

Scalabrinians



Scalabrinian Mission Explores its Role at St. John Neumann

Celebrating Faith and Heritage in St. John Neumann's Diverse Community.

Hispanic Ministry in Kansas City Addresses Challenges

Overcoming Cultural Challenges Through Ministry and Collaboration.

Nuestra estación de Milán en Colombia

Un examen de conciencia del Padre Florenzo Rigoni y el Padre Jesús Salinas.



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humilitas
SCALABRINIANS

SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO PROVINCE

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Life-transforming Relationship with Christ

When we think about Catholicism in today's culture, we can see the influences of the Enlightenment shaping people's faith and a shift towards the democratization of authority within the Church.

The influx of immigrants from various cultures, including European, Hispanic, Asian, and African Catholics, has enriched the tradition of popular devotion and piety within the Church. Many of these cultures focus on maintaining their ethnic customs and traditions through devotional Catholicism.

In history, there was a time when Catholicism demonstrated the powerful centralization of the Church in Rome. As the familiar saying goes, "When Rome spoke, the matter was settled" (*Roma locuta est, causa finita est*). Consequently, this brought into question the monarchical tradition of the church's authority, posing a threat to the hierarchy's control over many church matters.

Looking at the landscape of key concepts in theology that emerged during the Second Vatican Council, the threefold process See, Judge, and Act, has been the experience of action that offers a sense of direction to many religious institutions.

Amid the multiple challenges related to the secularization of culture, like the ideologies that promote life without God, the Church has sought to remain faithful to the principles of Christian Tradition. It aims to serve and has become a voice of strength to exemplify a deeper embodiment of what it means to be united with Christ.

The power and authority of Jesus are clearly expressed in his vision to restore our relationship with God and make us whole again. In today's post-modern era, this vision involves a strong emphasis on service and a well-developed theology of discipleship. We remember one of his famous statements: "*The Son of Man came, not to be served but to serve*" (Matt 20:28; Mk 10:15). Discipleship entails a commitment to lifelong learning and bearing witness to the Gospel. It is essentially the great need of the Church to embark

upon the life of following Christ and becoming like him. This is what holds us together to continue his mission in this world.

While accountability and interpersonal involvement are reflected in the process of human quest, human love is certainly the voice so powerful that can make a difference in this world. It sustains the call of discipleship, allowing God to evangelize our hearts or shape us from within as we stand in relationships with others. As a younger generation seeking to rediscover the fundamental aspects of faith from a human perspective, we find deep meaning and significance when love takes center stage, becoming the linchpin or cornerstone of our Christian lives. Our common purpose in this world is to share God's love for one another which defines the essence of our existence. //



A Message from our Provincial Superior

PILGRIMS OF HOPE

Pilgrims of Hope is the theme chosen by Pope Francis for the Jubilee Year 2025. We will hear and reflect of this when the Holy Year gets underway but we can already see that it will reflect two aspects of Pope Francis papacy: the centrality of his understanding of the church, and humanity, as pilgrim in the world, and hope as a fundamental virtue for Jesus' disciples. Pilgrims because we do not live in a world with a static reality, even Saint John Baptist Scalabrini reminded us that our true home is heaven, and we are all pilgrims in this land, aiming towards God. We are on our way, not alone, for Jesus walks side by side with us. This vision is central for the Scalabrinian spirituality: the understanding that migration, or people on the move, is much more than a sociological phenomenon. Even if forced migration dehumanizes men and women who must find refuge on distant lands, facing persecution and perils, migration can be seen as way of bringing different peoples and cultures together. It is only with eyes of faith that we can tear down the barriers of prejudice against the unknown: unknown language, unknown face, unknown beliefs. We fear what we

do not know or what we cannot control. As pilgrims in this land, the other is not a threat, but a companion on the journey.

Even if we agree that we are all pilgrims, it is not easy to see a better world coming soon, we can easily get discouraged by reality. As Scalabrinian missionaries we serve at the borders, the borders between nations, as Mexico and U.S.A.; Venezuela and Colombia; Mexico and Guatemala; Colombia and Ecuador; Colombia and Panama, are a few examples of our presence in conflictive places. We also recognize that the border is everywhere, (as the campaign by Catholic Charities U.S.A. has stated). The reality is harsh not only crossing border lines between nations, but continues, and sometimes is even more challenging when arriving at the place of destiny, hence the welcoming of strangers becomes another central point in our spirituality. That becomes a reality in parishes and shelters as safe places where all are welcome.

Considering the reality that surrounds us we can be discouraged, so it is essential to remind ourselves that we are

not only pilgrims, but we are pilgrims of hope. Without the virtue of hope we will get tired and give up on this beautiful journey towards God. Unfortunately, not everyone sees the world with eyes of hope. There are those who disseminate fear, and fear leads to despair. We do not need to go very far, it does not matter in which country we are, immigrants will be easily blamed for social disorder, crimes, violence, usually without evidence. The language of hate is contagious and can lead people who call themselves Christians to act against the commandment of love. People acting in this way don't have hope for they cannot recognize the hand of God acting in history. Beyond what some in the world see and spread as tragedy, we must be led by the banner of hope, because we know and believe that God has created humanity to live in harmony and peace. We must be the Pilgrims of Hope celebrating here on earth what heaven will be:



*The common house
of all God's children."*



Scalabrinian Formation in Haiti Exemplifies Holistic Approach

Father Rubens Sylvain, c.s, and Father Gustot Lucien, c.s, currently serve as formators of the Scalabrinian Seminary. Both of them are from Haiti and have been working together since October 2019.

Their collaborative efforts include frequent formal and informal meetings to discuss the progress of formation among the seminary's members. Additionally, they hold both ordinary and extraordinary meet-

ings for each stage to ensure comprehensive guidance and support for the seminarians.

The seminary comprises two preparatory stages and a philosophy program. In addition, it provides a discernment program within the seminary, allowing young men who have completed their classical studies to spend about a year immersing themselves in the community, gaining first-hand experience, and presenting them-

selves before being admitted to the preparatory program.

As of the 2023-2024 academic year, the seminary has 17 young individuals: 6 in the pre-propaedeutic stage, 4 in the propaedeutic stage, and 7 in the philosophy program.

Each stage has its specific program following the guidelines of the General Project of the Scalabrinian Formation and the spirituality of Saint John

Fr. Rubens Sylvain, c.s. and Fr. Gustot Lucien, c.s.





Baptist Scalabrini. Other activities include the celebration of the congregational landmarks in its history, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament twice a month, Joint mass held every Saturday with the local community, spiritual retreats, bi-monthly social gatherings, and a quarterly community meeting.

Those in the pre-propaedeutic have their training in the seminary with lay and religious teachers. Those of the propaedeutic, twice a week have

courses at the interpostulate Institute of the “Scheuts” together with other seminarians from other Congregations. This stage lasts one year. Those in philosophy studies at the Salesian Philosophical Institute, study for 3 years. This year, there are 3 in the first year, 1 in the second year, and 3 in the third year. They study from Monday to Friday in the morning. The afternoon hours are dedicated to sports, manual work, and other enrichment activities. //



For approximately 5 years, we have been trying to develop our work in very difficult contexts: the pandemic and the complex situation in the country. Despite all these less positive factors, there is hope, joy, and faith because we believe in the God of life, the God of Jesus Christ. We continue walking in the footsteps of our Founding Father, Saint John Baptist Scalabrini.”

—Fr. Gustot Lucien



*Pray for
Haiti!*

Hispanic Ministry in Kansas City Addresses Challenges

I am Father Ramiro V. Sánchez Chan, a Scalabrinian priest for 20 years. I serve as the Director of the Office of Hispanic Ministry in the Archdiocese of Kansas City. We work closely with 12 parishes focused on Hispanic ministry, providing lay formation programs, evangelization courses, and pastoral training. The Archdiocese covers 107 parishes serving approximately 250,000 Catholics across 39 counties in Kansas.

Upon my arrival nearly three years ago, Archbishop Joseph Fred Naumann appointed Father

Michael Hermes as the Episcopal Vicar for the Hispanic Ministry. I had worked with Father Hermes before, and I was tasked with preparing the New Pastoral Plan for the Hispanic Ministry. This involved getting to know the diverse realities of the 12 parishes, which are located in various areas, including the Kansas City metropolitan area, Johnson County, the State Capital, Topeka, Lawrence, and the remote Emporia, which is about 108 kilometers away.

My role requires regular travel

SCALABRINIANS MAGAZINE

Is published quarterly in full-color print editions. It shows the mission apostolates of the Scalabrinian missionaries in diverse communities across North and South America. It offers its readers a Scalabrinian perspective on migration and other expansive variety of topics.

The Scalabrinian Missionaries are committed to promoting the total salvation of humankind, leading migrants in particular, to connect their lives with the roots of their faith and cultural values. While we have more possibilities than ever to meet this diversity head-on with different cultures and ethnicities, our community aims at expanding spiritual and pastoral assistance to migrants. This dynamic process evolves within the context of every community and pastoral position we serve in Canada, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, the U.S.A., and Venezuela.

Together with our readers, we pray that our ministry with and for the migrants will make us more Christ-like and serve in some way to draw others closer to God.

May the spirit of our Founder, St. John Baptist Scalabrini, help us strengthen our vocation as his missionaries in the world.

Scalabrinians Magazine welcomes letters and articles from readers. Letters and articles may be edited for length and clarity. Please include your full name and address.

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Father Ramiro V. Sánchez Chan, c.s.



to these locations to assist in different programs for the Hispanic Ministry.

Our work has evolved over the past two years with the inclusion of bilingual individuals in the evangelization, marriage, and youth offices. Their invaluable assistance has reshaped the focus and direction of our mission, prompting us to seek out tools that better serve our community. We've conducted several workshops to empower the people of the Archdiocese, covering topics such as human trafficking, migration challenges, financial education, and

spirituality of catechesis. We aim to expand these efforts by introducing workshops on immigration laws, mental health, and other pressing needs within the Hispanic community.

Our work continues to align with the Pastoral Plan of the Archdiocese and the Hispanic Ministry's Plan. In addition, we are enhancing the Basic Course of Pastoral Theology to provide individuals with a structured curriculum, fostering the development of comprehensive pastoral projects under the guidance of parish priests and other mentors.

The acceptance of different cultures within the Hispanic community poses a significant challenge. Collaboration and synergy are essential in creating joint plans, recognizing and respecting cultural, ethnic, and racial differences is crucial in fostering unity.

Additionally, it is important to advocate for those whose voices are often unheard, particularly in an Archdiocese that is gradually embracing Hispanic culture in its daily operations. It is a key challenge how to recognize the Hispanic presence in large-scale events. //

A Paradigm Shift at St. Charles Parish Evolves in Ministry

I am Father Jesús Ramírez, Scalabrinian, originally from Purépero, Michoacán, Mexico. I am currently doing my pastoral ministry at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Melrose Park, Illinois.

St. Charles Borromeo Church was established in 1943 to serve the needs of parishioners of Polish, Lithuanian, Italian, and American descent, with all masses conducted in English.

In the 1980s, the demographic shifted as the Hispanic community became increasingly prominent. In 1987, the first Spanish Mass was celebrated, marking the significant growth in the Hispanic community within the parish. As a result, the parish now comprises around 3,500 members, the majority of whom are Hispanic.

Currently, there are 6 Spanish masses and 1 English mass held

on weekends, with an additional Portuguese mass celebrated on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. The Hispanic community in our parish and the Archdiocese of Chicago is incredibly strong. As a Hispanic who grew up in Mexico and has also lived in places like Colombia, I am continually amazed by the faith and devotion that Latin migrants have in seeking God while in the United States.



For many, it's not easy, as their primary goal is to work towards the *"American Dream"* rather than practicing their Catholicism. However, once they become involved with the Church, they develop deep commitment and devotion.

In our parish, the majority of parishioners are Mexican, but we also have small groups from Guatemala, El Salvador, Puerto Rico, Honduras, and Brazil, and in recent years, there has been an influx of Venezuelans and Colombians. This cultural diversity enriches our community in various ways, including customs, traditions, and food.



As Scalabrinians, our parish motto is the phrase of Saint John Baptist Scalabrini that says, *"Called to bring to the migrant the smile of their land and the consolation of their faith."* This motto urges us to reflect on the importance of supporting migrants and motivates us to continue advocating for their reception and fighting for the rights of the most vulnerable.

Sometimes, the work within the parish is undervalued, as some do not see working with migrants as an integral part of parish duties. However, it is essential to recognize that our communities are diverse and are composed of migrants, spanning first, second, or third generations.

Additionally, we continue to welcome “*new arrivals*” daily, some of whom have previously stayed at one of our *Casas del Migrante*.

In collaboration with the Lay Scalabrinians of our parish, we strive to create a welcoming environment for migrants. The Lay Scalabrinians come together to provide support and organize various events and fundraisers to address the specific needs of migrants.

In addition to offering ministerial and liturgical training, our parish celebrates Scalabrinian festivals that aim to make migrants feel at home.

These include the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, where we host a “*Feast of the People*” allowing each country to share its culture, customs, and traditions, including its cuisine. Furthermore, on June 1st, we honor San Juan Bautista Scalabrini, the patron saint of

migrants.

During the Christmas season, we host a migrant posada with a different theme each year, and during Lent, we observe the migrant's station of the cross.

Our parish has been blessed with the presence of Scalabrinians since its founding, and their spirituality has fostered an inclusive community, welcoming parishioners regardless of their place of origin. //



St. Charles Borromeo Church, Melrose Park, Illinois.

Grafting New Roots of Liturgy and Spirituality - An Insight for Discerning Mystery



One of the challenges of the memory of Dante's first postmodern times is to find an appropriate place for ontological meaning and a multifaceted approach to ministry. The sacramental praxis of spirituality, for instance, teaches us how we experience God's presence in the liturgy. It reminds us that we need to connect more deeply to the sacred origins so that we can communicate the mystery of faith in our lives.

I call to mind Dante Alighieri's *Vita Nuova* (1292-1294) as a theological elegy. It has every moment that allows experiencing the divine forces. It incorporates liturgy and scripture to elevate courtly love and

the memory of Dante's first meeting with a living Beatrice. The narrative begins with that memory and ends with a vision of Beatrice's apparition that gives purpose to his book.¹

With that human attachment pattern and divine relationship attachment in Alighieri's book, I find the key element in the interaction that reflects layers of familiarity with the content of liturgy and the way one responds to the indwelling of the Spirit, either in one's supplication or actions. It is important, however, to understand within the framework of the Church's broader life how liturgy and spirituality lead the faithful to maturity of faith.

It is by proceeding from the visible to the invisible, from the sign to the thing signified, from the "sacraments" to the "mysteries."²

The emerging reality in our catechetical program where some students claim that their relationship with God stands apart from any corporate worship and that they can be good Catholics even without regularly attending the church, has inspired me to welcome the challenge and engage this topic in conversation with some scholars in the field of catechetics.

PERSPECTIVES OF SPIRITUALITY AND LITURGY FROM CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARS

Over the ages, spirituality has carried with it a multiplicity of meanings. The challenge to arrive at a definition stems from the fact that spirituality is lived and experienced more than defined. After the Second Vatican Council, Karl Rahner wrote that spirituality would be the most important question facing Christianity in the future.³

The spirituality Rahner envisaged for the future combines personal faith and commitment to communal liturgy, prayer, and service of the faith community. It is intrinsic like humankind to seek meaning in life.

Because Rahner sees God's initiative in spirituality, he encourages Christians to have personal awareness of God's presence in their lives. His definition of spirituality is lived out, not "spiritual individualism," but is supported in an ecclesial expression that embraces everyday life.

Sandra Schneiders, on the one hand, suggests three distinct uses of spirituality. First, it describes a "fundamental dimension" of being human; second, it refers to the "lived experience which actualizes that dimension" and third, it describes "the academic discipline which studies that experience."⁴ She adds that if the "ultimate concern is God revealed in Jesus Christ and experienced through the gift of the Holy Spirit within the life of the life, one is dealing with Christian spirituality."⁵ She sees spirituality as a lived reality that brings life's struggles. Even Philip Sheldrake shares the same perspective that "it is how we stand before God in the context of our everyday lives and how we respond to challenges of life."⁶

Catherine Dooley says, "Liturgical rites and celebrations of the word within the context of the liturgical year are primary formative experiences because the Church gathered in worship shapes the identity and faith of the catechumens and the baptized in the very act of celebration."⁷ Liturgy shapes one's formation in the Christian faith because it provides a symbolic experience of God in his/her life and expresses the very identity of what it means to be a Church. In many diverse forms of ministry, the Church performs the essential and fundamental functions of the ministry of the word.⁸

The members are called together. They are called to faith in the most appropriate manner in their concrete situations.⁹

Liturgical catechesis has scriptures and prayers that provide certain aspects for reflection. It is filled with Old Testament metaphors, references, and meanings.¹⁰ At times, they are not linear but rather cyclical or built up into the mystery of Christ present among us. They shape attitudes and values that lead to movements of insight and transformation. In addition, "liturgical catechesis looks at the images and meanings of the Scripture readings within the



1. Barbara Nolan, "The Vita Nuova: Dante's Book of Revelation," *Dante Studies* 88 (1970), 13-27.

2. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1075.

3. Karl Rahner, "Christian Living Formerly and Today," in *Theological Investigations*, 7, 3-24 (New York: Seabury, 1977), 4.

4. Sandra Schneiders, "Spirituality in the Academy," in *Exploring Christian Spirituality: An Ecumenical Reader* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 250. 249-269.

5. Schneiders, "Spirituality in the Academy", 254.

6. Philip Sheldrake, *Images of Holiness: Explorations in Contemporary Spirituality* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1988), 2.

7. Catherine Dooley, "Liturgical Catechesis: Mystagogy, Marriage or Misnomer?" *Worship* 66 (1992): 395.

framework of the particular worshipping community and the day and season of the liturgical year.”¹¹ As a whole, the primary purpose of liturgy is “to give worship and praise to God and build up the Body of Christ.”¹²

CONCLUSION

Liturgy and spirituality provide a perspective and they help one find a personal morality that weaves together the religious and secular in his/her life. They hold things on the relationship as God desires us to be – to have a deep sense of God in our lives and to enable us to communicate the mystery of faith.

The relationship between liturgy and spirituality is often discussed under the Latin tag, “lex orandi, lex credendi” (The law of prayer determines the law of belief).¹³ No doubt, some have interpreted it in a manner that argues for the dominion of liturgy over doctrine. Aidan Kavanagh, however, asserts this position when he states that, “the law of worship transcends and subordinates the law of belief.”¹⁴

It is one essential component when the community engages in a celebration during corporate worship. Its liturgical patterns in both structure and content shape the spirituality or Christian formation of participants. The process of nurture and growth occurs in the lives of Christians as they constantly develop what their faith is all about in our world which is often at variance with the repercussions of contemporary culture. What the liturgy always does to shape an individual's spiritual maturity to faith or simply his/her spirituality and to challenge him/her how one

looks at the world, is to offer, articulate, and celebrate a vision of the Christian life with constancy in today's world. As all theology retains the paschal mystery as its axis, the close connection of liturgy and spirituality leads an individual's journey into an imitation of Christ, i.e., into Christlikeness.

Community is important to an individual's total human development. Equally important, however, is that through active engagement in the liturgy, the presence of Christ is experienced and that union with God is central to spirituality. //



8. *General Directory for Catechesis*, #50, p. 44.

9. *General Directory for Catechesis*, #51.

10/11. Dooley, “Liturgical Catechesis: Mystagogy, Marriage or Misnomer?” 393.

12. Dooley, “Liturgical Catechesis: Mystagogy, Marriage or Misnomer?” 395.

13. Kevin W. Irwin, “Lex orandi, Lex Credendi - Origins and Meaning: State of the Question” in *Liturgical Ministry* 11 (Spring 2002), 58. 57-69.

14. Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 46.

Deseos, Sueños y Esperanzas



En el segundo viaje a Panamá, en donde el primer por invitación de Mons. José Domingo Ulloa a un Encuentro de Obispos de frontera entre Colombia, Panamá y Costa Rica (marzo de 2024) y en el segundo para dar inicio oficialmente a la misión SC siempre tuvimos en la mente y en el corazón de que esta nueva presencia misionera debería ser como San Juan Bautista Scalabrini hacía, deseaba y sonaba para la iglesia, la sociedad, autoridades, organizaciones y los migrantes: trabajar en sinodalidad y comunión con la Iglesia y como Familia Scalabriniana.

En permanente diálogo con todas las fuerzas organizadas de la sociedad, Organismos Internacionales y autoridades de gobierno responsables por el tema migratorio, pero al mismo tiempo, siempre con la independencia y autonomía propia de

cada organización e Institución.

Creemos que, sería importante intentar construir y hacer una misión actualizando Scalabrini hoy, porque ser Scalabriniano (a) es estar con los migrantes y ser Scalabrini hoy es motivar y apoyar para que otras organizaciones, personas e instituciones también se comprometan con el tema migratorio y de modo especial acoja, proteja,

promueva, integre y celebre con los migrantes, sin olvidarse de acompañar e involucrar la migración interna y comunidades locales, porque entendemos que somos una sola e única familia humana.

Con más razón siendo Scalabrini Santo nos pide para que demos este testimonio como paso importante para que seamos un ejemplo que alumbra en este

Equipo de PMH - Pastoral de Movilidad Humana (Ligia, Mario, Jorge y Nyselle)



momento histórico oscuro, difícil, violento y conturbado en que vive la humanidad.

Para fortalecer este deseo y sueño hemos llevado un importante material impreso sobre la persona de San Juan Bautista Scalabrini para que sea conocido y divulgado como santo de la iglesia y definido por el Papa Francisco como, Padre de los Migrantes. Este material fue compartido en áreas diferentes en que pudimos estar y participar en este breve tiempo: en el Norte - Diócesis de David en Chiriquí, en el Sur - Vicaría del Darién y en el Centro del País - Arquidiócesis de Panamá capital.

Es una primera semilla que fue sembrada en esta tierra buena y fecunda que es el pueblo y la Iglesia Panameña y que con el tiempo dará buen fruto. //

Summary at a Glance

The article discusses the Scalabrinian mission's efforts in Panama, focusing on the establishment of a new mission in line with the vision of Saint John Baptist Scalabrini. Fr. Mario reflects on the importance of working in collaboration with the Church, society, international organizations, and government authorities while maintaining the independence of each institution involved in migration issues.

The mission aims to embody Scalabrini's legacy by supporting migrants and encouraging other orga-

nizations to commit to their cause. The focus is on welcoming, protecting, promoting, and integrating migrants, as well as engaging with internal migration and local communities, recognizing the unity of the human family. To promote this vision, the Scalabrinians distributed materials about Saint Scalabrini, recently declared the "Father of Migrants" by Pope Francis, in various regions of Panama. This effort is seen as planting seeds in the fertile ground of the Panamanian Church and society, with hopes that it will yield positive results over time.



Encuentro de formación con OIM
(Organización Internacional de Migraciones)



Scalabrinianos en el Hogar Luisa en Panamá

Nuestra estación de Milán en Colombia

Como Scalabriniano, el cansancio de la compasión me acompaña desde hace años. Scalabrini recordaba la escena de la estación de Milán, y sigo preguntándome: ¿Será precisamente este esfuerzo de tender la mano, de acomodar sobre mi cabalgadura al desgraciado caído en manos de los bandidos a lo largo del camino, que se ha apoderado de algunos misioneros y religiosos scalabrinianos? ¿Es un examen de conciencia que hago todas las tardes mientras cierro un día más en la frontera o donde debería estar y no estoy?

Es un examen de conciencia que hago con el P. Jesús Salinas, que siempre ha elegido Colombia como su primer destino y debo decir que sigue como caballo de jale delante de mí.

Cuando escucho al Papa Francisco hablar de la *globalización de la indiferencia* me siento culpable. Recuerdo cómo en el primer congreso de espiritualidad en Triuggio uno de los puntos principales fueron las asimetrías de nuestras respuestas misioneras y se subrayó que en demasiados lugares no estábamos allí donde la emigración gemía y soñaba, donde la migración era desgracia y esperanza, sufría y se hacía añicos, o al contrario seguíamos en posiciones que eran casi albergues para ancianos, esperando que muriera la última generación de migrantes. Es una pregunta que debemos seguir planteándonos y permanece al mismo tiempo en la actitud expresada muchas veces en el Antiguo Testamento: *hinenni... ¡Aquí estoy, habla Señor!*

EL OCASO DE NACIONES UNIDAS

Estoy escribiendo desde Colombia, donde a lo largo de pocos meses, en unos casos hasta de un puñado de días, docenas de organizaciones internacionales, empezando por Naciones Unidas, han cerrado las puertas de su ayuda humanitaria y se fueron, dejando en la calle a miles de migrantes, desplazados, perseguidos políticos y un sin número de niños y mujeres con las llagas abiertas del hambre y enfermedades crónicas.

Todo eso se dio en el marco de una serie de contradicciones codificadas. Hemos pasado de un alud de kits de todo tipo, por edad, de apoyo en transportes y salarios para empleados a un desierto donde tan solo el viento nos sacude sin mensajes, cancelando como esponja los últimos vestigios de la bonanza de ayer.

Con Padre Jesús Salinas, Padre Chuy como hermano amigo mexicano y todos nuestros compañeros y compañeras de diáconía nos quedamos crucificados, sin respuesta delante de un éxodo de parte de quienes tendrían que estar aquí... P. Jesús repite siempre: *“la Iglesia estaba antes, y seguirá quedando, los demás se van y quedará, aun sola”*, porque como decía Scalabrini *“allá donde el pueblo sufre y lucha allí está la Iglesia.”*



Migrantes Venezolanos en la Frontera con Colombia. Flickr (CC)

MIGRACIÓN CIRCULAR

Mirando a nuestro alrededor descubrimos las ruinas y los escombros de esta migración venezolana, asistidas al comienzo por Naciones Unidas, sin el segundo pilar que la Carta de las Naciones encomendaba a ACNUR en su firma en 1948. Dicha Carta indica dos cimientos: *la asistencia en la emergencia y la creación de soluciones duraderas*. En este segundo pilar la respuesta de Naciones Unidas a Colombia ha fracasado. Ha impulsado una migración de Albergue en Albergue, de una ciudad a otra, de una nación a otro continente, hasta encontrarse en un círculo cerrado y transformar a los Venezolanos en migrantes circulares, que salen de su propio país, dan muchos recorridos alrededor y vuelven transformados en *nómadas*, sin la tradición cultural de haberlo sido jamás.

Con un suspiro profundo y prolongado terminamos repitiendo a coro con América Latina: ¡Sin embargo, la Providencia está ahí! Todo esto, porque alguien en el gobierno de los dos países vecinos dijo que la migración venezolana es resultado de las sanciones de Estados Unidos contra el régimen, es una conspiración internacional y aquí descubrí cómo la política se apropia del poder de definir caminos de vida o muerte, de dignidad o miseria, de importancia o invisibilidad.

Summary at a Glance

The article is a reflection by the Scalabrinian missionaries Fr. Florenzo Rigoni and Fr. Jesús Salinas working in Colombia, addressing the emotional and physical toll of aiding migrants, particularly those affected by the Venezuelan crisis. Fr. Florenzo and Fr. Jesús, inspired by the legacy of Scalabrini, discuss the exhaustion that comes from continually helping the vulnerable, questioning whether this relentless effort is sustainable.

The piece critiques the recent withdrawal of international organizations, including the United Nations, from Colombia. This exit has left thousands of migrants and displaced individuals without essential support, creating a void where basic needs are unmet. The missionaries express a deep sense of helplessness as they struggle to respond to the escalating humanitarian crisis.

A central theme is the concept of "circular migration," where Venezuelans, once aided by global organizations, are now caught in a cycle of moving from one temporary refuge to another without finding stability. This has turned them into nomads without a tradition of nomadism, highlighting the failure of international efforts to provide lasting solutions. Despite these challenges, Fathers Florenzo Rigoni and Jesús Salinas take solace in the continued presence of the Church, which remains committed to supporting those in need, even as other entities withdraw.

The article concludes by reflecting on the ongoing struggles in Latin America, suggesting that the region's deep wounds remain unhealed, symbolizing the broader, unresolved issues that persist in the face of these challenges.

Puedo decir con todos mis compañeros de viaje que cada día damos la bienvenida a niños, mujeres y madres desnutridas que llevan meses y años esperando una intervención médica mínima y no pueden permitirse una aspirina y esto no se explica con sanciones. Estamos operando en una nación que ostenta el triste récord de la guerra más larga del mundo desde el siglo pasado: Colombia vive una guerra civil desde hace 37 años. No hablaré del narcotráfico, de esta telaraña extendida por todo el planeta, dado que tenemos enormes plataformas en mi país, Italia.

Hoy en día, cuando se habla de mafia siciliana, calabrés, china, mexicana, colombiana, es simplemente mover el dedo sobre el globo terráqueo y ponerle un nombre. Como decían en Chiapas en la época de la guerra zapatista: una vez terminados los análisis y el reconocimiento de los signos de nuestro tiempo, decían: *aquí algo está roto*.

Sí, es la Pachamama la que está herida, son las venas de América Latina las que no quieren cerrarse, es la imposibilidad, como dicen los indios apaches de Nuevo México, de crear cicatrices que nos recuerden una batalla ganada. //

Venezuela está de Éxodo

Para nadie es un secreto que de la tierra de Venezuela han salido millones de personas, con nombres y con historias tan sentidas.¹ Las cifras reales representan el mayor éxodo de América Latina y como seguidores de Cristo tendría que movernos a la caridad. Porque como dice San Juan Bautista Scalabrini:

“Donde el pueblo sufre y llora ahí debe estar la Iglesia.”

Como Scalabrinianos acompañamos a un pueblo que tiene hambre y sed de Dios. Además, un gran número de quienes se quedan acá necesitan del pan material para enfrentar los desafíos diarios como: la dificultad de encontrar un salario digno, servicios públicos fuertes, una educación sólida y una Iglesia comprometida, entre otros. Yo que estoy acá doy testimonio de lo dicho por el Padre de los Migrantes:

“El pan del migrante muestra con cuantas lágrimas se ha bañado y cuanto sabe a sal.”

Asimismo, subrayo que con Iglesia me refiero no solo al clero, sino al pueblo de Dios y a la Iglesia universal que no ten-



1. Según las cifras del ACNUR más de 7,7 de personas han salido de Venezuela en busca de una vida mejor. Consultado 23 de abril de 2024: <https://bit.ly/4fA5TPw>

dríamos excusa para comportarnos como espectadores prejuiciosos de un éxodo anunciado, más bien, *¡seamos un instrumento para cultivar una sociedad creyente donde el Dios de la Vida se manifiesta en la caridad!* De hecho, hay creyentes que, tocados en su corazón de carne colaboran en la construcción de un Reino cuyo Rey es Cristo Migrante.

La misión que se dispone en Valencia, Venezuela incluye dos parroquias y una escuela con alrededor de 660 estudiantes en situación de carencia multidimensional.

En mi experiencia he entendido cuanta es la relevancia de Dios en una situación de fuerte necesidad. Soy testigo de como el templo se llena y las personas vuelven a Dios. Este éxodo inició con un pueblo que sale y el creyente no interpreta en esta salida una triste derrota, sino un nuevo encuentro con Cristo que también migra y nos llena de identidad, donde somos hijos e hijas de Dios.

“Por tanto, el venezolano no es... esto o aquello, para el bautizado, el migrante es tu hermano.”

San Juan Bautista Scalabrini acertaba cuando afirmaba:

“Para el migrante la patria es la tierra que le da el pan.”

Ante esta realidad, la patria de Venezuela ahora está sembrada en América Latina y el mundo. La migración como signo de los tiempos muestra a Dios en el migrante. Las semillas del Reino nos empujan al éxodo de nuestra vida para estar con él. La misión continua, hagamos que Cristo sea experimentado por los migrantes, de ser posible sin palabras y con caridad. //



Niño de la misión que disfruta de una Cachapa Venezolana



Summary at a Glance

The article discusses the significant exodus from Venezuela, the largest in Latin America's history, and calls on the Church and its followers to respond with compassion. Inspired by Saint John Baptist Scalabrini, Fr. Juan Pablo stresses that the Church must be where people suffer, especially in times of crisis like this migration.

In Valencia, Venezuela, Scalabrinian missionaries support those who remain, facing challenges such as inadequate wages, poor public services, and the need for spiritual and

material assistance. The local Church has become a refuge, helping people reconnect with their faith. Fr. Juan Pablo urges the broader Church community not to be passive but to actively help migrants, viewing them as brothers and sisters. The mission in Venezuela, which includes two parishes and a school for 660 students, illustrates the Church's role in providing crucial support. The article concludes by encouraging the Church to let migrants experience Christ through acts of charity, making faith a lived reality.



Dwelling in Love - A Portrayal of Jesus in the Ministry

It is only when we are secure in our understanding of who we are about God and others, how we behave with others, and where our boundaries begin and end with others that we can claim our connection with God which forms the fundamental Christian metaphor: “*God is love [agape]*” (1 Jn. 4:8, 16). God is relational and this is how we describe the church’s mission and worship where we share in this communion. People of all backgrounds and cultures have their share of stories to tell us, especially in relationships. Many writers, composers, and filmmakers have been inspired by untold stories and testimonies about human relationships.

Tensions over several issues continue to unfold. The challenge of healing the wounds of injustice, for instance, reminds us of our interconnectedness; our vulnerability as men and women in the world with others has pressed us more into rediscovery and deeper articulation of our Christian life. However, how we live and whether or not we are living out of balance,

especially regarding relationships, should be our guiding principle to engage in life.

Everyone knows that the church is now becoming more diverse in a wide assortment of cultures, especially in North America. From a range of perspectives, it is evident that the general movement draws on several issues and concerns, one of which is how we deal with them or how we treat them with a common vocabulary of discourse that endeavors to center on the inclusive well-being of the body of Christ.

We have focused on what inspires us and what motivates us to reinforce the missionary mandate of the church, e.g., dialogue of cultures, renewal of its inner life as a church; including our struggle with our daily realities to see anew what patterns in our life-relationships need conversion.

With the changes that our Catholicism has undergone, our liturgical place of encounter with Christ has not isolated us from the world. Instead, it has helped us live out our identity about God and others.





The centrality of love in the community shapes our interpersonal relationships, which in turn raises our awareness of a new sense of who God is. Further-more, using metaphorical, symbolic, or analogical interpretations of God evokes a relational character, such as with the God of Isaac, adding to the richness of our understanding of God. Jesus Christ embodies the self-giving love of God.

James W. Fowler says on faith development, "Our task is to nurture people, with the help of God's grace, in their ability to be in faith."¹ With this in mind, we become a living document of ecclesiology in the modern world. As *Lumen Gentium* 14, paragraph 2 says, "*Spiritum*

Christi habentes," ("possessing the Spirit of Christ").

Each of us lives in the theater of God's grace. It means that God is actively and lovingly present in every person's life, not just in the lives of Christians, but in the lives of everyone, including atheists and agnostics. Given the redemptive essence of the gospel, the Church embodies the mystery of Christ in tangible ways, such as our recognition of the inner world where wounds become sites of God's grace. We understand, through our deep commitment to others, that "*where the poor suffer, we are called to stand firm and aid them.*" This principle guides our mission as a church and underscores the pressing need and

priority to act. There is an author who once said, "To find your mission in life is to discover the intersection between your heart's deep gladness and the world's deep hunger."² When we started on our journey as religious missionaries with the Hispanic immigrants years ago, we had some difficulties coping with the structure and working relationship with our confreres in the community. We first thought we were going to quit after three months and leave the mission. However, seeing the struggles of poor migrants, especially deportees who came to us for shelter and food, spiritual and pastoral assistance, we felt that we were still needed in the community. Hence, we kept the journey of perseverance and commitment to working with them in different ways.

Working with immigrants, we came to understand more the so-called shape of human hope in action and the Christian metaphor of mission and worship that "*God is love.*" This is the context where we are faced with decisions to find appropriate ways that would enable us to embody the caring presence of God for them as they gradually grow in the breath of newness or a new understanding of the gospel – that God is love. //

1. James W. Fowler. *Stages of Faith*. (San Francisco: Harper Row, 1981). 66.

2. Quoted from Parker J. Palmer's book. *Let Your Life Speak*. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, Inc., 2000). 36.

See also www.lexisworks.wordpress.com/2012/03/14/finding-my-mission.

Una Gran Concurrencia de los Trabajadores Agrícolas se llevó a cabo



La Oficina de Comunidades Culturales de la Arquidiócesis de Montréal y la Misión de Lengua en Español de la Arquidiócesis, están contentos de celebrar este año la 22ª Peregrinación anual de Trabajadores Agrícolas Latinoamericanos. Cada año, la Arquidiócesis de Montréal, toma de la mano esta maravillosa iniciativa.

Antes de la Covid, la misa anual se celebraba en el Oratorio de San José. Después de la Covid, la oficina de las Comunidades Culturales y Rituales, junto con las misiones latinoamericanas de la diócesis, decidieron celebrar la misa cada año en una parroquia diferente. Esta decisión permitió implicar a las distintas comunidades locales, que tienen



así la oportunidad de acoger, encontrar, conocer y dialogar con los numerosos trabajadores temporales. El número de temporeros en Quebec está aumentando. Se calcula que hay unos 40.000 y dos países de origen tienen el mayor número, Guatemala y México. Este año, el 28 de julio, se celebró una misa en la parroquia de San Theophilo. La comunidad latina se reunió



en un momento festivo y de bienvenida. El director de la oficina diocesana Padre Pierangelo Paternieri, c.s. junto con el Padre Edison Osorio, c.s., presidieron la santa misa, recordándoles que su presencia es esencial, y que la solidaridad nunca debe faltar entre ellos, que como migrantes han dejado a sus familias, que a menudo pueden experimentar momentos de tristeza, cansancio, soledad, pero la solidaridad puede darles la fuerza para continuar, su fe les da la luz para poder vencer los momentos difíciles.

Cada año el Arzobispo de Montreal, Mons. Christian Lépine, quiere recordar que durante unos meses la Iglesia de Montréal será la Iglesia de los trabajadores temporales y los sacerdotes que sirven a los fieles de lengua en español serán sus pastores. //



Summary at a Glance

The article focuses on the 22nd Annual Pilgrimage of Latin American Agricultural Workers, a significant event organized by the Archdiocese of Montréal to honor the contributions of approximately 40,000 migrant workers, primarily from Guatemala and Mexico. The event, previously held at Saint Joseph's Oratory, now rotates among different parishes to strengthen ties between local communities and the workers. This year's mass, celebrated on July 28 at the Parish of Saint Theophilus, was led by Fathers Pierangelo Paternieri and

Edison Osorio. They highlighted the importance of solidarity among the workers, who often face loneliness and hardship far from home.

Archbishop Christian Lépine emphasized the Church's role as a spiritual refuge for these workers during their stay in Montréal, with Spanish-speaking priests providing pastoral care and support. The event also serves as an opportunity for the local community to welcome and connect with these essential workers.



We Love Them till the End

In our family, we never abandon our elders; instead, we show them even more interest and support, recognizing the sacrifices they have made for our family. This sentiment is echoed in many of the "Italian churches" in the U.S. and Canada.

The wave of Italian emigration to the U.S. following the First World War has reached a significant landmark. Italians have displayed remarkable adaptability, integrating into American society, assuming positions of authority, and notably strengthening the Catholic Church in major urban centers such as New York (Manhattan), Brooklyn, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Cincinnati. Interestingly, Saint Scalabrini visited all these cities during his 1901 trip to the U.S.

The Italian migration to Canada occurred in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. Consequently, it can be said that the Italian-Canadian community has matured and is now approaching its senior years. Despite a reduction in pastoral needs, our Italian communities remain numerous and lively, with a focus on traditional devotions and celebrations.

In a sense, we have achieved our mission, but there are still many elderly members within our



Holy Rosary, Italian Church in Washington

communities. Even the Scalabrian missionaries are reaching retirement age. Does this mean it's time to close shop? Not at all! The time to reap the fruits of our labor is now! I propose three scenarios that could assist us in meeting the genuine needs of our parish communities:

Firstly, we must not overlook or neglect the original community. They likely require more attention as they approach the final stages of their lives and draw closer to eternal life. They are reaching the end of their earthly journey and fulfilling the purpose of their lives. It is unlikely that they will be able to attend Zoom conferences or streaming events or participate in your Bible classes. However, they would certainly appreciate a traditional mass, a healing service, or a home visit, especially when they are unwell or incapacitated. They have been coming to the church all their lives, and now it's the church's turn to go to them.

The second scenario involves the first generation, typically born in a new land. These Italo-Americans/Canadians grappled with the challenges of assimilating into a new society; many had to let go of their family culture and traditions to be accepted. Despite this, they still hold onto the memories of their family celebrations. The strong attachment to their

family traditions and faith remains crucial. An intriguing aspect of this faith is the processions and celebrations dedicated to their town saints.

These festivities often serve as the sole connection between In places like Canada, these



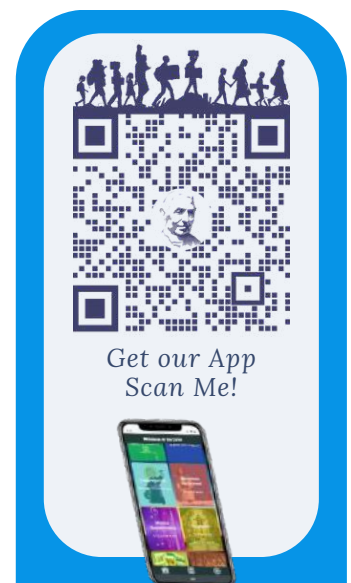
their youthful faith and their current lives. These occasional ties must not be severed, as they are their only link to the church, particularly in times of illness or loss. The third scenario involves the second generation, which is

the grandchildren. Typically, this generation is more open and connected to the original family. It's interesting to see how many Italian language and culture classes are organized in both the U.S. and Canada. Many

children choose to have their first communion and confirmation in the church of their grandparents, even though they attend Catholic parish schools and easily integrate into the local community. Weddings, especially in my church, mostly involve grandchildren of former parishioners.

Funerals are also a tribute from the grandchildren to their grandparents. Even though there is no direct link between the family church and their local church, they feel an almost biological connection with their family church, especially in the case of mixed marriages.

The best approach is to help them integrate into the local Catholic community, where they will spend the rest of their lives. When the immigrant church successfully brings the children into the local Catholic parish, one can say the mission is accomplished.





Procession off Corpus Domini.

As the initial phase of assisting the first generation of migrants from the local community comes to a close, it is important to now turn our attention to embracing and accommodating the next wave of emigration. In the United States and Canada, this new wave is likely to consist of diverse nationalities such as Latino, Filipino, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Indian, and Chinese migrants.

It is heartening to witness the Scalabrinians' readiness to welcome these new mass migrations of the new millennium into their established Italian churches and communities. //



Visit of the Apostolic Nunzio, Cardinal Pierre Christoph.

Scalabrinian Mission Explores its Role at St. John Neumann

The community of St. John Neumann, mostly comprised of Mexicans and Salvadorans, has developed a rich spiritual and cultural life that has profoundly impacted its members. The daily masses in Spanish and English, together with the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the rosaries, and the Scalabrinian novena every July, form an integral part of the community's regular devotions.

The parish of St. John Neuman, with a predominantly Spanish-

speaking population consisting mainly of Mexicans and Salvadorans, has cultivated a vibrant spiritual and cultural life that deeply resonates with its members. The daily masses in both Spanish and English, along with the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the rosaries, and the annual Scalabrinian novena in July, are vital components of the community's regular devotional practices.

People's devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe and the Divine

Savior of the World holds significant importance in the spiritual lives of the faithful. The observance of the *Fiestas de la Virgen de Guadalupe*, featuring traditional *mañanitas* and novenario, serves to fortify believers' faith, nurturing a sense of solidarity and inclusion.

These festivities allow worshipers to enrich their relationship with God and their cultural legacy, imparting spiritual solace and optimism during challenging times.





Religious celebrations serve as a cultural cornerstone, enabling community members to uphold their traditions and pass them down to future generations. This is particularly impactful in immigrant communities, where maintaining a connection to cultural heritage provides a sense of identity and enduring connections.

Additionally, the Friends of Scalabrini group provides valuable assistance to migrants, including support with food pantries for families in need. They also visit migrants and offer assistance in different forms, often connecting them with specialized stores in search of daily work, such as construction, gardening, and other manual tasks. This is a common scene in Houston and many other cities across the United States.

Participation in these regular devotions creates a strong sense of community. Families come together in faith, supporting each other. The Guadalupe Society, with 654 families, is a clear example of how faith can unite people in a common cause, promoting solidarity and mutual support.

exemplifies how faith can unite people in a shared purpose, fostering solidarity and mutual support. Members of the Society of Guadalupe have the unique opportunity to enrich their knowledge of the faith and the teachings of the church through engaging activities and meaningful discussions.

Through the Society of the Guadalupe, my members have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of faith and the doctrine of the church. Being on the ground enriches your spiritual life, which also allows you to live your life more fully and consciously, positively impacting your daily lives.

The regular devotional gatherings foster a strong sense of community, bringing families together in faith to support one another. The Guadalupe Society, consisting of 654 families,



Challenges faced by migrants: Without legal protections, these workers are vulnerable to exploitation, such as low pay, unsafe working conditions, and lack of benefits. Additionally, undocumented migrants are at risk of arrest and deportation, leading to precarious situations.

In our educational endeavors, we have witnessed the transformative power of God's grace enriching our lives. Our English classes, held twice a week during the school term, not only equip students with language skills but also foster community growth and spiritual fortification. Additionally, our distance education program at the undergraduate level has proven to be a blessing, enabling three generations of graduates to pursue their studies while maintaining their spiritual connection.

Our catechism program, which initially had 500 children, has experienced significant growth and now has over 800 enrolled. This growth serves as a testament to the love and commitment of our parish. The catechism classes are conducted in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, mirroring the rich diversity of our community and ensuring that the teachings of faith are accessible to all, regardless of language barriers.



In our multicultural and multi-ethnic environment, we are dedicated to nurturing the spiritual growth of our teenagers and young people, safeguarding and enriching their faith so that they can thrive with hope and love in a diverse world.

Additionally, the diverse and thriving ethnic ministries within our community are truly remarkable. Our vibrant community life includes seven folk dance groups for adults and children, providing opportunities for artistic expression and

physical activity. The morning practices of a large group of women further contribute to this cultural vitality.

The Asian presence is honored through the Filipino tradition of *Simbang Gabi* and Vietnamese worship gatherings held monthly. Additionally, Brazilians, with the support of Scalabrinian priests, participate in three Portuguese masses each month, and celebrate the *Virgin of Aparecida* and the *Fiesta Junina*, including a special time for communal sharing. //

A whiff of thought

Woven from the ripple sentiments,
an overture of things seems to come.
Like an instinctive feel that draws the time,
a weighty thought has the mighty call.



Drawn in swooping strokes of ink,
are bits and pieces of character traits.
within the discovery of human drama,
provides a scope pregnant with thoughts.



On a long and arduous journey,
a culture of attitude comes through both.
Becoming part and keeping apart,
with that ability to have a sense of life.

Like pieces of parchment of yesteryears,
Old, wrinkled, and fading color.
On which memories of the past,
are drawn with passion and confession.

It is a stealth device,
a kind of creative embedding.
A truthful picture, a source of reflection,
that depicts the whole spectrum.



In an assortment of events,
including some heavy episodes.
Disjointed moments with lilting brogues,
transform the action into reflection.

Thorns and Thistles

Scalabrini Mobile

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Scalabrinians

“Saint Charles! Marvelous example of that fearless constancy, of that generous patience, of that ardent charity, of that enlightened, helpless, magnanimous zeal, of all those virtues that make a man a true apostle of Jesus Christ.



(To the Missionaries for Italian emigrants in the Americas,
Piacenza, 1892)

