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Communiqué of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development: Theme of the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees

Theme of the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees

Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay

The 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees will be celebrated on Sunday, 24 September 2023. The Holy Father has chosen as the title for his traditional Message, “Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay”, with the intention of fostering renewed reflection on a right that has not yet been codified at the international level: the right not to have to migrate or, in other words, the right to be able to remain in one’s own land.

The fact that many persons are forced to migrate demands a careful consideration of the causes of contemporary migration. The right to remain is older, more deeply rooted and broader than the right to migrate. It includes the possibility of sharing in the common good, the right to live in dignity and to have access to sustainable development. All of these rights should be effectively guaranteed in the nations of origin through a real exercise of shared responsibility on the part of the international community.

To promote adequate preparation for the celebration of this day, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development will launch a communications campaign aimed at fostering a thorough understanding of the theme of the Message through multimedia aids, explanatory materials and theological reflections.