

Christian Migrants and Their Living Faith in Mission: An Indonesian Perspective

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journals.sagepub.com/home/trn**Raymundus Sudhiarsa** 

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Abstract

The main problem highlighted in this essay is the challenges being faced by Christian migrants in Indonesia. They are expected to succeed in overcoming the cross-cultural problems within their Christian communities, and externally to take part in building a fellowship beyond their own groups. Indonesia's multireligious and multicultural landscape has suffered in the past few decades from the politics of identity. The Christian migrants have also been affected by this. Whilst they need support in formulating afresh their Christian identity, they also require a broader intercultural mindset. Through observations, focus group discussions and literature reviews, the paper tries to formulate the role Christian migrants can explore in their cross-cultural contexts. The basic position it takes is that the Catholic migrants (a case in this paper) are also agents of mission and that migration is to some extent a process of building bridges among diverse peoples in society. The paper argues that there is a need for the migrants to be equipped with intercultural competencies and inter-religious spirituality.

Keywords

Migration, migrant, church, mission, universal, fellowship

Introduction

Migration is a huge issue in Indonesia. Cooperation and socio-religious tensions in such a context of people movements are both part of living together in this multicultural and multireligious society (Ismail 2012; Pelly 1999; Tirtosudarmo 2009). This reality informs their understanding of being church (Cruz 2013; Tan 2012).

When the Dutch colonial authorities in the early twentieth century made migration their political policy in this country (formerly, the Dutch East Indies), the main idea was the availability of cheap land for tea and coffee plantations on the outer island of Java. Reducing population density on Java Island was one reason (*Kementerian Desa* 2015; Padmo 1999; Sukmawati 2016), but getting cheap labour was an urgent need. As a Republic, Indonesia's main goal was to manage the welfare of the people, such as land distribution and the betterment of households' economy. Today, the second and third generations of these migrants have their own problems.

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This paper arises from my observation of the growing diversity of Christian communities in many dioceses in Indonesia, particularly where the presence of migrants is strong. The focus here is on Christian communities on the so-called outer island, such as Sulawesi, Kalimantan and Sumatra, which I describe as the diaspora churches. The increasing flow of migration since the second half of the last century has made the diversity in Christian communities even more complex. Field observations and focus group discussions, narratives of pastors in the field and seminarians have been used as primary sources. The literature review, particularly the church documents, is expected to help deepen the analysis of the findings.

Internal Migration Movement

The history of planned migration was started by the Dutch colonial government. It was known as Ethical Politics (*Ethische Politiek*, promulgated by Queen Wilhelmina on 17 September 1901). This, seemingly humanitarian programme, had negative impacts such as slavery and human trafficking. The colonial government used the so-called Cultivation System (1830) in its colonies. The system was designed to control the local population as well as to transport the raw materials in the cheapest way (Pohan and Izharivan 2017: 146). When the Indonesian government (1945) took over, this programme was used for the benefit of the people of the country (Frank, 2004; *Kementerian Desa* 2015). However, it has also to be admitted that such a sustained government policy has also led to various socio-religious conflicts (Baba, 2012; Ismail, 2012; Pelly, 1999).

After the independence of Indonesia (1945), two migration patterns have been quite common, namely the government and the spontaneous or self-initiated migrations (Aswan, 1995; Bahar, 1996; Budianto et al., 2021; Sardjadjidjaja, 2004). Besides these, there have also been 'forced migrations' either due to natural disasters or political reasons.

Migration initiated by the government is fully facilitated by the government starting from the place of origin of the migrants until they are settled in their new locations. Most of these migrants are peasants of poor families with low education who rely on the government's support. The self-initiated migration happens by the choice of those moving with the support of friends and family (Pohan and Izharivan 2017: 148). Many migrants also leave their birthplace to reunite with their families who migrated earlier. The common problem they face involves the need for cultural adjustments, adapting to weather as well as to new farming techniques, which are different from the methods they used in their home regions.

There has also been a massive migration from Bali after the devastating eruption of Mount Agung in 1963 (Self and Rampino, 2012). The migration of residents who survived the catastrophic destruction was facilitated by the government. They were invited to move to other islands such as Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Sumatra. The main goal of the migrants, who are generally farmers and labourers, is to find a new and more promising livelihood and a better future for their descendants. As they depart from their place of birth to a new one, they do not only bring their skills in farming or animal husbandry but also their culture, customary values, beliefs and religious practices (cf. Hanciles 2003: 146).

The same is true of the victims who survived the tsunami in Flores, NTT (*Nusa Tenggara Timur*, East Nusa Tenggara), at the end of 1992. They were mostly from low-income families, encouraged to seek a better life on other islands where the population was still sparse. Although economic considerations were indeed the main reasons for migrating, these people on the move also carried with them their religion, customs and culture. This means that migration as a movement of people from one place to another is not only a matter of demographics but, it also involves many other dimensions of life as noted.

This paper will only discuss issues of religion and theology. The subject of research is limited to Catholics scattered on the outer islands of Java, which are socially and politically on the margins of society.

Cross-Cultural Experience of Catholic Migrants

Catholic Christian migrations have occurred throughout the country. These migrations give the diaspora characteristics to many dioceses, such as Tanjungkarang and Pangkalpinang dioceses in Sumatra; Tanjung Selor Diocese, Samarinda Archdiocese and Banjarmasin Diocese in Kalimantan; Denpasar Diocese which covers the islands of Bali, Lombok and Sumbawa; as well as some areas of the Makassar Archdiocese and Manado Diocese in Sulawesi. What is quite impressive about this migration is the role of migrants in the church and in society.

Internally, the dynamics of church life in these dioceses are largely determined by the presence and involvement of migrants (cf. Siong 2022), and many of them are active as catechists and teachers or religion at schools (Kotan, 2022, Brahmandika, 2022). Because of the presence of these migrants, many dioceses in Kalimantan, for example, have come to life. It means that the contribution of these migrants determines the dynamics in the local Churches. This experience seems to confirm the truth that there is a close relationship between migration and mission, as it has been explained by a few authors on the subject (cf. Hanciles 2003, 145, Nguyen 2013, 205, Phan 2020). Biblically speaking, the history of the development of many dioceses in Indonesia is just a continuation of the Acts of the Apostles, where Christian communities were built by Christian migrants. Migrations have thus been seen as an instrument to accomplish God's redemptive purpose (van Thanh 2013, Magezi 2019).

The Pangkalpinang diocese in Sumatra, for example, was initiated by the activities and services of a Chinese migrant worker, Paul Tsen On Ngie (died 14 September, 1871). He came to Bangka Island and arrived in Sungaiselan with his fellow workers sometime in 1830 and worked as a contract labourer in a tin mine operated by Dutch companies. As a person who was equipped with traditional Chinese medicine, he tried to help many of the sick contract labourers. A colleague of mine, the late Father F.X. Hendrawinata (1949–2021) in a discussion at the celebration of Mission Week in Pangkalpinang (20–22 October 2017) recounted that 'the spirit of the Basic Christian Communities throughout the Diocese could not be separated from the evangelistic torch lit by the lay apostle Paul Tsen On Ngie.' Before the arrival of Fr. Y.Y. Langenhoff from Batavia (now Jakarta) to Bangka Island in 1853, the formation of the Christian faith was fully handled by the well-known migrant layman, Paul Tsen On Ngie. Hendrawinata noted with the greatest of respect, 'Paul Tsen On Ngie can be regarded as the founder of the mission on the island of Bangka.'

In relation to social life, many Catholic migrants are active in mobilising and reviving the economic system such as Credit Unions, for instance, the *Sumber Rejeki Desa Bukit Sawit Credit Union*; some are community leaders (Brahmandika, 2022; Dominggus, 2022; Harjosusanto and Wiyanto, 2011: 213; Siong, 2022); and others members of the Bulungan Regional House of Representatives in the early 1970s representing Catholic community (Harjosusanto and Wiyanto, 2011: 145). A seminarian, Adolvus Stevanus, proudly told how his parents, migrants from Flores, and their generation became the forerunner to the birth of many parishes in East Kalimantan served by SVD (Divine Word Missionaries). He said,

We are proud to be the descendants of migrants. Our parents came from East Nusa Tenggara to East Kalimantan primarily looking for work and a better quality of life. It was they as migrants who initiated

Christian communities which later became parishes served by the SVD. Had it not been for the migrants, perhaps there would not have been parishes as they exist today (discussion on August 15, 2022).

The migrants are well known as hard workers. It should be noted also that the migrants in Kalimantan come from various regions in the country. Their presence creates a multicultural composition in society as well as the Christian communities of the parishioners throughout the Archdiocese of Samarinda in East Kalimantan.

The presence of these migrants has created conditions for good intercultural encounters and the opening of cross-cultural processes that are fertile and mutually enriching (cf. Mauludi, 2015). Marriage between tribes, for example, is a common reality that naturally happens very often in this archipelagic country (cf. Maarif, 2009: 46) and, as such, the birth of bicultural or multicultural generations that make up the face of these diaspora churches is noteworthy. The paradigm of mission in local churches sets aside the traditional model of the Western Church heritage and is more accommodating and responsive to the local social context that emphasises the values of togetherness and brotherhood in their common home called Indonesia. In other words, the basic tone that unites the church life and the church community of these migrants is ‘to be with others.’

Migrations have led to greater cultural contact among diverse religious traditions (Kementerian Desa, 2015). The Banjar people from South Kalimantan, for instance, migrated to Riau (Putra, 2011); the Bugis, Butonese and Makassar people from South Sulawesi migrated to North and East Kalimantan (Vayda and Sahur, 1996) or to South Kalimantan (Hendraswati et al., 2017), North Bali (Khusyairi et al., 2016) and East Nusa Tenggara. A researcher from Flores) gives the following illustration of these people on the move:

[T]hey are estimated to be about eighty thousand in number, spread out along the coastal areas of Manggarai (Labuan Bajo, Terang, Reo, and Pota), Ngada (Riung, Bhekek, and Mbay), the north coast of Ende district (Watu Bara, Maurole, and Aewora), the north coast of Sikka district (Magepanda, Wuring, Geliting), on the small islands of Pamana, Sukun near Maumere town, and in Kalabahi and Kupang (Tule 2000, 96).

South Sulawesi residents living in Kupang, Timor, who have become residents of the city, can illustrate the accommodative efforts of migrant tribes in Indonesia. Many of them were born in Kupang, bred there, and have made a lawful living in the city and its surroundings. As with other Bugis migrants, if they do not become fishermen, they have some business in the market or they operate as traders. These are the well-known people of South Sulawesi who have penetrated all corners of the country from Sabang in the West to Merauke in the East (Robinson 2000, 44).

The history of internal migration of ethnic groups in Indonesia underscores the ‘moving characteristic’ of the inhabitants of this archipelago. The people on the move manifest two tendencies: The first is that they maintain their cultural identity and the second is that they always try to adapt to their new homes. This Bugis proverb seems to echo this, *kegisi monro sore lopic, kositu tomallabu sengereng* (where boats are stranded, life is upheld) (Kesuma 2004, 137). There is also a Malay proverb that has become a virtue with migrants in the archipelago, which is *di mana bumi dipijak, di situ langit dijunjung* (where the earth is trodden on, there the sky is upheld). The wisdom of these ethnic groups shows the fundamental human ability to relate to different people without losing their cultural identity.

The Christian faith that promotes universal fellowship, where everyone is a brother and sister as Pope Francis mentioned several times in his encyclical letter *Fratelli Tutti* (2020), must be made known. This ‘cultural mission’ echoes God’s commandment to people ‘to multiply, to fill the

whole earth and conquer it, to have dominion over the living creatures of the sea, in the air, and on the earth' (Gen 1:28; cf. 9:7). Christian migrants accept this challenge as part of their life to be a blessing to society at large (cf. Astuti et al., 2015; Kristiyanto, 2015), following Abraham's call, the father of all migrants (cf. Gen 12:1-3) (Levitt, 2002). In other words, these migrants have a mission, namely to bring a positive impact to the surrounding community, especially in the moral and religious realm. Theoretically, they have a distinctive Christian ethos that manifests the character of Christ, including being friends with everyone. Our concern is the extent to which their presence and involvement in community life are able to promote inclusive values that embrace and overcome suspicion and various social tensions as a result of the dichotomous mentality (Bandiyono, 2008).

The attitude of life that excludes people who are different from us is a disease that exists in a plural society like Indonesia. Moreover, in the past few decades, there have been fanatical and radical groups that have wandered in Indonesian society under the pretext of freedom. This is a concern for us and many parties with goodwill. In various ways, the fundamentalist groups strive to aggravate tensions between the locals and the migrants. The Regional Regulations which are very exclusive seem to support their efforts and sharpen the tensions between 'the sons of the land' and 'the outsiders,' majority-minority, etc., which tends to violate human rights (Libbi et al., 2013; Zuhro, 2010).

Broader human fellowship and brotherhood is part of the mission of the Church and this is rooted in the teachings of Jesus: 'Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother' (Mt 12:50). Human nature as *imago Dei* is the fundamental theological idea for the construction of such a brotherhood. God says: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness' (Gen 1:26).

Ingroup Favouritism Versus Commitment to Common Good

Ingroup favouritism, as generally occurs in social groups or organisations, is also a real problem in Indonesian society. The so-called 'island mentality' that alienates people from each other has to be acknowledged as part of the narratives in this archipelagic country. Exclusive claims and the seeds of inter-group conflict are not easy to be removed. However, from DNA testing, geneticists have evidence to show that these exclusive claims are plainly wrong. Genetically, archaeologically and linguistically, the entire population of this archipelago is diverse. A BBC News Indonesia Report reports: 'The results of the Eijkman Institute genetic study, which involved 70 ethnic populations on 12 islands in Indonesia, proves the intermingling of several genetic ancestors from different periods and pathways' (Affan, 2021). A reporter writes: 'What makes us Indonesia is our collective intention and effort to make this country a home for all' (Affan, 2021). Many national teachers have often echoed the importance of tolerance and an attitude towards life that prioritises togetherness. Ahmad Syafii Maarif, for example, wrote this

[I]f we can survive as a nation and state that is complete and fully sovereign in an unlimited period of time, it is truly a gift from God that has a very high value. In that direction, we must move away from sub-cultural egoism, parochialism, regional arrogance, momentary interests, and valueless political pragmatism (2009: 55–56).

In one of the studies conducted by Isabelle Côté, her informant stated that 'the situation between migrants and locals is analogous to a dry leaf, which will rapidly burn when there is fire' (2022). That is, it is easy for this plural society to be angered and take intolerant actions. Differences in

ethnicity, culture and religion are indeed sensitive issues. Migration can also be often seen as a means of ‘Christianization,’ if the migrants are Christians, or ‘Javanization,’ if the migrants are Javanese. The experience of rejection from the local population whether openly or covertly is an ever-present story among the migrants.

Tribunpontianak (2015), for example, reported that the Landak Indigenous People, West Kalimantan, refused migration on the grounds, among others: (1) preferential treatment given by the government to other migrants and (2) the migration programme is prone to conflict. Ignoring indigenous people’s rights that are not handled wisely is very likely to trigger a wide and prolonged conflict (Putra et al., 2021). Another example is from the migrant area in Lampung (Budianto, 2020). The local community’s rejection of the government’s policy to bring in migrants from other areas was expressed openly here. One can also sense tensions in the community – such as an unexplained dislike of other groups and being envious of their success.

Social conflicts that occur due to deeply seated sentiments, in my opinion, are not easy to overcome. Surely it is quite impossible to be completely eradicated from our way of thinking and interactions. Nevertheless, we still hope that Christian migrants can be disciplined to promote the building of fellowship with neighbours (*Fratelli Tutti* 80-83) and genuine hope for a better world and brighter future (*Ecclesia in Asia* 290). This is one of the important issues in pastoral ministry as initiated by the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Migrants and Refugees in 2013 (Mirifika, 2017). Dioceses in Indonesia, especially the ones that receive and send migrants, is intensely cooperating in the pastoral ministry for migrants.

Pastoral Challenges

Church leaders look at Jesus Christ who patiently trained his disciples to be promoters of his mission: universal fellowship, peace and options for the powerless. Jesus identified Himself with those on the margins of society. ‘[W]hen I was hungry, you fed me; when I was thirsty, you gave me drink; when I was a stranger, you gave Me a ride; when I was naked, you clothed Me; when I was sick, you visited Me; when I was in prison, you visited me’ (Mt 25:35–36).

The experience of many migrants who are involved in the life of the church needs to be explored further. Many of them volunteer for faith building among themselves, due to the limited number of ordained personnel and the infrequent visits from priests (Kotan 2022; Harjosusanto and Wiyanto, 2011). A migrant catechist who is also a religious teacher in a remote area in Banjarmasin Diocese lives his ministry with the guidance of his mother. She was quoted as saying, ‘Those who work for God cannot be rich, but also never lack’ (Londa in Kotan 2022: 52). A migrant who became a catechist in the interior of Central Kalimantan testified that he had to persevere in building the local Christian community on his own. For him, this was a formidable challenge, especially since Christians only had the Eucharistic service once every 3 months during their Pastor’s visit. He wrote, ‘People need to receive guidance, assistance, but is that only the job of priests, catechists, or religious teachers? Yes, of course, it is the duty of all of us who have been baptised’ (Sular in Kotan, 2022: 199). Adry Yanto Saputra (discussion on 20 May 2022), a newly ordained priest to the Palangka Raya Diocese in Central Kalimantan, a Dayak by descendants, admits the great role of migrants in reviving Christian communities both in the city of Palangka Raya, in the districts, as well as in the interior of Kalimantan.

Becoming a catechist in the interior mission is indeed a challenge that is not easy for everyone to cope with. Loneliness, limited means of transportation and communication and other cross-cultural experiences that are not always pleasant are ever-present (Korain in Kotan, 2022: 123). If reflected more deeply, perhaps these experiences are a core part of the catechists’ own faith formation:

‘Cooperating with priests with different characters, styles, and backgrounds, actually adds experience and faith,’ said Ignatius Sunarto (in Kotan 2022: 277) a catechist from Tanjung Karang Diocese, Lampung. A pastoral worker expressed his surprise to see the habits of the people in his ministry at the border of the Muara Teweh and Kandui, such as gambling and drinking alcohol inappropriately. Some of them were Christians who rarely attended Sunday mass. Even school children consume alcohol mixed with other drinks (Siong, 2022).

Thus, challenges come from both sides, from pastoral ministers as well as from the local community. This is surely the responsibility that the church should consider seriously, such as sufficient training for the pastoral workers as well as those who are preparing themselves to migrate. Collaboration between the sending and receiving churches is of great importance.

In his time, the Lord Jesus earnestly prepared and trained His apostles in such a way that they would be ready to handle the mission among diverse people, such as those of different ethnic or religious backgrounds. The parable of the ‘good Samaritan’ (Lk 10: 25–37) is just one good example for migrant catechists. Helping anyone in difficulties is fundamental to Christian ethics (*missio ad extra*). In his encyclical letter *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis mentions that by acknowledging the dignity of each person, Christians can contribute to the new birth of the aspirations of universal fellowship.

[L]et us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all (FT 8).

Taking all these into consideration, the Christian communities of the diaspora church are expected to internalise the gospel ideals of becoming ‘light of the world and salt of the society’ (Mt 5: 13–16). For this reason, pastoral ministry (*missio ad intra*) is an important concern of the dioceses in Indonesia (Karina, 2022). One of the basic needs for migrants from the start in their new settings is this personal and group empowerment. Suffice it to take an example from the migrants in North Kalimantan, the Tanjung Selor Diocese (founded in 2002). As they arrive in a new place and spread over a wide area, these migrants feel the need to unite. They then spontaneously organise informal meetings, primarily at the level of the ethnic-cultural group and religion. Each group feels comfortable among its own. Pastoral workers find it difficult therefore to get them to mix and work together. The church admits that such a situation is also exacerbated by the limited means of modern transportation and communication (Harjosusanto and Wiyanto, 2011: 130).

Church’s Response

Migrations initiated by the government have several main objectives, such as population distribution, social welfare, unity of the nation-state, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* as the national identity and harmony of nature and integrity of creation (Bandiyono, 2008; Haboddin, 2012). All this can also become the Church’s pastoral agenda for migrants. My research shows several things that stand out.

First, building cooperation between the sending and receiving dioceses of migrants is of great importance, particularly in preparing or training the (future) migrants in some cross-cultural competencies, such as being able to respect each other’s differences and learn from each other. Therefore, a collaboration that continues to be intensified, both at the local, national and international levels, should be appreciated. In essence, ecclesiastical institutions are responsible for providing maximum service to people who dream of improving their quality of life. In an interview,

R.D. Daslan Moang Kabu of the Archdiocese of Ende (Mataloko, Flores, 2 October 2017), said this:

[I]ndeed they [migrants] left without asking the blessing of the diocese of origin. They were also left uninvited by the diocese of their destination. Obviously, they are Catholics. They are our people, part of the Church that needs help and assistance (Mirifika, 2017).

Second, the social capital of the migrants, namely the mentality of hard work and perseverance to cultivate the soil so that it is productive is an important provision to shift the hunting and gathering culture of some host locations. The culture of cultivating the earth and making it productive is one of the important aspects of Christian faith (cf. Rm 5:3-4; cf. Jm 1:2-4). All this could be regarded as part of 'becoming a man of faith,' as God commanded Adam to accomplish (cf. Gen 1:26). The realisation of the orderly, clean and healthy villages of these migrants are part of cultural mission. This means also that economic success and social progress must contribute to the development of the larger community (Astuti et al., 2015; Harjosusanto and Wiyanto, 2011). A migrant from Flores, East Nusa Tenggara, Yakobus Gala (36 years old), who left his birthplace and migrated to North Kalimantan in 2014, shared his experience thus:

[O]ur presence was well accepted by the host society. First, they really need people who can help them in their faith and church life. The community here is very dependent on us in church matters, such as leading the deepening of faith and inviting them to be involved in ecclesiastical activities. What is a valuable lesson for us is that they really put their trust in us. However, it must always be kept in mind, that once they are lied to, they will leave you for good (interview by Dominggus, 2022).

This level of cooperation is a productive social capital for the community.

We have narratives of the migrants leaving because of loss of cultivable land to turn it into a good place to live as Christians. Being able to do farming is their social capital which they carried with them as Christians. The Christian migrants from Bali to Southeast Sulawesi in the mid-1970s have a special story. In an interview, Mr Adrianus I Made Dana, a voluntary migrant from Bali expresses his experience:

[E]conomic difficulties are the main factor for us to migrate. At that time (in the late 60 s to early 70 s), many people in our area [Palasari, Bali] experienced difficulties in managing agricultural land. The availability of water for irrigating rice fields is very limited. Also, many residents have only limited agricultural land; besides many can only become farm laborers. We agreed to try our luck in other areas and leave our birthplace (by Felix Mahendra 2022).

Third, the spiritual capital of Christian migrants who come from various regions is a fundamental strength to survive difficulties. The dioceses, to which they are immigrants, have facilitated this diversity of true self-disclosure. That is how the migrants have a unique way of celebrating faith by following each culture of their origin, building their communion in line with their customs of origin, and cultivating mutual collaboration within the community composed of diverse ethnicity. This can be regarded as the Christian testimony and at the same time a simple but authentic proclamation of the Gospel. In other words, a new way of doing mission grows from the field (cf. Harjosusanto and Wiyanto, 2011: 134–140).

Fourth, for most Christian migrants, after some decades, diversity in cultural expressions is quite enriching. It is celebrated as a school for self-improvement through cross-cultural fertilisation (cf.

Rukmana, 2015). The people have learned to cross cultural boundaries. This has given birth to a bicultural generation which is familiar with otherness, for God has created all human beings equal in rights, duties, and dignity, and has called them to live together as brothers and sisters' (Fratelli Tutti, 2020, cf. Abu Dhabi Declaration, 2019). Such competencies in cross-cultural communities cannot be owned easily by everyone. Most people need training. This is part of the big challenge in fostering a fruitful community of faith within the church. It is also a call or responsibility to participate in advancing life together in the Indonesian nation-state as a common home for each of its citizens.

Migrants as Missionaries

Christian mission should bring about something new or something different, such as salt giving flavour to food (Mt 5:13) or leaven leavening dough (Lk 13:21, 1 Cor 5:6). In such a vision, Christianity provides a new and more enlightening alternative to a meaningful life. In the context of the multicultural and multireligious nation-state of Indonesia, migrant churches have a responsibility to promote the values of openness, togetherness and inclusiveness. This mission awareness needs to be worked out and expanded continuously in each migrant wherever he/she is present, in the schools, in the offices, in the markets or in their neighbourhood.

Theologically speaking, this missionary awareness is an essential dimension of the sacraments of initiation. Pope Francis might have given a precise phrase, namely 'missionary disciples' (Evangelii Gaudium [EG], 2019, 24.40.50.119-121.173). 'Let us look at those first disciples,' says the Pontiff (EG 120), 'who, immediately after encountering the gaze of Jesus, went forth to proclaim him joyfully: 'We have found the Messiah! (Jn 1:41). The Samaritan woman became a missionary immediately after speaking with Jesus and many Samaritans come to believe in him because of the woman's testimony (Jn 4:39). So too, Saint Paul, after his encounter with Jesus Christ, immediately proclaimed Jesus' (Ac 9:20, cf. 22:6-21).

Issues such as cultural adaptation, accommodation, openness, interculturality, the spirit of hard work, perseverance, *gotong-royong* (honest cooperation) and cross-cultural values need further exploration. All of this could complement the spirit of pastoral ministry as well as the core dimension of cross-cultural training handled by the sending dioceses as well as the receiving ones. These values are fundamental to the Christian mission that the migrant churches in the country have to nurture. They could be made more aware of their call to bear witness to such values and so become missionaries as well (cf. van Thanh, 2013, Hanciles, 2013). The migrant churches also have an outreach mission (*missio ad extra*), namely to promote a greater fellowship starting from their particular communities. The fundamental reason is that everyone is primarily an (in) migrant in this country. In this sense, all forms of tribal mentality are obviously contrary to the nature of our being. The migrant churches need, therefore, to continue to witness through their deeds and being. We recall Jesus' reminder to his companions: 'You will be my witness in Jerusalem, in the whole Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth' (Ac 1:8).

Conclusion

Internal migration in Indonesia has contributed to maximising the encounter of people of diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. From the Church's perspective, migration has been an opportunity to bear witness to Christ in the wider society. Just as the development of the church since post-apostolic times was facilitated by the migration of the followers of Christ, so migration in

this country can be regarded as an opportunity to carry out our mission. Christian migrants can effectively bear witness to Christian values in their daily lives.

To make this mission more effective, it is necessary for migrants themselves to be prepared and trained, both in cross-cultural competencies and in the knowledge of the Christian faith. Therefore, cooperation between the sending and receiving churches is urgently needed. Cooperation with facilitators of goodwill will help to develop a better sense of community and fraternity without borders under the shared vision of a common home.

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