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Benedict XVI: We Are One Family

Marks World Day of Migrants and Refugees

VATICAN CITY, JAN. 16, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI is affirming that, despite the differences that exist among human persons, we are one family.

The Pope stated this today in an address before praying the midday Angelus together with those gathered in St. Peter's Square.

He acknowledged today's celebration of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, "which every year invites us to reflect on the experience of many men and women, and many families, who leave their own country in search of better conditions of life."

"'One single human family:' This is the theme of the message that I composed for today's observance," the Pontiff observed.

He explained, "It is a theme that indicates the end, the goal of the great journey of humanity across the centuries: forming one family, naturally with all the differences that enrich it, but without walls, recognizing all as brothers."

"On the feast of the Holy Family, immediately after Christmas, we noted that even Jesus' parents had to flee their own land and take refuge in Egypt to save the life of their child: The Messiah, the Son of God was a refugee," the Holy Father affirmed.

He continued: "The Church itself has always known migration.

"Sometimes, unfortunately, Christians feel forced to leave, with suffering, their land, thus impoverishing the country in which their ancestors lived."

"Sometimes this migration is voluntary," Benedict XVI noted, "sometimes, unfortunately, it is forced by wars or persecutions, and it often happens -- as we know -- in dramatic conditions."

He noted that "the voluntary movement of Christians, for various reasons, from one city to another, from one country to another, from one continent to another, are occasions to enhance the missionary dynamism of the Word of God and make the witness to faith circulate more in the mystical Body of Christ, crossing peoples and cultures, and reaching new frontiers, new environments."

The Pope concluded, "In turning to the Virgin Mary, with the Angelus prayer, we entrust to her protection all migrants and those who give them pastoral care."

On ZENIT's Web page:

Papal address: <http://zenit.org/article-31474?l=english>

Benedict XVI's message for World Migrant and Refugee Day: [http://zenit.org/article-30771?
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