

# Migrants "Stand at the Door and Knock"

## Archbishop Urges Sacrifices, Suffering Required by Solidarity

SYDNEY, Australia, MAY 12, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The president of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers is asking what reaction migrants find when they "stand at the door and knock."

Archbishop Antonio Vegliò reflected on Revelation 3:20 to ask this question when he gave a homily Tuesday in Sydney. The Vatican official made a pastoral visit to meetings of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office.

The archbishop said his trip to Australia showed him "the need to focus the attention on the values, the providential aspects, and the positive dynamics of human mobility."

He said the Mass he celebrated aimed to be a sign "of the multi-ethnicity of the Australian continent, or better of its intercultural journey, which means a dialogue among cultures, more so than a simple tolerated coexistence. It is an exchange that enriches everyone, because at the center there is Jesus Christ who 'is the same yesterday, today and forever' and in every part of the world."

The prelate went on to reflect on the passage from Revelation. He said that in this Scripture, Jesus invites overcoming "barriers of fear, prejudice, indifference, selfishness, narrow-mindedness."

Pointing to the image of the door, Archbishop Vegliò said, "God is before us just like any of us is before others. [...] The door suggests exactly this double orientation: the entrance of a house is like a border, that has a protective and a communicative dimension. The threshold of the house marks the boundary between what is public and what is reserved to the family that lives in the house, to its intimate and private life."

Calling to mind Abraham before his tent, the archbishop said that "the value of protection and separation of the entrance is integrated with the value of communication and unity."

"A threshold is a threshold and not a barrier, but only if we make it a bridge between two distant sides, a link between two worlds far away, if we understand it in the sense of a relationship, by respecting differences," he reflected.

### Waiting

Jesus stands before the door, knocks, and then waits for an answer, the prelate continued. "Many migrants and refugees, once they reach the country of their destination, stop at the door of the local people. In their own country they did not have the opportunities which they now think they can get, at least in a certain amount, in order to achieve a more stable and comfortable condition for them and for their loved ones.

"What will be the reaction of those who are usually inside the house, safe, sheltered, with the assurance of being able to take advantage of goods and resources? That door can remain shut, also in order to defend customs, traditions, mentalities as well as prejudices, fears. Or, it can be an open door, that becomes welcoming and hospitable, and yet respecting justice and truth."

Archbishop Vegliò said this does not mean "fostering illegality, but promoting human dignity with a special attention to the legitimate search for safety and legality."

"Sharing resources, in solidarity, has the effect of creating a new condition of life, in communion," he said.

"Surely, solidarity requires efforts, sacrifices and sufferings," the archbishop acknowledged, but he continued with his reflection from Revelation: In order for the visionary to go through the door, he is invited to move up higher.

We too, the archbishop declared, "are called to see Jesus' presence that knocks at our doors and to be courageous witnesses of solidarity and justice."

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