"STRANGERS AND ALIENS NO LONGER"
THE MOST REVEREND NICHOLAS DiMARZIO, Ph.D., D.D.
BISHOP OF BROOKLYN

THE IRISH EPISCOPAL COMMISSION FOR EMIGRANTS
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Introduction

It is with great pleasure that I have come today to Ireland to repay

a debt of gratitude owed to the Irish Nation and the Irish Church for

what has been the development of the Untied States, and most especially

the Catholic Church in the United States. I must speak first personally

as a Bishop who grew up and lived in a Church which was sustained by

the faith and devotion of Irish immigrants and their descendents. My

own childhood was spent in a mostly Italian neighborhood in the City of

Newark, New Jersey. But our priests and our sisters were Irish-

American. They gave generously of themselves for our spiritual

welfare. I remember the names of priests like Moran, Doyle, O'Neill, McHugh, and Ryan among others who inspired my vocation, as well as sisters named Duffy, Joyce and many others. The Church in the United States owes much to the immigration from Ireland. Even more personally, as I look to my five nieces and nephews who belong to the Italian/Irish tribe, a new one being built in the United States, they are Colleen and James Fitzgerald, my sister's children, as well as my brother's children; Nicole, Christine and Frank whose mother's maiden name was Caille.

Clearly, the integration of the Irish into American culture is now an established fact. Today, we come to speak of how the transition of a country of emigration to now one of immigration will deal with many of the same issues faced by the Irish who emigrated to the United States and some of the other places where they migrated.

The classic description of Irish demography is contained in a book entitled, "The Irish: Emigration, Marriage and Fertility" written by

Robert E. Kennedy, Jr., who is not related to the most famous Kennedy Family. Rather, he is a sociologist who in 1973 produced a work which outlined the story of Irish emigration, marriage and fertility rates which are the classic measurements of demography. In fact, this was the book which I studied in my demography class as part of my doctoral studies. The book begins with the Great Irish Famine and continues the study through more modern times, tracing the survival of the Irish nation using very interesting techniques such as postponed marriage and permanent celibacy, which is not just clerical celibacy, as well as high fertility rates which were able to rebuild the Irish nation after the Great Famine.

It was the event of the Great Famine which began mass emigration from Ireland. And it was the unprecedented economic development of the "Celtic Tiger" or "Celtic Tigress" which began immigration to Ireland. Clearly, the necessity for labor in an era of unprecedented development has presented new issues to your society and to the Church. Perhaps the greatest question to be answered first is "will this immigration be temporary or permanent?" Have these workers come as

guest workers or eventually will they become permanent immigrants?

This history of other European nations can be most helpful in this case.

Perhaps the classical line describing the guest worker program in

Germany can be a byword for our consideration. The Swiss dramatist,

Max Frisch, once said, "We asked for workers, and we got people." I

think that this is the situation that you face today here in Ireland. It is

not only the labor market that has accepted the labor of these

immigrants, but it must be the society which integrates and includes

them realizing that they are not merely disposable workers but human

beings. For the Church, this becomes another question of ecclesial

integration which follows from social integration and inclusion, and

which, I believe, can be a model for integration in general. It is a given

that integration into a society takes place through the mediating

structures; churches, schools, labor unions, and other social and civic

institutions. These are the structures by which immigrants are integrated

into a society.

Last month, the Immigrant Council of Ireland hosted a seminar to which a colleague of mine from the United States, Dr. Demetrios Papademetriou, was invited. He is the President of the Migration Policy Institute. Following his return, he reported to me, as the Chairman of the Board of this immigration policy think tank, that he heard the most amazing speech every given by a head of state on immigration. It was your President, Mary McAleese, who warned against the ghettoization of immigrants and said newcomers must be given every chance to join society's main stream. In one sentence, she suggested that, "Ireland had no excuse for getting it wrong and every chance to get it right on immigration and diversity."[1]

How true it is that the experience of the Irish nation as immigrants should have taught the nation some lessons about becoming an immigrant accepting country. Although these lessons are not easy to put into effect, they are lessons learned from harsh experiences. I take this opportunity to compliment your immigrant study and advocacy

organizations for their wonderful work and name a few with which I have become familiar; The Irish Immigrant Council, Migrant Rights Center and the Irish Refugee Council. Civil society has an important role in the integration of new immigrants and refugees. The fact is, you have learned your lessons well. The challenge now is to put them into practice, in becoming a welcoming nation and a welcoming Church.

Integration or Inclusion

At the end of this short talk, I will speak about the Church's imperative of welcome which has been a constant theme of Church teaching for the past fifty years. I think now it is more important that we set our sights on what do we mean by integration? The word inclusion has been used by the Immigrant Council of Ireland as perhaps a better word. The word inclusion might be misunderstood to be a "one-way street" where the society accepts immigrants and includes them in its fabric. The word integration, however, can be understood as a "two-way street" whereby there is a mutual responsibility both on the receiving

society and the immigrant to integrate into the fabric of that same society. But words are only as good as what people take them to mean. It is clear that our intention is to find a way to be a welcoming society and, indeed, a welcoming Church.

What are the obstacles that need to be overcome in extending a welcome that facilitates inclusion and integration? Many obstacles exist and clearly many arise from racism. Racism is based not only on color and national origin, but also on the innate differences that exist between people. It is especially a challenge for Ireland where for the most part it has been a homogeneous society with the major divisions being that of religion between Catholic and Protestant. In the future, however, the diversity that will occur, if immigration will become permanent will have to overcome a natural avoidance of differences, which in its worse form, is racism.

In another term, xenophobia, we find the fear of strangers which also accents the differences of culture, language and attitudes that make

the strangers among us difficult to accept. As the title of the talk implies, the newcomers cannot be treated as strangers or aliens. They must be seen as our brothers and sisters, clearly those we welcome. Perhaps In one of the images from the Jewish tradition might help us to understand what I mean. An old Rabbi once told his disciples how they could tell that the night ended and the day was on its way back. He asked his disciples, "How can you tell when the night ends and the day is on its way back?" "Could it be, one student asked, when you see an animal in the distance and you know whether it is a sheep or a dog?" "No," replied the Rabbi. "Could it be, another asked, when you look at a tree in the distance and can tell whether it is a fig tree or a peach tree?" "No," said the Rabbi. "Well, when is it?" the pupils demanded to know. "It is when you can look in the face of any man or woman and see that he is your brother and she is your sisters. Because, if you cannot do this, then no matter what time it is, it is still night and you are in the darkness."

The question for us is, "Do we recognize in the face of these new immigrants our brothers and sisters?" Do we see them as our fellow human beings? How is it possible for us to reverse xenophobia to become what has been called in the 1984 Migration Day Message of the Holy See philoxemia, which is a sense of open and cordial hospitality. St. Paul speaks of this in the Letter to the Romans, 12:13, "If anyone of the Saints is in need; you must share with them, you must make hospitality your special care."

The notion of hospitality as affirmation of the person is most profound. Without it, the person is not able to be a self, most literally, an "I." The then Cardinal Josef Ratzinger noted, "But how does one go about affirming, assenting to, one's I? The answer may perhaps be unexpected: We cannot do so by our own efforts along. Of ourselves, we cannot come to terms with ourselves. Our I becomes acceptable to us only if it has first become acceptable to another I. We can love ourselves only if we have first been loved by someone else…Man is that

strange creature that needs not just physical birth but also appreciation if he is to subsist. This is the root of the phenomenon known as hospitalism."[2]

This rather profound theological insight of our present Holy Father becomes the basis for another sociological insight that is, I believe, the key to integration and inclusion. Immigrants integrate only from a position of strength. When they are affirmed and accepted, when they are welcomed, then they understand their responsibility to become part and parcel of a culture which is open to them. They should never lose the culture which is their own, which is not merely their language and habits. Rather, it is a deeper understanding of who they are as human beings. They will bring that understanding of themselves to a culture which is not closed to accepting newcomers and is ready and willing to affirm them.

There are several images which have been used to describe integration, assimilation, and multiculturalism. These are all terms that

have appropriated for them the meaning given by their users. Integration can apply a certain separation and a two-way process as I described above. A mosaic perhaps becomes the best visual image of what integration is about. The separate pieces all blend together to create a beautiful and lasting image. Assimilation, on the other hand, seems to blur differences and the melting pot, which never seems to melt anything, becomes that image. The word multiculturalism describes a society where people from different cultures work toward accommodating each other without losing their roots, their identity. The image used is the salad bowl, where various elements never quite mix but together present a tasty meal.

Whatever the images or the words we use to describe the phenomenon, we must go beyond nomenclature and look to the heart of the matter, which is the heart of the society which must be open to accepting new members. Only as new and full members can they be accepted, otherwise they will always be strangers and aliens.

Demographic Impact

Perhaps a word should be said one the magnitude of the problem that is faced by your society. I have found it difficult to get accurate numbers regarding the number of foreign-born non-citizens who make up part of Ireland today. The best numbers I can find come from the Central Statistical Office of Ireland. Data show that there were 612,000 foreign-born persons residing in Ireland in 2006. To put it differently, about one in seven persons living in Ireland was born in another country. At the same time, one in ten residents in Ireland does not have Irish citizenship. Please do not hold me to the numbers, you know better than I. But any way you slice it, however, it would seem that your problem is of a magnitude that can be addressed without major complications. There are plenty of models that you could adopt to help you in this process. In general, the European Union has been successful when it comes to immigration, in at least addressing the issue of labor migration and the social benefits which should accompany it. It is most

difficult to point to any one model of social integration or inclusion that is better than another. Every society is unique and one plan might not work in another nation. What is most important, however, is the desire to be an open society based on equality and inclusion and integration. And then whatever model works, so be it.

Indicators of Integration

I would like to call your attention now to the hand out which I have given you (Attachment I). Perhaps this can be a guide to the indicators of social integration and inclusion compared to approximate indicators of ecclesial integration and inclusion. As I said, at the end of the talk I will briefly outline some Church teaching that supports these indicators of ecclesial inclusion. But right now it might suffice just to make the comparison.

The eight indicators of social integration that I cited are generally the classic variables which researchers use to empirically test a level of integration of immigrants in society. For purposes of time, I will just briefly describe the meaning of these social indicators. Obviously, the first, "labor force participation," is the most basic form of economic participation and certainly is verified in the case of Ireland today. "Language acquisition" becomes another indicator of integration. You must judge for yourselves how well English, or perhaps even Irish is adapted as the second language of the new immigrants. The third, "education continuance," means availing themselves of furthering education in a society or at least using the educational means available for their children. This is something which I will comment upon later. Fourth, "military service," is another indicator clearly showing participation in society which is not dependent upon citizenship. While the next item, "naturalization rate," tells us of how people truly are adapting to the new country and becoming full-fledged citizens. Another indicator is voting. Once naturalized, immigrants may exercise

the political and democratic choices available to them. I understand that here in Ireland voting in local elections is available to all adult residents registered at a valid address regardless of their citizenship. I am not sure how that is determined; however, it is a good indicator to integration by allowing this type of freedom to be exercised. The seventh indicator would be "home ownership." This indicates permanent settlement beyond any temporary attachment. And finally, perhaps the most telling variable of social integration is "inter-marriage" with the native population. {if time permits -- I might briefly comment on this regarding the possible marriage of Eastern Europeans to the Irish native population. Several years back, Father Andrew Greeley, an eminent sociologist and rather controversial priest from Chicago, did a study of ethnic marriages in the United States. He found, for example, that one of the least common intermarriages were between the Polish and the Irish. It seems from his studies and investigation that their cultures are rather similar and do not lend to the attraction of opposites which seems to make many marriages work. Well, enough said about that….if time permits}

What about the indicators of Ecclesial Integration and Inclusion? What might they be? How can we view there with an understanding of the immigrant's behavior from an ecclesiastical point of view?

First, "Mass attendance and sacramental participation in their native language" is a clear indicator of inclusion. Your Council provided for me a listing of the many languages Masses available to Brazilian, African, Filipino, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Syrian and Syro Malabar, and Syro Malabar Indian immigrants. Clearly, you have opened the door to this type of welcome. I do see, however, from the listing that these special language liturgies are celebrated once or twice each month. I might say that if at all possible, a more frequent celebration of language Masses develops a better position of strength. Hoping that these people go to English-language services on alternate weeks is a fond hope. You can tell me better then I can if it is working, but it does not seem to work in the American experience. The immigrants just attend Mass less.

The second indicator of Ecclesial Integration might be "attendance at English language services." Again, your experiment with alternate languages might be a successful one. But in the United States we have developed duplex, and sometimes triplex and quadraplex, parishes where the same parish Church is being used at different times for different languages, much like our modern movie theatres. At some point, those who attend these services must integrate and that becomes another challenge to parochial integration. There are several good guides to parish welcome and integration which our Bishops' Conference publishes.

Attendance at religious education opportunities also is another variable which could be tested, and religious education in the language of new comers is of particular importance.

The fourth important variable would be the recruitment of "vocations to the priesthood and religious life." The experience of the Untied States has taught us that the immigrant, and even the second

generation, do not produce the vocations that the third generation produces. For whatever reasons, either of economic subsistence or lack of integration, this seems to be the pattern. There are certain groups in the United States context, however, that have broken the pattern such as the Vietnamese and Koreans who have given many first generation immigrant vocations to the Church, mainly because their own native clergy have accompanied them. Hopefully, your experience will be one which does not lengthen the time for vocational recruitment.

"Parish membership," again corresponding to naturalization rates, perhaps, might be an indicator of permanence and participation. The sixth indicator, "Pastoral Council participation," again can be another indicator of true parochial integration. Another indicator would be "personal parishes which might correspond to "home ownership." Personal perishes were the rule in the United States and are still among certain groups where they are very numerous and able to support themselves in parishes and where the duplex and triplex solution does

not work. They are still allowed under Canon Law and are an alternative in certain circumstances.

Finally, "inter-marriage" is the same variable as in social integration when immigrants marry natives and vise-a-versa.

I would be very happy and welcome questions on this short excursion into Ecclesial Integration.

As I have tried to study the situation before coming to Ireland, it seems clear to me, as President McAleese announced, you have every opportunity to get this right because of the position of the Church in Irish society. Many societies today have a certain built in aversion to Ecclesiastical authority and even a certain anti-clericalism, which might be a new phenomenon here in Ireland. But at the same time, do not underestimate your power as a witness to the best means of integration for which the Church can take the lead. All integration is a local process. As the saying goes in the United States, "All politics is local."

Integration is clearly a political consideration, it has to do with people and how well the get along, and how well they are able to assist one another.

Example of Integration Policy and Church Practice

I bring your attention to one current problem here in Ireland which I became aware of through the media and may be an example of what I am speaking. The issue is the integration of the children of immigrants in the school system which is largely composed of "Catholic Schools." I am not sure of the level of Catholicity, nor the control that you exercise over these schools. Recently, news reports have spread about the potential ghettoization of immigrant children in non-religious schools, or so called "public schools" because of the lack of their ability to enter Catholic schools since they lack baptismal certificates. Presumably, this is not only a problem for immigrant children, but also the non-baptized and non-practicing Catholics.

Clearly, this is an opportunity to address a real integration issue in light of our faith. The practical solutions may be difficult and I will not venture into any of them, since I am not cognizant of all of the circumstances. But certainly from news reports this is an issue with which you must wrestle with and find a solution that becomes a clear witness to how the Church will be in the forefront of integrating immigrants into your society.

Church Teaching on Integration

All of the teaching of the Holy See for the past 50 years, including its latest document from the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People and its instruction "Ergra Migrantes Caritas Christi" "The Love of Christ Towards Migrants," is a clear affirmation of inculturation and cultural and religious pluralism. As a member of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, I heartily recommend this document to your reading

and study. I do believe that the history of the Church in the past 50 years has brought us to a better level of understanding of how to welcome immigrants. The publication of Canonical norms, or judicial pastoral regulations, can be very useful to resolve the inevitable problems that arise.

Care must be taken also for the pastoral workers, be they priests, religious or laity, as they too deserve special attention because they too, for the most part, are immigrants themselves and suffer the same problems of rejection and loneliness that the other migrants feel.

Clearly, already the welcome of the Irish Church has been a generous one. The very fact that you are holding this conference means that you are willing and ready to struggle with the problems that you have discovered. Perhaps only the biblical images of the Tower of Babel and Pentecost can truly give us a perspective necessary to engage in this complex work of social and ecclesial integration. We all know the story of Babel well, it was a project to build a tower to the sky,

unmatched by no other. But a project bound for failure because of the inherent pride of its builders and their rejection of the divine plan. And so there comes a point when a confusion of languages and misunderstanding halts the building of this tremendous project and all comes to ruin. Perhaps it might be similar to the project of the Celtic Tiger creating a new and unprecedented economy, but one which will demand comprehension and an understanding among those who are the architects, builders and the common workers.

But it is Pentecost which is the model of our faith. It is a time when the Holy Spirit speaks through Peter and all understand what he says, each in their own language, because Peter speaks the language of love. Somehow the Spirit breaks down all barriers and makes them one, so that the Church of Pentecost is united around Mary, the perfect image of the migrant woman. And so it is today in Ireland that the Church, built on the rock of Peter, must speak a language of love that is understood by all peoples. These words of love and welcome will

become the binding force united by the Spirit, to build a strong Church and a strong nation.

As the old Irish song goes, "It's a long way to Tipperary" and you have just begun the journey. Do not get tired along the way, because the goal is worth achieving. We pray that your efforts will be blessed by the God who is Trinity, Unity and Diversity. May that be your model and goal.

God bless you.

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[1] Remarks by President McAleese to open the Immigrant Council of Ireland Discussion on Migration 'The Richness of Change: Gaining from Migration in 21st Century Ireland', Royal Irish Academy, Dawson Street, Dublin 2, Wednesday 4th October 2007

[2] Cardinal Josef Ratzinger, Principles of Catholic Theology, Ignatius (1987) 79-80.

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APPENDIX I

Indicators of Social Integration / Inclusion	**Indicators of Ecclesial Integration / Inclusion**
1) Labor force participation	1) Mass attendance/sacrament participation in native language
2) Language acquisition	2) Attendance at English language services
3) Education Continuance	3) Religious education attendance
4) Military Service	4) Vocations to the priesthood and religious life
5) Naturalization rate	5) Parish Membership
6) Voting	6) Pastoral Council participation
7) Home Ownership	7) Personal parishes
8) Inter-marriage	8) Inter-marriage