



## **POPE FRANCIS CALLS FOR COMPASSION AND LOVE FOR MIGRANTS**

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### **VATICAN CITY -**

The Holy Father Pope Francis has called for compassion and love for the over 250 million migrants in the world, noting that about 22.5million of these are refugees who in the words of emeritus Pope Benedict XVI; “in order to find peace, they are willing to risk their lives on a journey that is often long and perilous, to endure hardships and suffering, and to encounter fences and walls built to keep them far from their goal.”

Pope Francis made this call in his World Day of Peace message for the Year 2018. He declared: “In the spirit of compassion, let us embrace all those fleeing from war and hunger, or forced by discrimination, persecution, poverty and environmental degradation to leave their homelands.”

The Holy Father stated that much more need to be done than just opening up our hearts for those suffering. He added: “Welcoming others require concrete commitment, a network of assistance and goodwill, vigilant and sympathetic attention, the responsible management of new and complex situations that at times compound numerous existing problems, to say nothing of resources, which are always limited.”

The Catholic Pontiff spoke extensively on why there are so many refugees and migrants; how the wisdom of faith fosters a contemplative gaze that recognizes that all of us belong to one family; outlined four mileposts for action; indicated the need for two international compacts and home for common good.

The four mileposts for actions advocated by Pope Francis for asylum seekers, refugees, migrants and victims of human trafficking are: welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating. According to the Holy Father; ‘Welcoming ‘calls for expanding legal pathways for entry and no longer pushing migrants and displaced people towards

countries where they face persecution and violence; while 'Protecting' has to do with "our duty to recognize and defend the inviolable dignity of those who flee real dangers in search of asylum and security."

The Pope added: 'Promoting' entails supporting the integral human development of migrants and refugees through access to all levels of education, among other things; and 'Integrating' means "allowing refugees and migrants to participate fully in the life of the society that welcomes them."

Pope Francis expressed the hope that this year, the United Nations will draft and approve two Global Compacts, one for safe, orderly and regular migration and the other for refugees. According to him: "these compacts will provide a framework for policy proposals and practical measures".