In prepared remarks to members of the Commission in the Vatican's Clementine Hall, Pope Francis expressed his thanks to them for their work carried out in the Church's name to assist migrants and refugees in great need. The multiple projects initiated on five continents, he said represented "exemplary instances of the four verbs – welcome, defend, promote and integrate."

The Pope underlined that **"today as in the past, liberating the poor, the oppressed and the persecuted is an integral part of the mission entrusted by God to the Church."**

The Pontiff noted that much had changed since the Commission was established in 1951. Needs have grown ever more complex, he said, "tools for responding ever more sophisticated, and your service increasingly professional."

Inspiring action

The Pope expressed the hope that their work would "continue to inspire local Churches to do all they can for persons forced to leave their home countries and who, all too often, become victims of dishonesty, violence and abuse of every sort."

Open and sincere dialogue

In order to set free those who today are oppressed, rejected and enslaved, the Pope stressed that it was "essential to promote open and sincere dialogue with government leaders, a dialogue, he added, that takes into account people's actual experiences, sufferings and aspirations, in order to remind everyone once more of his or her responsibilities."

He went on to say that, “the processes set in motion by the international community for a global agreement on refugees, and another for safe, orderly and regulated migration, represent a privileged forum for implementing such dialogue.”

The work continues

The work is not over, Pope Francis concluded, “together, he said, we must encourage countries to coordinate more suitable and effective responses to the challenges posed by issues of migration; and we can do this on the basis of the essential principles of the Church’s social teaching.”