-temporal border and moves from place to place across the earth.

The leader of the fallen angels, Satan, exists to deceive humanity as an evil spirit who migrates across the Earth. The Book of Job reads, “One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them. The Lord said to Satan, ‘From where have you come from?’ Satan answered the Lord, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and

lamb will feed together, the deaf will see, the lame will hear, and all suffering, death, mourning, crying, and pain will cease to persist (John 14: 1-3, Isaiah 35:5-6, 65: 21-23, 25, and Revelation 21:3-4).

⁴⁷ Angels also act as border-crossers in the Islamic tradition. The angel Gabriel migrates from heaven to earth to deliver the Quran to the prophet Muhammad in the event known as the *Tanzeel*. (Notes from the Notre Dame theology course “Islam and Christian Theology” taught by Gabriel Said Reynolds, Fall 2017)

from walking up and down on it” (Job 1:7). This evil and itinerant fallen angel who migrates back and forth across earth and crosses the border between the spiritual and the physical realms devours those in its way. Scripture warns us, “Be sober-minded and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). There are benevolent spiritual migrants, the angels, who can be hidden in the form of earthly strangers. At the same time, there is the evil spiritual migrant known as Satan who can disguise himself as an “angel of light” and cross borders that do not reconcile but scatter relationships (2 Corinthians 11:14). A reason God sends his Son Jesus Christ, the Eternal Migrant, to the transient Earth is to destroy the schemes of this cunning, quick-witted, and often disguised border-crossing devil (1 John 3:8).

I now move my attention to fleshy things, namely Adam and Eve, the first humans and the first migrants in the Bible and the Quran. These migrants are different than the prior migrants discussed in that they are physical beings rather than pure spirits. They are important to the discussion in that they affirm the primacy of the migrant identity in humanity just as God’s moving spirit above the primordial waters of creation affirms the primacy of the migrant identity in the unseen domain. After ingesting the apple from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve migrate from an ideal, eternal world to a world defined by death and work. This migration is a reflection of the psychological movement from being unashamed of your true self to being ashamed of who you, i.e. becoming self-conscious during teenage years. Life is a migration away from the true self, the self we see in the Garden of Eden, to a self that is covered and ashamed of itself. Christ, the True God, helps us migrate back to the true self, the childhood self that was once thought lost.

Abraham – the father of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – is tied to angels, Satan, and Adam and Eve through his migrant identity. Raised in a society of wandering clans, tribes, and merchants who moved from location to location, Abraham’s story begins with a migration out of Mesopotamia just as the Abrahamic metanarrative begins with the migration of God into finite matter. In the Bible, he is first mentioned in Genesis 11:31 migrating from Ur to Haran with his family. His father dies in the latter city, and the Lord then tells Abraham to extend his migration past Mesopotamia, “Go from your country, your people, and your father’s household to the land I will show you” (Genesis 12:1). Abraham obeys God’s command to migrate away from his home and family, and God in return blesses him in his ultimate destination of the land of Canaan. In this buffer zone of little significance between the time’s major world powers, the Egyptians and the Amorites, God chooses His people. If Virgilio Elizondo names God’s choice of sending His Son Jesus to Galilee, a humble land of little significance in the eyes of the world, the “Galilean Principle”⁴⁸, then I call this Old Testament version the “Canaanite Principle”. God chooses to reveal Himself in a marginal land to a people few in number and insignificant in the eyes of the world powers at the time. Canaan was a simple, humble, and poor land, yet God chooses it preferentially, “The Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples” (Deuteronomy 7:7). God chooses to reveal Himself to a lowly migrant from Ur in the poor and humble land of Canaan. He blesses this migrant from Ur, giving him many descendants.

The first of these descendants is Ishmael who is born after Sarah, the wife of Abraham, asks Hagar, her maidservant, to sleep with her husband. Sarah later has her own son, Isaac, and

⁴⁸ For more on the Galilean principle, see Virgilio Elizondo’s book, “The Galilean Journey: The Mexican-American Promise” and Fr. Daniel Groody’s “Cup of Suffering, Chalice of Salvation: Refugees, Lampedusa, and the Eucharist”.

in jealousy of the firstborn Ishmael, she tells Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael out into the desert. He does, and the first *Saracens*, meaning “(cast away) empty by Sarah”,⁴⁹ wander south from the land of Canaan into the desert of Beersheba. The water skin of these two wandering exiles runs dry, and Ishmael falls ill to dehydration and fatigue. The young boy cries what seem to be his last cries, and a distraught Hagar lays her suffering son under a bush to die. She sits a bowshot away and cries, “I cannot watch the boy die” (Genesis 21:17). This poignant image in the desert of Beersheba conjures up images of the migrants and refugees awaiting the deaths of their loved ones in the Sonoran and Saharan deserts today. Unlike the modern-day narrative which includes the recorded deaths of 7495 migrants and refugees in 2016,⁵⁰ the Old Testament account depicts a life-saving miracle. An angel of the Lord appears to the sobbing Hagar and the dying Ishmael, “Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation” (Genesis 21:17). Following, the two miraculously find a water well. Ishmael survives, and in the following years, he has children with an Egyptian woman which forms the beginning of what will become a great nation. Thousands of years pass by, and another migrant significant in the eyes of God appears south of Canaan on the Arabian Peninsula.

The Prophet Muhammad was born in Mecca, a city of merchants, in 570 CE. His father, Abdallah, died before his birth, and his mother, Amina, died when he was six. Muhammad’s grandfather took him in, but he soon died too. His paternal uncle, Abu Talib, then took in the orphan Muhammad and raised him. As tradition goes, Abu Talib, a merchant from the city of

⁴⁹ This meaning of *Saracens* was found on page 134 of Sahas, Daniel J. *John of Damascus on Islam: The "Heresy of the Ishmaelites."* Brill, 1972.

⁵⁰ “World Fatalities of Migrants, Refugees Approach 7,500 in 2016 as Three-Year Total Tops 18,501.” *International Organization for Migration*, 4 Sept. 2017, www.iom.int/news/world-fatalities-migrants-refugees-approach-7500-2016-three-year-total-tops-18501.

merchants, allows Muhammad to join him on a trading journey north from Mecca and into Syria. Along the way, he meets a Christian monk named Bahira who claims a mark between the shoulder blades of Muhammad to be the “seal of prophethood”. In his movement across the earth, Muhammad receives his call. Bahira tells Abu Talib, “A great future lies before this nephew of yours, so take him home home quickly”.⁵¹

A great future did indeed lie ahead of Muhammad. In the following years, according to Islamic texts, Muhammad’s heart was ripped from his chest and cleaned with snow by two figures dressed in white, the angel Gabriel came down from heaven and handed him the literal word of God, and he quickly gained a large group of disciples in Mecca which its inhabitants and Muhammad’s bloodline, the Quraysh, opposed. He also gained a following from the Medinese *ansar*, or Helpers, who lived 280 miles north of Mecca and met the prophet at a trading fair in Al-Aqaba near Mecca. When Muhammad’s uncle Abu Talib died, the Prophet lost his protection against his persecutors in Mecca.⁵² It is the *ansar*’s embrace of Islam years prior to the death of Abu Talib that gave Muhammad secondary protection from his persecutors.⁵³

These “Helpers”, the *ansar*, played a critical role in protecting the Meccan muslims who fled from their persecutors, the Quraysh, in a migratory event known as the *hijra*. While Muhammad was facing persecution in Mecca, the *ansar* practiced the Prophet’s prescribed laws and beliefs in Medina, ideologically connecting them to Muhammad hundreds of miles away. This relationship played a critical role in the Prophet’s migrant integration program and

⁵¹ Reynolds, Gabriel Said. “Chapter 1: Muhammad in Mecca.” *The Emergence of Islam: Classical Traditions in Contemporary Perspective*. Fortress Press., 2012.

⁵² Peters, F. E. *Muhammad and the Origins of Islam*. State University of New York Press, 1994. p. 179.

⁵³ Ishaq, Ibn. (Trans. A. Guillame). *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's "Sirat Rasul Allah"*. Pakistan Branch, Oxford University Press, 1955. p. 191, 197-199.

subsequent domination of Islam by creating a common set of beliefs and moral code between the needy immigrants and helping Muslims.

What caused the migration, the *hijra*, in the first place was the religious persecution of Muslims, a reminder of today's persecution of the Muslim Rohingya in Myanmar. The persecution of the Meccan Muslims by the Quraysh ultimately forced some of these oppressed peoples to flee Abyssina in modern-day Ethiopia and others to Yathrib (the most important village of the conglomerate of villages known as Medina)⁵⁴ in modern-day Saudi Arabia. My focus here is the latter, the *hijra*, the migratory event which marks the beginning of Islam. In July 622 AD, year 0 on the Islamic Calendar, the persecuted Muslims of Mecca fled to Yathrib in Medina. In this *hijra*, it is the *muhajirun* who emigrate from Mecca and the *ansar* who welcome them in Yathrib. The word *hijra* does not appear in the Quran, but there are twenty-three occurrences of *hajara* appearing as the nominalized participles *majahirun*, *muhajir*, *muhajirat* or a relative clause such as *hajarū*. All of these forms mean "those who emigrated, Emigrants". The capitalized "Emigrants" implies that the group is clearly defined.⁵⁵ These Emigrants fled Mecca to another clearly defined group, the "Helpers" or *ansar*, in their migration to Medina 280 miles away. Ibn Shaq describes the *hijra*,

"When God had given permission to fight, and this clan of the "Helpers" (from Medina) had pledged their support to him in Islam and to help him and his followers, and the Muslims had taken refuge with them, the Messenger commanded his companions to emigrate to Medina and to link up with their brethren, the "Helpers": "God will make for you brethren and houses in which you may be safe." So they went out in companies, and the Messenger stayed in Mecca waiting for the Lord's permission to leave Mecca and migrate to Medina." ⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Peters, F. E. *Muhammad and the Origins of Islam*. State University of New York Press, 1994. p. 91.

⁵⁵ Raven, Wim. "Hijra". *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE*. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson, eds. P.1.

⁵⁶ Ishaq, Ibn. (Trans. A. Guillame). *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's "Sirat Rasul Allah"*. Pakistan Branch, Oxford University Press, 1955. Pp. 212-213.

Following the migration of his disciples, the Prophet Muhammad embarked on his own migration to Medina. Upon leaving his hometown of Mecca, Muhammad lamented, “O Mecca! I know you are the most blessed (*khayr*) of the land of God. If your people did not force me to leave I would never have left you.”⁵⁷ These words are echoed in the lamentations of migrants who are far away from their homes today. One refugee and friend of mine, Sowe from Senegal, expressed his sadness to me in Rome, “I did leave my home. I wish I did not leave my home. It is difficult life here.” In response to this suffering, my friend Sowe finds consolation in the Quran and the life of the Prophet Muhammad, the migrant who was also uprooted from his home 1400 years ago. He, alongside millions of other migrants and refugees around the world, find life-giving consolation through this Arab migrant central to the religion of Islam.

Muhammad eventually completed his desert migration from Mecca to Medina in year 0 on the Islamic calendar (622 AD). It is striking to step back for a moment and note that the beginning of Islam is marked by a migration. Upon arrival in Medina, Muhammad found a religiously and culturally diverse expanse of oasis villages comprised of Arab pagans, Jewish tribes, *muhajirun* who had migrated from Mecca, and the *ansar* of whom some had converted to Islam years prior in their journey to the trade fair in Mecca. Muhammad established a special brotherhood between the *ansar* and the *muhajirun* which helped the poor *muhajirun* rapidly integrate into Medina's society and contribute to its subsequent financial and political flourishing.⁵⁸ The brotherhood was a process of migrant integration where one Helper (*ansar*)

⁵⁷ Ismail bin Kathir. *Al-Syrah al-Nabawiyyah*. Volume 2, p. 285.

⁵⁸ A modern-day Christian parallel of this historical Muslim migrant integration program is *Fraternità francescana Ripa dei Settesoli* at the friary *San Francesco a Ripa* in Rome, Italy. I visited this friary in the Spring 2018. There, Italian friars and refugees live together, pray together, and eat together under the same roof. The friars provide a personalized path for refugees to help them integrate into Roman society. In addition, the friars have a S.P.Q.R.

was paired with one Emigrant (*muhajirun*). The established brotherhood positioned the two as inheritors and protectors of one another, and they were made one.⁵⁹ In the unity of locals and immigrants on the individual and societal levels, the first nation of Islam was born, fulfilling the prophetic verse revealed to Muhammad years earlier in his Meccan period, “He has created you and will raise you again as one soul” (Quran 31:28). The *hijra* and the establishment of the Muslim brotherhood brought mutual benefit to both the inhabitants of Medina and the Emigrants from Mecca by bringing peace to the inhabitants of Medina, aid to the Emigrants, and a unified rise to power for both parties.

As this exploration of Islam has shown, the religion begins with and bases its calendar upon a great migration, the *hijra*, and its central prophet, Muhammad, shares in the migrant identity of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the angels, Satan, Adam and Eve, Abraham, Hagar, and Ishmael. The act of migration is integral to the foundations of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam – all of which claim the desert migrant Abraham as their father of faith. It is also integral to Creation (God’s migration from the infinite to the finite) and the Incarnation (Christ’s migration from heaven to Earth). Alongside the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Islamic tradition affirms the primacy of the migrant identity in its central prophet and earliest beginnings.

While Christian migration theologians have primarily interpreted the plight of migrants in light of the Christian tradition, I have begun to interpret the plight of migrants in light of the Islamic tradition in this section. This is especially pertinent when one considers that the two countries from which the most refugees flee today – Afghanistan and Syria – and the two of the

program (*Servizio Problema Quotidiano Risolto*) where work is provided to their guests which includes small removals, care for terraces and gardens, repairs, masonry, electricity, carpentry, plumbing, cleansing, assistance at the hospital, and accompaniment for women and elderly who must walk at night in certain parts of Rome.

⁵⁹ Quran 8:72

countries which host the most refugees today – Turkey and Pakistan – are predominantly Muslim countries.⁶⁰ For some migrants, like my friend Sowe, the Islamic religion is the most important part of their life. It gives them a faith that guides them through their suffering. If migration theology is to truly cross borders, it must continue to correlate the lives of migrants and refugees with their religious traditions and sacred texts, not solely the Gospel.

In this section of “Judge”, I have correlated today’s global atmosphere surrounding migration to the Abrahamic tradition. In doing so, I have added theological significance to the reality of migration today. Now, I will fix my mind’s eye upon a model of action for today, St. Francis of Assisi. In this final section of this senior thesis, I investigate this moral exemplar in search of guidance through the complex waters of today’s age of migration. My study examines St. Francis’ biography, his migration from the false self to the true self, and his encounter with the Sultan of Egypt. Through observing the life of St. Francis of Assisi, I claim that reading today’s signs of the times in light of the Abrahamic traditions calls for actions of reconciliation, hospitality, and solidarity between Christianity and Islam. Thus, the Church’s ultimate vision for the world as “a civilization of love” and “a culture of life”⁶¹ can be more fully realized. I then end this thesis by deferring to another Francis, Pope Francis, who is guiding the Catholic Church to the works prescribed for salvation in the Gospel’s vision of the end times (Matthew 25:31-46). But first, I return to where I left off in my journey through salvation history, June 622AD or year 0 on the Islamic calendar.

⁶⁰ United Nations. “Figures at a Glance.” *UNHCR*, 19 June 2018, www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html.

⁶¹ These are the words of Paul VI and John Paul II for envisioning the Church’s ideals for the world. Kerwin, Donald, and Jill Marie Gerschutz. *And You Welcomed Me: Migration and Catholic Social Teaching*. Lexington Books, 2009. p. 23. Cross-reference: Paul VI, *Regina Coeli Address*, May 17, 1970 and *Evangelium vitae* nos. 21,28,50,77,82,86,87,92,95,98,10

Section III – Act

Following the great migration that begot the religion of Islam, the *hijra*, Muslim forces set out on a series of conquests across the Arabian Peninsula, north throughout the Middle East and into India, and finally west across North Africa then into Southern Spain. This force was met by another force, the Church of Rome. After stifling Muslim expansion, crusader knights endorsed by the papacy fortified Church authority across Europe then expanded Christian domain into the Eastern Mediterranean. In addition, crusaders took back some of the territories overtaken by Muslims during Islamic expansion, the most important being the Holy Land. By the 13th century, Christianity reigned supreme throughout the civilized world. A Latin king ruled Constantinople in the east, and King John of England laid down his sovereign crown and received it back as a vassal of the Pope in the west. The Church of Rome, spanning from England to Constantinople, was the strongest and most politically powerful it had ever been.⁶²

Despite this temporal rule, clergymen honed little spiritual rule over their own morality. Greed, cruelty, and lust riddled the ecclesial courts where assassination, corruption, and incest were all too common. Perjury, bloodshed, and self-serving politics seeped into a Church desperately in need of a return to its moral and spiritual principles founded in Christ. The Church did not need another shrewd politician or ruthless military commander. It needed someone who could pull the Church out of its moral depravity and renew the Church to its earliest foundations rooted in the Gospel. The Church found such a moral and spiritual exemplar in the person of St. Francis of Assisi, an *alter Christus*.⁶³

⁶² Hibbert, Christopher. *Rome: the Biography of a City*. Penguin, 2001. Pp. 88-89.

⁶³ Meaning “another Christ” in Latin. The full quote by Pius XII reads, “there has never been anyone in whom the image of Jesus Christ and the evangelical manner of life shone forth more lifelike and strikingly than in St. Francis. He who called himself the ‘Herald of the Great King’ was also rightly spoken of as ‘another Jesus Christ,’ appearing to his contemporaries and to

St. Francis was born in Assisi, a small Italian town 175 kilometers north of Rome, to Pietro di Bernadone and the lady Pica in the year 1182.⁶⁴ At the time of his birth, Francis's father was away in France in his work as a cloth merchant. His mother, Pica, had him baptized with the name Giovanni which later was changed by his father to Francesco, a name that celebrated the mass wealth that the family had gathered through contact with the French and their selling of *panni franceschi* meaning "French clothe". In the rustic surroundings of Assisi, Francis learned the skills of archery, wrestling, and horse-riding. He wanted to become a noble knight and hero of Assisi despite his father's expectation that Francis would continue the lucrative Bernadone clothe trade. According to Thomas of Celano, his first biographer, Francis "wasted" the first twenty years of his life to grand, heroic dreams of knighthood and greatness. This grandiose persona was characterized by magnetic charisma, gallant demeanor, flamboyant clothing, extravagant claims, and the swooning of women with troubadour poetry.⁶⁵ Francis life changed when invaders from Perugia invaded Assisi in a civil war during his early twenties. Francis, in his self-sought heroism, was one of the first to wield arms. He was also one of the first to be captured and imprisoned by the Perugian invaders.

future generations almost as if he were the Risen Christ." See: *Humani Generis* (August 12, 1950) | *PIUS XII*, w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_30041926_rite-expiatis.html.

⁶⁴ Francis' date of birth differs between biographers as either 1181 or 1182 because it was calculated back from his death on October 3rd, 1226. I chose this date because it is the one encrypted on Francis's tomb in the Lower Church of the Basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi, Italy.

⁶⁵ The Troubadours were 11th-13th century poets of southern France, northern Spain, and northern Italy. Their name is derived from the Occitan verb "to compose, to invent, to devise". Dante Alighieri defines their poetry as *fictio rethorica musicaque poita* which means "rhetorical, musical, poetical fiction". For more on the Troubadours, see Judith M. Davis' essay "Troubadours" in *The Literary Encyclopedia*. Volume: *World History and Ideas: A Cross-Cultural Volume*.

Instead of being killed like his fellow defenders of Assisi, Francis was imprisoned in a dark dungeon because his expensive clothes signified a high ransom price to his captors. In his imprisonment from 1201 to 1202, Francis's ostentatious, flamboyant youth took a turn towards isolation and desolation. Separated from normal life in Assisi, Francis changed internally. After a year and a half in isolation and introspection, he was released back into Assisi a notably different person than when he entered it according to his biographers. Rather than having the same dreams of a knighthood devoted to the glory of his own heroism, he now dreamed of a knighthood devoted to the glory of God's Kingdom.

What could have happened to Francis in this imprisonment to reorient his existential posture so profoundly? In my estimation, St. Francis migrated from his "false self" to his "true self" during his time in darkness and isolation.⁶⁶ I say this in analysis of how biographers and modern scholars characterize Francis before and after his imprisonment. Thomas of Celano, his first biographer, describes the pre-imprisonment false self in young Francis, "in pomp and vainglory he strove to surpass the rest in frolic, freaks, sallies of wit, and idle talk."⁶⁷ Leclerc comments that beneath Francis' flamboyant dress and extravagant behaviors "lay scarcely concealed a desire to make much more of himself and to rule others. The truth was that Francis caressed high personal ambitions."⁶⁸ Richard Rohr, O.F.M concisely articulates what I think is the nature of Francis' pre-imprisonment false self, "Young zealots think it's all about them."⁶⁹ Francis, in his false self, holds an exaggerated belief in his own importance. However, something

⁶⁶ The false self is who one thinks they ought to be and is characterized by self-concept illusions. The true self is who you actually are without the constructs of a conscious thinking subject. In other words, the true self is who one is in the eyes of God.

⁶⁷ Thomas of Celano. *La Vita Prima Di S. Francesco D'Assisi*. Tip. Della Pace, 1880. P.1.

⁶⁸ Leclerc, Eloi. *Francis of Assisi: Return to the Gospel*. Franciscan Herald Press, 1983. P. 24.

⁶⁹ Rohr, Richard. *Immortal Diamond: the Search for Our True Self*. Jossey-Bass, 2013. P. 7

about the dark isolation from his old way of life in his imprisonment seems to change Francis. During his time in darkness, Francis is stripped of every worldview and self-conceptualization he has. Friedrich Nietzsche articulates this experience through the metaphor of a voyager at sea leaving behind the solid land of knowing and familiarity,

In the Horizon of the Infinite. We have left the land and have gone aboard ship! We have broken down the bridge behind us, - nay, more, the land behind us! Well, little ship! look out! Beside thee is the ocean; it is true it does not always roar, and sometimes it spreads out like silk and gold and a gentle reverie. But times will come when thou wilt feel that it is infinite, and that there is nothing more frightful than infinity. Oh, the poor bird that felt itself free, and now strikes against the walls of this cage! Alas, if home sickness for the land should attack thee, as if there had been more freedom there, - and there is no "land" any longer!⁷⁰

Like the voyager in the metaphor, St. Francis was stripped of everything he had attached himself to in his dark isolation and imprisonment. He had no solid land to stand on, no societal construct or self-concept to hold onto, only his life blown across the infinite oceanic expanse - those deep, complex, and unpredictable waters that oscillate between peace and anxiety. Though there is no account of what St. Francis experienced during this time of isolation and despair, I speculate that the experience was something similar to what can be seen in the *Divine Comedy*, a text written within a century of St. Francis' death.

In the *Divine Comedy*, the Italian poet Dante Alighieri writes of his character's pilgrimage down into hell, through purgatory, and up into heaven. This literary geography that unfolds through a series of 100 canti is a 100-step migration away from the false self, i.e. the self lost in a savage and dense "dark wood", and towards the true self, the self that gazes upon the Beatific Vision, i.e. the integrated self whose will is turned "like a balanced wheel rotated

⁷⁰ Nietzsche, Friedrich, and Thomas Common. *The Gay Science*. Dover Publ., 2006. Aphorism # 124

evenly, by the Love that moves the sun and the other stars”⁷¹. The first movement in the migration from the false self to the true self is down into one’s own underworld, a descent into that subterranean layer of existence where one becomes aware of a sinful self in a sinful world. Modern Franciscan spiritualist Richard Rohr, O.F.M. articulates this same downward movement into the one’s personal hell, “The path of descent is the path of transformation. Darkness, failure, relapse, death, and woundedness are our primary teachers, rather than ideas or doctrines.”⁷² Though Virgil guides and teaches the pilgrim Dante ideas and principles grounded in classical thought throughout the *Inferno*, his primary guide and teacher is experiencing the path of descent into the darkness, failure and woundedness of our humanity for himself.⁷³ With each subsequent circle down into hell and each conversation with sinners, Dante becomes more and more aware of personal and collective evil.

In my estimation, Francis of Assisi also experienced the path of descent which is the path of transformation while imprisoned. In his isolation, he was stripped away from every self-concept, leaving him in a context to explore and understand the dark contours of his existence world with no distraction. Carl Jung helps articulate the psycho-spiritual transformation I see in Francis, a journey that begins in inwardness, downwardness, and disintegration of grandiose self-conceptions. When asked by one of his students, “What has your pilgrimage really been?” Carl Jung answered, “In my case Pilgrim’s Progress consisted in my having to climb down a thousand ladders until I could reach out my hand to the little clod of earth that I am.”⁷⁴ Similarly, St.

⁷¹ *Inferno* I.1-6, *Paradiso* XXXIII.145 (the first and last lines of the *Divine Comedy*)

⁷² Rohr, Richard. “Lineage and Themes.” *Center for Action and Contemplation*, cac.org/living-school/program-details/lineage-and-themes/.

⁷³ A distinction with Rohr’s idea is that Dante’s path of transformation is not only a descent but also an ascent into Purgatory and Paradise.

⁷⁴ *C. G. Jung Letters, Volume 1*, selected and edited by Gerhard Adler in collaboration with Aniela Jaffe (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), footnote 8, p. 19.

Francis traveled downward from self-righteous grandiosity to a less egoistical, more humble existence – one highlighted by a love for the poor and nature. The journey away from the false self begins with a downward descent and release of the seemingly stable ground that is a delusional self-image as St Francis, Dante, Nietzsche, and Jung all experienced. It is only through embodying the true, integrated, God-focused self that one can find stable land again.

After a year and a half in isolation and introspection, Francis was released back to Assisi a notably different person than when he entered it according to his biographers. This new Francis, this more true Francis, was different than the old Francis. Rather than seemingly grandiose, illusory, self-absorbed, and arrogant, Francis was notably subdued and prayerful, developing the shadow side of himself he had not yet developed. In a particularly impactful time of prayer, Francis heard a voice coming from the crucifix in the Church of San Damiano in Assisi. “Go, Francis, and repair my house, which you see is falling into ruin”. Francis, taken aback by the audible voice, responded to it literally. He began to rebuild churches across the Italian countryside. At one of these churches, St. Mary of the Angels in the countryside below Assisi, Francis heard the following passage read then made it his life mission.

“The kingdom of heaven has come near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts—no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep. Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave.”
(Matthew 10:7-11 NIV)

In his intuitive, now serious nature, Francis embodied these words as his truth.⁷⁵ He spent the years following wandering the Italian countryside from place to place, tending to lepers,

⁷⁵ Søren Kierkegaard best articulates what it means to embody one’s truth as St. Francis did. “Truth has always had many loud proclaimers, but the question is whether a person will in the deepest sense acknowledge the truth, will allow it to permeate his whole being, will accept all its

preaching the Gospel, and amassing a following of like-minded men and women who wished to live their lives according to the way Francis lived his. In these years, Francis began to rebuild the Church in a new way. Rather than rebuilding individual physical churches on the ground with stone and hammer as he had been doing, he began to rebuild the spiritual and moral framework of the institutional church by returning to the life explicitly proposed in the Gospel.

During these same years, Francis' psychological migration towards his true, integrated self was accompanied by one particularly dramatic episode. Upon return from a trading trip in France, Francis's father discovered that his son had stolen his horse and clothe to buy materials to rebuild churches. Furious, his father took Francis to the local authorities, but Francis refused to answer any of their questions. Then, his father took him to the local bishop where a large crowd was gathered. The father told the bishop of Francis's theft but before the bishop could say anything in reply, Francis took off his garments and stood naked before all those who were gathered. Fully naked, Francis said to his father Pietro di Bernadone, "Until now I have called you my father on earth. But henceforth, I can truly say: Our Father who art in heaven."⁷⁶ In this moment, Francis concretized his identity as a son of the Eternal Father. The bishop of Assisi then wrapped Francis in his cloak for the time being until Francis created his own clothes made of undyed wool akin to those of the poor. Following this episode, Francis continued to encounter and embrace his true self and the true God simultaneously and in parallel fashion.⁷⁷ In other

consequences, and not have an emergency hiding place for himself and Judas kiss for the consequence." Kierkegaard, Søren. *The Concept of Anxiety: A Simple Psychologically Orienting Deliberation on the Dogmatic Issue of Hereditary Sin*. Edited by Reidar Thomte, vol. 8, Princeton University Press, 1980. p. 138.

⁷⁶ Bonaventure, et al. *The Life of St. Francis of Assisi. From the "Legenda Santa Francisci" of St. Bonaventure*. R. & T. Washbourne, 1915.

⁷⁷ Rohr, Richard. *Immortal Diamond: the Search for Our True Self*. Jossey-Bass, 2013. P. 14

words, he walked his life path with eyes fixed upon the Beatific Vision as the character Dante does in the 100th canto of the *Divine Comedy*.⁷⁸

As Francis grew in stature, his Gospel-based lifestyle spread like wildfire across Europe. Over 5000 men had joined in living the life exemplified by Francis. Realizing the magnitude of the movement, Francis visited Rome with some of his followers to seek approval for the Order of Friars Minor from Pope Innocent III in 1210. In meeting with the mendicant from Assisi, Innocent III was impressed by his life but prudent in granting Francis papal approval of his order. One night, however, Innocent III had a dream of Francis upholding a crumbling St. John the Lateran, the Cathedral of Rome which represents Francis as the moral exemplar upon which a morally bankrupt Church was being rebuilt. Following this dream, Innocent III granted the *poverello*⁷⁹ papal approval for his Order of Friars Minor *viva voce*.⁸⁰

Following the rapid expansion of his peaceful revolution, the Order of Friars Minor, Francis felt called by God to visit Egypt where the fourth crusade was taking place. He crossed the Mediterranean in the opposite direction as migrants and refugees do today, landing in Egypt. There, Francis was captured, dragged, and beaten by the Sultan's army then brought to the Sultan himself. St. Bonaventure describes the interaction in his biography of St. Francis,

“The sultan asked them by whom and why and in what capacity they had been sent, and how they got there; but Francis replied that they had been sent by God, not by men, to show him and his subjects the way of salvation and proclaim the truth of the Gospel

⁷⁸ Francis of Assisi's life can be summed up through the four foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees: *Imago Dei*, *Verbum Dei*, *Missio Dei*, and *Visio Dei*. After his imprisonment and hearing the words spoken to him at San Damiano, Francis was inspired by the *Verbum Dei* to live the *Missio Dei* that looks at the poor and lepers as *Imago Dei*, all the while with eyes fixed upon the *Visio Dei*. See: Groody, Daniel G. “Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees.” *Theological Studies*, vol. 70, no. 3, 2009, pp. 638–667.

⁷⁹ *Poverello* means the “poor one” in Italian.

⁸⁰ *Viva voce* means orally rather than via writing in Italian.

message. When the sultan saw his enthusiasm and courage, he listened to him willingly and pressed him to stay with him.”⁸¹

Francis shared the Gospel with the Sultan with “enthusiasm”⁸², leaving such an impact that the Sultan showered him with gifts and military protection instead of killing Francis. Francis, staying true to his radical poverty, accepted none of the gifts except for an ivory horn used by the Muslims to call for prayer five times each day. Upon return to Italy, he used the horn to summon Christians to prayer just as the Muslims used it to summon believers to prayer.⁸³ In this fruitful encounter and exchange of culture during the crusades, Francis and the Sultan lived out the message central to the Gospel, “Love thy enemy” (Matthew 5:44).⁸⁴ Not only does his life exemplify the Gospel. It exemplifies all four of the foundations of a Theology of Migration; Francis was inspired by the *Verbum Dei* to live the *Missio Dei* that looks at the poor, lepers, and non-Christians as made in *Imago Dei*, all the while with eyes fixed upon the *Visio Dei*. Francis’ individual encounter with the sultan provides a model for the Church’s collective task to promote unity and love among people in the modern age as examined in *Nostra Aetate*,

“In our time, when day by day mankind is being drawn closer together, and the ties between different peoples are becoming stronger, the Church examines more closely her relationship to non-Christian religions. In her task of promoting unity and love among men, indeed among nations, she considers above all in this declaration what men have in common and what draws them to fellowship.”⁸⁵

⁸¹ Bonaventure, et al. *The Life of St. Francis of Assisi. From the "Legenda Santa Francisci" of St. Bonaventure*. R. & T. Washbourne, 1915.

⁸² The English word “enthusiastic” is derived from the Greek word “entheos” which means the God within. (class notes, “Plato’s Images of Death and Love”, Professor David O’Connor, February 28, 2019)

⁸³ Here, St Francis manifests the fourth foundation of a Theology of Migration, *Missio Dei*. Francis crossed the human-human divide between the Christian and the Muslim. And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others?

⁸⁴ Bonaventure, et al. *The Life of St. Francis of Assisi. From the "Legenda Santa Francisci" of St. Bonaventure*. R. & T. Washbourne, 1915.

⁸⁵ “Nostra Aetate.” *Vatican*, www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html.

The encounter of St. Francis and the Sultan of Egypt eight centuries ago must be remembered today in the age of migration where Christians and Muslims are being drawn together faster and on a larger scale than ever before. In order to embody the vision of love and unity in human society, we must strive today for the type of fellowship emulated by Francis and the Sultan.

Today, a different Francis models the social vision of solidarity, respect, and openness that St. Francis embodied. This Francis is Pope Francis. This Francis is not only a great teacher of the Gospel as the other Francis was; he too makes the Gospel concrete with his life action. For example, from February 3rd through 5th 2019, Pope Francis followed the spirit of St. Francis and visited a Sultan of today in the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed. This was the first visit to the Arabian Peninsula by any Pope in the history of the Catholic Church. In addition to engaging in inter-religious dialogue on this visit, Pope Francis also provided words of encouragement for the U.A.E.'s 1 million Catholics, most of whom are economic migrants from India and the Philippines. In a mass at Zayed Sports City he spoke, "It is most certainly not easy for you to live far from home, missing the affection of your loved ones, and perhaps also feeling uncertainty about the future." But Pope then reminded them, "the Lord is faithful and does not abandon his people."⁸⁶ This message of hope and encouragement in life away from home does not only apply to these migrants in Abu Dhabi. It applies to me as a college student living away from family and friends in Omaha. It applies to Pope Francis as he lives away from his loved ones in Buenos Aires. It applies to every modern-day migrant I discussed in section I, "act", and every spiritual, historical, and religious migrant

⁸⁶ Watkins, Devin. "Pope at Mass in UAE: 'Jesus at Our Side When We Are Alone'." *Vatican News*, 5 Feb. 2019, www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-02/pope-francis-uae-mass-jesus-at-side-of-migrant-workers.html.

discussed in section II, “judge”. Ultimately, Pope Francis’ message, “the Lord does not abandon”, applies to all of humanity as we wander through life here on this itinerant Earth away from our Creator.

Pope Francis, like St. Francis, sets his eyes upon the vision of God, a vision that culminates in the eschaton where a great migration will take place. In the end of our spiritual narrative, we will be reunited with our Creator. According to the Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions, Jesus Christ and all of the angels will cross the divine/temporal border in a final migration from heaven to our itinerant Earth.⁸⁷ According to the Gospel, the following event will take place.

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.”

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’”

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’”

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ (Matthew 25:31-40)

⁸⁷ Qur’an 3:45-48; 3:55; 4:157-159, 43:61; Acts 1:11, 3:19-21, 17:31, 1 Corinthians 1:7, 4:5, 11:26, 15:23-25, Philippians 1:10, 3:20, Colossians 3:4, 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, 2:19-20, 3:13, 4:15-5:4, 5:23, 2 Thessalonians 1:6-7, 2:1-2, 2:8, 1 Timothy 6:13-16, 2 Timothy 4:1-2, 4:8, Titus 2: 12-14, Hebrews 9:28, 10:25, 10:37, James 5:7-9, 1 Peter 1:3-5, 1:13, 2:12, 4:13, 5:4, 1:16, 3:3, 3:8-10, 1 John 2:28. 3:2-3, Jude 1:21, Revelation 1:4, 1:7-8, 22:12-13, 22:20-21

As this vision of the end-times predicts, we will be judged according to how we have treated those at the bottom of the social dominance hierarchy. Christ will judge whether we crossed the border between our own inner world and the external world of the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned. It is upon actions such as this that our salvation will be judged and the Church's social vision of a civilization of love and a culture of life will be realized. Until then, it is our task to see, judge, and act for and with those most in need today.

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