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Photo credit: UNESCO at <https://www.unesco.org/en/days/international-migrants>

"The synodal path [...] leads us to see in those who are most vulnerable-among whom are many migrants and refugees-special companions on our way, to be loved and cared for as brothers and sisters." Pope Francis

International Migrants Day is observed on **December 18th** each year. This date was chosen in 2000 by the UN General Assembly to coincide with the adoption of the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* by the United Nations General Assembly in 1990.

Migration is a global phenomenon driven by many forces including aspirations for dignity, safety and peace. The decision to leave home is always extreme, and, too often, the beginning of a dangerous, sometimes fatal journey. International Migrants Day recognizes the contributions of migrants around the world and to acknowledge everything migrant workers do to help the economies of their host communities.

In Canada, systemic inequities continue to deny migrant workers' rights. Globally, Canada has yet to ratify the *International Convention of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*. Despite this, migrant labour remains a staple of the Canadian economy for food production and processing. On average, about 50,000 to 60,000 agricultural workers arrive in Canada on an annual basis. Migrant workers sustain Canada's food supply and as another year dawns and we gather as family around our tables to share, we give gratitude for the sacrifices and labour that accompany this mobility.

In September, councils noted the World Day of Migrants and Refugees with this message: "We recognize the pressing need to build an inclusive society, one in which the presence and contributions of migrants' are both valued and respected. Communities prosper when they are open to receive the other into their midst, and we encourage local parishes and communities to actively participate in welcoming events." (Bishop William T. McGrattan, Bishop of Calgary and President of the CCCB in a message for **World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2024** on Sunday Sept. 29th). Councils may wish to present a workshop on this topic and Workshop #806 Community Life and Social Teaching (A & B) would be very useful. www.cwl.ca