



THE Migrant Watch

quarterly newsletter of the Philippine Migrants Rights Watch

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Manila, Philippines

Improving Communication and Information Skills

Last August 17 and 18 PMRW held its capacity building seminar at Splash Mountain in Los Baños, Laguna. The focus of this year's seminar was: Basic Communication and Information Skills.

There were 24 participants representing eight of the 12 PMRW members.

The two days were divided into four courses: How NGOs can Deal with the Media by Mr. Cito Beltran; Preparing a Power Point Presentation by Mr. Michael Rioja; Photography by Fr. Fabio Baggio; and The Basics of Writing and Writing Feature Articles by Prof. Corazon Arboleda and Ms. Lisa Garcia.

Mr. Beltran gave an overview of the different forms of media and their practices. He started his lecture by explaining the different kinds of print media, broadcast media and non-traditional forms of media. He cited useful examples and presented activities to illustrate how different media outfits make decisions on what will be disseminated, and how to work with the media (particularly, how to get media coverage for important events or issues). Mr. Beltran also emphasized that one has to be clear on why there is a need for media exposure. Knowing the purpose will determine the plan on how to gain media coverage. He also advised the participants to be understanding of the working style of the media – e.g., cancellation of appointments to rush to an emergency or another event is common.

Following are some tips in working with media:

- It is important to know the different media forms. This will determine what medium to use to convey particular messages.
- To establish oneself as a source of information, competence is important. Initially, image and proper representation are important to get the attention of media people, but the most basic is competence.
- The message must be short but clear.
- In conducting a press conference, it is important to set the parameters to stay focused on the topic.

Mr. Rioja's presentation provided a good introduction to the different functions and tools of the Power Point program to prepare visually appealing presentations.

On the second day, the morning started with Fr. Fabio Baggio's lecture on photography using a digital camera. He explained

Maria Celeste A. Marasigan
PMRW Secretariat



the different functions of the camera, the different types of shots, and basic tips on timing, lighting and distance from the subject. For the practicum part, the participants were asked to take three different shots – portrait, landscape and candid. When the group reconvened, Fr. Baggio made observations about the sample shots and how to improve them.

The last session was on writing. This is a vital topic since the work in all organizations involves some writing, including basic communications, preparing reports and the like.

Prof. Arboleda's excellent lecture included a write shop which was an effective tool to learn about wordiness and how to simplify expressions. This was followed by Ms. Garcia's presentation on basic news writing and how to write feature articles and press releases. She first presented the common types of news stories and gave the participants pointers on how to organize and write stories.

The workshop was not all work. The social night was a night of fun and fellowship. The participants went home armed with lessons that can be put to good use in the days to come.

PMRW's Case against OWWA - Updates

Henry Rojas
PMRW's Legal Advisor

On September 19, 2003, the Board of Trustees of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) passed Board Resolution No. 38 entitled "Omnibus Policies of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration" otherwise known as the "OWWA Omnibus Policies."

Several migrant worker organizations and NGOs for migrant workers questioned the new policy directions undertaken by OWWA as well as the absence of a consultation process with the affected sectors. The main objectionable features of the OWWA Omnibus Policies are the following: (a) mandatory collection of a US\$25.00 membership fee from the overseas contract workers on a per contract basis; (b) limitation of OWWA services and benefits only to OWWA members in good standing; (c) creation of "permanent alternates" in the OWWA Board of Trustees with "voting rights;" and (d) classification of the minutes, transcripts and tapes of the proceedings of the proceedings of the OWWA Board of Trustees as "confidential and not for public circulation unless authorized by the OWWA Board or OWWA Administrator."

Realizing that the OWWA Omnibus Policies were adopted by the OWWA Board of Trustees in violation of existing laws, in excess of the legal mandate of the OWWA Board, without the benefit of public consultation, and that the implementation of the same shall result in additional financial burden on the overseas workers, the Philippine Migrants Rights Watch (PMRW) and two OFWs, namely, Mr. Jesus P. Reyes and Mr. Rodolfo B. Macorol filed a case for the annulment of the OWWA Omnibus Policies before the Regional Court of Pasay City. The plaintiffs in the case are represented by Former Senator Wigberto Tañada, Atty. Henry S. Rojas and Atty. Charmaine M. Calalang. OWWA is represented by the Office of the Solicitor General ("OSG").

The complaint was filed before the Regional Trial Court of Pasay City on February 18, 2004 and was subsequently raffled to Branch 111 of the Pasay RTC. Acting on OWWA's motion to dismiss, the trial court issued an order dated August 31, 2004 dismissing the complaint on the ground of lack of jurisdiction, law, comity and convenience. The plaintiffs' motion for reconsideration was likewise denied by the trial court.

In order to challenge the dismissal of the complaint, on February 18, 2005, the plaintiffs elevated the case on appeal by certiorari before the Supreme Court. The petition was given due course on February 13, 2006 and is now pending for resolution by the Supreme Court.

Timelines:

February 18, 2004 – a complaint for the annulment of the OWWA Omnibus Policies was filed before the Regional Trial Court of Pasay City.

February 27, 2004 – court hearing was held on the plaintiffs' prayer for the issuance of a temporary restraining order and OWWA's opposition thereto. Parties were given 5 days to file their respective memorandum of arguments.

March to May 2004 – OWWA, through the OSG, filed a series of motions for extensions of time to file their answer and memorandum of arguments which were all granted by the trial court despite opposition from the plaintiffs.

March 3, 2004 – Plaintiffs filed their memorandum of arguments.

May 14, 2004 – Plaintiffs received, through counsel, OWWA's motion to dismiss the complaint on the ground of lack of jurisdiction and failure to state a cause of action.

June 3, 2004 – Plaintiffs filed their opposition to the motion to dismiss.

July 7, 2004 – Plaintiffs received, through counsel, a copy of OWWA's reply.

July 16, 2004 – Plaintiffs filed their rejoinder.

August 31, 2004 – Trial court dismissed the case on grounds of lack of jurisdiction, law, comity and convenience.

September 21, 2004 – Plaintiffs filed their motion for reconsideration.

January 14, 2005 – Trial court denied plaintiffs' motion for reconsideration.

February 18, 2005 – Plaintiffs, as petitioners, filed an appeal by certiorari before the Supreme Court questioning the trial court's decision.

March 30, 2005 – The Supreme Court issued a resolution requiring OWWA to file its comment to the petition.

April to October 2005 - OWWA, through the OSG, filed a series of motions for extensions of time to file their Comment which were all granted by the Supreme Court despite opposition from the petitioners.

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October 5, 2005 – Petitioners, through counsels, received a copy of the Respondents' Comment.

January 6, 2006 – Petitioners, through counsels, received a resolution of the Supreme Court dated December 7, 2005 which: (a) granted the OSGs motion for extension of time to file Comment; (b) noted on the records the filing of the OSG's Comment as of September 27, 2005; (c) required the petitioners to file a reply to the OSGs comment within 10 days; and (d) denied petitioners' motion to expunge from the records the respondents' Comment.

January 16, 2006 – Petitioners, through counsels, filed their reply.

February 13, 2006 – The Supreme Court issued a resolution granting due course to the petition and required both parties

to submit their respective memoranda within 30 days from receipt of a copy of the Court's resolution.

April 6, 2006 – Petitioners, through counsels, received a copy of the respondents' memorandum.

April 21, 2006 – Petitioners, through counsels, filed their memorandum.

June 5, 2006 – The Supreme Court issued a resolution directing the Regional Trial Court of Pasay City, Branch 111, to elevate the complete records of the case to the Supreme Court within 30 days from receipt of the Court's resolution.

Blessing of the Stella Maris Dormitory for Seafarers

Savino Bernardi, AOS

On Sunday, 30 July 2006, the Stella Maris Dormitory for Seafarers has been solemnly blessed by the Cardinal of Manila Archdiocese, His Eminence Gaudencio Rosales. About 150 people attended the blessing, including the resident seafarers who offered their labor of love in the previous days to have the place well prepared for the event.

Among the guests were representatives from government and maritime organizations, members of various NGOs, friends of the Apostleship of the Sea, and the priests as well as the president and some members of the Parish Council of Nuestra Señora de Guia Parish, Ermita. The presence of representatives of the Nuestra de Guia Parish was significant because the Stella Maris Dormitory occupies the entire 4th floor (400 square meters) of a parish building. The space was granted to the ministry of the Apostleship of the Sea, realizing the presence of several thousands of seafarers every day milling around the area of Ermita. The Apostle-

ship of the Sea was blessed by this generous offer of the Parish and of the Archdiocese because the place is located very close to the main Port of Manila, it is at the very center of the City and it is close to many manning agencies deploying thousands of seafarers every year: "They are all around us," said Fr. Savino Bernardi CS., Director of the ministry to seafarers.

The seafarers who now reside at the dormitory expressed

their praise and happiness because they found the dormitory very convenient, comfortable and affordable. The facilities of the new dormitory were opened in early June and it soon reached its full capacity of 90 bed-spaces and two rooms for couples. The fact that the dormitory is on the 4th floor of the building is no deterrent to seafarers seeking accommodation there. "It is like on a ship," they say, "where we have to climb up and down

the stairs many times a day and it keeps us fit." After climbing the stairs, a large icon of Our Lady Star of the Sea, donated by the Apostleship of the Sea in the UK, welcomes them to the dormitory. On the roof-top, the garden terrace with ample covered area offers them clean air and a relaxing place away from the noise and the hustle and bustle of the streets.

Fr. Savino is happy to see the realization and blessing of the dormitory as the first stage of a Center for Seafarers in Manila which is long overdue. Once the full project of the Center will be completed, the Apostleship of the Sea will be able to operate from one building and offer its many services to the seafaring community for their spiritual, social and personal needs, including recreation and rest.

To have a Center for Seafarers in Manila – there are more than 300 of them in the major ports throughout the world – has been the dream of Fr. Savino ever since he began his ministry for the seafarers in Manila ten years ago. Costs



and finding a suitable place have been the major obstacles. The offer of the Archdiocese of Manila has provided the providential answer. It is ironic, in fact, that 250,000 Filipino seafarers working on board in international shipping could benefit from so many Centers throughout the world, while here in Manila they have nowhere to go.

The first stage of the dormitory for seafarers has been accomplished mostly through alternative resources from abroad. It has yet to receive assistance from the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), based in the UK, which usually provides a substantial amount for this purpose. Fr. Savino still hopes to receive assistance from the ITF for the realization of the second stage of the project: a well furnished and

welcoming Center for Seafarers here in Manila.

At the blessing of the dormitory, His Eminence Cardinal G. Rosales expressed his appreciation for the realization of the first stage, as he saw how the space the Archdiocese offered was so efficiently renovated to accommodate many of the seafarers coming from the provinces, who otherwise have a hard time during their prolonged stay in Manila. More than 300 seafarers have found a welcoming home at the Stella Maris Center since it opened its doors.



Faith on the Move

By Fabio Baggio
Scalabrini Migration Center

A Symposium on the Theology of Migration

Held in the Maryhill School of Theology, Quezon City (Philippines) on 14-15 July 2006, the Symposium Faith on the Move was a joint initiative of the Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (CBCP-ECMI), the Maryhill School of Theology and the Scalabrini Migration Center. Over 250 participants from different countries of Asia underlined the importance of understanding migration as a sign of the times and a theological "place." The event was made possible thank to the financial support of MISSIO-Aachen.

First Session: The Challenges

Fr. Philip Muncada, SVD and Fr. Louis Aldrich, SJ presented two case-studies, concerning respectively Filipino migrants in Japan and Asian migrants in Taiwan. Both presenters stressed the challenges posed by modern migration to the sending and receiving communities, at the society and Church levels. Questions about the inclusion and integration processes in Japan and Taiwan were raised, taking into consideration the multicultural and multireligious environment in Asia. It was highlighted that the defense and promotion of human rights and regional solidarity is still an ideal. Two main challenges posed to the Church in Asia were identified: 1) What should

be the reaction of the Church before an unjust system, which victimizes migrants? 2) What should be the pastoral action of the Church before the threat of family disintegration because of migration?

Second Session: The Frameworks

The second session dealt with two frameworks, which a theological reflection on migration can be placed into. Dr. Agnes Brazal presented the human rights' framework, paying particular attention to the "cultural rights." An interesting philosophical and psychological approach to the right of identity introduced the theological reflection on cultural rights, which offered the Trinitarian model as paradigm. The real "ousia" of the Holy Trinity is "relationality," meaning "equality in diversity." Human beings, created in the image and likeness of God, have to "negotiate" their identity, which is "becoming" as the result of relationships with others. Fr. Giovanni Zevola, OMI presented the biblical framework, looking into the experience of migration of the People of Israel as it is reported in the Bible. There is a clear development in the understanding of "foreigner," which starts from hostility and ends to hospitality. As long as the People of Israel considered the foreigner as a threat to their identity, hostility was the main

attitude. But as soon as they realized that their identity was actually “revealed” in the encounter with the others, hostility changed into hospitality. Fr. Zevola concluded with the invitation of the prophet Isaiah to “enlarge the space of our tent,” bridging the distance while respecting the difference.

Third Session: Places and Belonging

Bishop Luis Antonio Tagle opened the third session, which dealt with places and belonging. Bishop Tagle highlighted that the mission of Jesus Christ often led him to leave home, cross frontiers and find home, just like any migrant. Jesus was essentially “homeless,” and even finding new homes, he was always a “guest,” never the “owner,” not even of his tomb. The mission led Jesus to cross boundaries, reaching out the outcast, the unclean. Mission is actually the real “place of belonging” of Jesus Christ, homeless with the homeless, eternal migrant. Dr. Emmanuel de Guzman presented three traditional images of the Church in migration: shepherd and flock, mother and children and family and members. In the pursuit of the Church with and of the migrants, Dr. de Guzman introduced a new image: the city life, where differences are “relational” and not “essential.” City life is a “space” constituted by four main elements: social differentiation, variety, eroticism and publicity. Beyond the concept of homogeneous “membership,” differences become the real richness of the Church in migration, and migration becomes the “space” where to celebrate diversity.

Fourth Session: The Reminders

The fourth session opened with the presentation of Fr. William Larousse, MM, who considered migration from a missiological perspective. Migration is where the Church is asked to prove its participation in the Trinitarian mission of calling into one family all humanity in and through this diversity. Migrants remind the Church of her real nature as a pilgrim Church, whose true citizenship is only in heaven. Professor Anselm



Min, from the Claremont Graduate University (California), offered an exciting eschatological approach to migration. Professor Min underlined that migrants’ struggles and hopes constantly remind the Church of her commitment to achieve the eschatological ideal of reconciled humanity in a new heaven and a new earth. The eschatological hope empowers human beings to live faithfully in this world but also with a necessary tension between this world and the world to come.

Fifth Session: The Encounters

Bro. Anthony Rogers, FSC opened the last session, highlighting how faith encounters in Asia may help in globalizing solidarity. While pursuing homogeneity, globalization is also stressing the differences and enhancing the gaps. The globalized world often dehumanizes relationships and encounters and the Church’s mission today is to move from fragmentation to unity, from cruelty to caring, from grabbing to sharing. In this sense, the active participation and involvement in the world of Migrants and Refugees is indeed a constitutive dimension of the Evangelizing Mission of the Church in the Post-Modern World. The contribution of Fr. James Kroeger, MM, focused on the *religious* dimensions of migration from the perspective of interreligious dialogue. Catholic migrants in Asia face a multireligious environment and they need guidelines to manage such delicate encounter. A dialogue “Decalogue” for migrants was then proposed with the aim to transform Catholic migrants into “interfaith dialoguers.” Fr. Kroeger particularly underlined the importance of the “dialogue of life”, constituted of simple and ordinary actions, what could be called a good “neighborology.”

The Symposium was enriched by two selected contributions from theology students. Fr. *Victorino Cueto*, with his paper titled, “*Out of Place*”: *Exilic Existence in a Globalized World*, reflected and captured the life-story of migrants, the (post)modern-day exiles so prevalent in our hyper-globalized world. Sr. *Eva Ocanar*, MSCS, through her paper titled, *Filipino Migration: A Missionary Challenge*, offered a missiological reflection on the pastoral care of Filipino migrants as an innovative, but feasible way to help the Filipino Church to improve her migrant ministry.



The OFWs in Lebanon

EDITORIAL

by Edwin Corros (CBCP-ECMI)

The June report of the Paralegal Desk of the Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ECMI) of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines noted that for the months of April and May, we received seventeen individual cases from Lebanon and Syria. We were struck by the large number of cases from these two countries. The cases involved illegal recruitment, absconding from work (running away from employers), and detention of workers in jails. Concerned about the high number and seriousness of the cases that were brought to ECMI, we decided to invite officials from government agencies that are working directly with OFWs to discuss and find out the real situation in Lebanon. On June 9, officials from the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA-OUMWA) represented by Mr. Bert Salvador; Deputy Administrator Viveca Catalig of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and Atty. Angelo Jimenez of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) came to ECMI to discuss the matters pertaining to the report. We learned in that meeting that these agencies have likewise received similar complaints of run-away cases. Cases of rape and sexual harassment in Lebanon were also brought to these agencies' attention. Following that meeting, ECMI issued a press briefing cautioning Filipinos about the conditions in Lebanon. According to Ms. Catalig,

POEA also issued a temporary suspension of deployment to Lebanon.

Barely a month after the meeting, the crisis in Lebanon took place, prompting many OFWs there to seek refuge at the Miraculous Medal Church in Beirut, run and administered by the Vin-



centian Missionaries. Fr. Gestie Advincula, the lone Filipino priest working full time among the OFWs, was instrumental in assisting the evacuation of thousands of OFWs back to the country. The same church was used as the evacuation center for Filipino nationals when Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982.

When news of the war in Lebanon broke out, ECMI celebrated mass at the CBCP compound for the intention of those people affected by the conflict in Lebanon and Israel. Another mass and candle lighting ceremony was also held on July 23 at the Nuestra Señora de Guia Parish Shrine in Ermita,

Manila. This was jointly organized by the ECMI and the Archdiocese of Manila. On August 11, 2006 along with other NGOs working with migrants, ECMI held another mass and vigil at the same

workers who sought assistance from the CBCP were immediately helped through the office of ECMI. When asked what they wish to do upon their return to the country, the workers simply wanted to go home to their respective provinces and to be reunited with their loved ones and families. They wanted to let their families know that they were safe and have nothing to worry about. When asked what brought them to Lebanon, practically all of them wanted to improve their economic life as there were no jobs available in the place where they came from. Of the thirteen OFWs that came to the office from July 31 to more or less two weeks after, majority of them were getting \$150 as reported in the media. They claimed that they were promised a monthly salary of \$200. Most of them had run away from their employers when the war erupted, i.e., the crisis provided them an opportunity to flee from the abuses and exploitation they had experienced from their Lebanese employers. Their stories confirmed the statement of Fr. Advincula that the crisis in Lebanon was a blessing in disguise for many OFWs. There were thousands of undocumented OFWs in Lebanon and many allegedly escaped due to physical abuse. The many reports highlighting the abuses of OFWs in Lebanon should not be solely blamed on the employers. We also need to consider other factors,

Church to press the government to do more in serving the OFWs in Lebanon. Some newly repatriated OFWs and government officials came to join the mass in solidarity with the repatriated OFWs. Few days later, the ceasefire was declared between Israel and Lebanon.

On July 31, ECMI started to receive repatriated OFWs from Lebanon. This is due to the collaboration of ECMI and the church in Lebanon on how to handle returning OFWs. During that period, there was a strong impression that the Philippine government was not providing enough assistance to the displaced OFWs affected by the Lebanon crisis. The

beginning with the system of deploying workers to Lebanon. Based on our investigations, we learned that from the Philippines, anyone could fly to Lebanon with a tourist visa. This was easily supplied by many illegal recruiters in Manila camouflaging as travel agencies. Illegal recruiters had offered jobs as domestic workers or caregivers for \$200 a month. No placement fee was re-

happen among foreign workers in Lebanon, including sexual harassment and rape. Lebanon's no visa policy lured many unemployed Filipinos to accept the offer.

What many prospective OFWs were not aware of did not understand of the defective structure of employment of foreign workers in Lebanon was the system that would require employers

worker and the employer in this kind of a system. It is immediately aggravated when both have language problems, besides the fact that cultures between two nations are distinctly foreign to each other.

Life in Lebanon was a rude awakening. Their passports were confiscated; some workers were locked up so that they will not run away. At the height of the crisis, there were reports of Filipinos jumping from high storey buildings to escape. Those who had survived recounted their horrible experiences of maltreatment and abuses. These abuses are linked to the recruitment and placement process. Employers shell out US\$2,000 to hire a foreign worker. To protect their "investment" employers keep a tight watch over domestic workers lest they run away. The system, thus, breeds distrust and animosity. It is aggravated by cultural barriers, beginning with language.

In Lebanon, ECMI's contacts reported by that many of the problems OFWs had encountered were labor related. The Afro-Asian Migrants Center in Beirut, a Catholic Church ministry devoted to migrants from Asia and Africa, disclosed that the experiences of Filipinos were not different from the experiences of workers coming from Sri Lanka, Ethiopia and other similar countries from South Asia and Africa. The maltreatment pattern was the same. Pastoral workers are frustrated by the incapacity of the sending countries to provide protection to their nationals when complaints are brought to their attention.

Meanwhile, of the 34,000 OFWs allegedly working in

Lebanon, less than third of the Filipinos have returned to the country. According to reports, many more want to go home, but they are not allowed by their employers. Those who have enjoyed good treatment most likely would not wish to return because they are aware that there are no jobs available for them. The Lebanon crisis has once again demonstrated the Philippine government's failure to provide immediate and efficient assistance to OFWs. The government's approach to labor export management, considered a good model by other countries, failed in dealing in responding to the needs of OFWs displaced by the Lebanon crisis. The government has not learned from previous experiences in similar situations of conflicts where our OFWs were caught in the crossfire (e.g., the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait). The safety nets to protect the country's new heroes displaced by wars, economic crashes, and other destabilizing factors are sorely inadequate. The migrant workers are again the ones who suffer the most.

On August 11, 2006 along with other NGOs working with migrants, ECMI held another mass and vigil at the same Church to press the government to do more in serving the OFWs in Lebanon. Among the attendants were repatriated OFWs and government officials. A few days later, a ceasefire was declared between Israel and Lebanon. For those who have returned home and for those who are still in Lebanon, the struggle to find ways to support their families continues.



quired; instead workers had salary deduction for three months to cover the cost of their airfare. Many of the OFWs who went to Lebanon found this attractive as they could go abroad without investing a single centavo. What they did not expect was the possible maltreatment and exploitation that could

to pay US\$2,000 to hire a foreign worker. This is the reason why Lebanese employers would confiscate the passport, lock the doors of the house fearing that the worker will run away if they would not like the job or the employer. An animosity was easily built between the

Seoul Archdiocesan Labor Pastoral Commission

In March 1971, as military dictatorship began tightening its grip on South Korea, Cardinal Stephan Kim founded the Labor Pastoral Commission of the Archdiocese of Seoul. The Commission began as a study group of priests who monitored what was going on in the world of work. The group quickly evolved into an advisory body comprised of lay people, religious and priests with a mission to both advise and help the Church's in its pastoral approach on behalf of working people. At that point of time most workers were migrants from Korean rural villages coming to Seoul (and other large Korean cities) to find work and lodging.

The Labor Pastoral Commission eventually opened counseling services for local workers when, because of military rule, they had difficulty in obtaining redress for unjust situations—unpaid salaries, industrial accidents and sicknesses, poor working conditions and unfair loss of employment. The Commission also holds regular meetings with the Catholic Action movements active in the world of work (Young Christian Workers, Christian Worker Movement and the Children's Apostolate). The Commission also has a monthly meeting with experts on labor affairs drawn from university professors, labor research institutes and others engaged in the area of employment and productivity.

In 1992, when migrant workers from other countries began to appear in the Korean

work environment, the Commission opened a counseling service for "foreign" workers alongside its already existing service for "local" workers. In response to the problems of migrant workers the Commission then opened and continues to run three houses for migrant workers - Bethany House for injured and sick migrant workers; Friendship House for migrant women seeking to leave the world of forced labor or prostitution, and

Bethlehem House for the infants of international marriages. Usually the children born to couples of international marriages have Korean fathers and the mothers are from the Philippines, Vietnam or Thailand

The Commission also promotes ethnic communities for Catholic migrant workers. The Filipino Catholic Community is the largest Catholic Community, followed by the Vietnamese, the Chinese and the Latin Americans. The communities are cared for by priests speaking the native language of these countries and have weekly Sunday masses and other activities.

The Commission's Migrant Workers' Counseling Services also has a Mongolian woman caring for the needs of Mongolian workers and a Thai lay-missionary working for Thai workers.



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