

The Migrational Triune God: A Study from Migrant Perspectives

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Abstract

From the past to the present, migration is one of the key concepts for understanding Christianity. A renowned Bible verse, Acts 1:8, illustrates the international migration from Jerusalem to the ends of the world to spread the Gospel. Additionally, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), "281 million people were international migrants, comprising 3.6 percent of the world population in 2020." Churches are valuable places for migrants to settle in new locations, regardless of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Within migrant contexts, the Nicene Creed holds a prestigious position because this creed is one of the products of discussions aimed at affirming a unified confession of Christianity across various cultural and regional backgrounds. The Nicene Creed is the result of crossing cultures, reflecting migration aspects, to establish the unity of the church. Thus, the Nicene Creed can play a pivotal role in missionally approaching current migrants, whether international or domestic.

This presentation explores the possibility of the Nicene Creed based on migrant perspectives and suggests moving from Trinity to Migrational Trinity. For this purpose, this presentation first explores the character of God the Father as God the Father for migrants, based on the Old Testament. Second, God the Son, Jesus Christ, is considered the incarnational migrant from heaven to earth and to the material beings. Third, the Holy Spirit is described as the migrating Holy Spirit because the wind, symbolizing the Holy Spirit, emphasizes movement, which is another word for migration. As a result of exploring the Trinity from migrant perspectives, the Triune God is presented as the hopeful Gospel for migrants who suffer from alienation, marginalization, discrimination, and other injustices in the world.

Background

The central theme of CATS-X is “Echoes of Nicaea: Enduring Faith and Embracing Unity – Asian Ecumenical Responses.” Within this theme, two key concepts emerge: *Nicaea* and *Echoes*. “Nicaea” symbolizes the past, while “Echoes” represent the present. This theme invites an exploration of the unique significance of the Council of Nicaea and how its legacy resonates with contemporary issues. One possible guiding question is: *How can we connect and reinterpret the doctrine of the Trinity in the context of migration?*¹

The Trinity² is chosen as the focal point of the past because it was the core theological achievement of the Council of Nicaea, affirming Christian faith within the Christian community and throughout the Roman Empire.³ Migration, on the other hand, represents a significant 21st century issue, often described as a global megatrend. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are closely linked to migration, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has published a noteworthy report, *Migration and the SDGs: Measuring Progress*. “Migration in the SDGs: Key Data Points” in a report is particularly useful in illustrating how migration intersects with each agenda.⁴

Thus, the primary aim of this paper is to build a bridge between the past (Nicaea) and the present (migration) by reinterpreting the Trinity. To achieve this, the presentation is structured as follows: first, it establishes a connection between the Trinity and migration through a contextual theological lens, recognizing the Trinity as a contextual theological

¹ The term migration does not have a single, universal definition, as its meaning can vary significantly depending on context and criteria. For example, in biblical studies, the term Diaspora is often used to describe the migration of the Israelites, highlighting the theological and historical nuances of their movements. In social science, however, migration is defined in multiple ways, often classified into categories such as international and domestic, documented and undocumented, or temporary and permanent. These definitions are shaped by the diverse contexts in which migration occurs. For the purposes of this presentation, migration will be understood using the definition provided by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

² Trinity and Triune God are the same but expressed differently. The term Trinity comes from the Latin *trinitas*, meaning “threefold” or “three in one.” On the other hand, Triune God is derived from two Latin words: *tri-* (three) and *-une* (one). These terms emphasize the same, God is three persons in one being. Therefore, this paper uses the terms Trinity and Triune God interchangeably, with no difference in meaning.

³ “It affirmed the Christian faith in the triune God and marked the transition from Christians being a persecuted minority to becoming a church recognized by the Roman State.” WCC, “Toward the Sixth World Conference on Faith and Order Commemorating the Council of Nicaea: Where Now for Visible Unity?,” (Geneva: WCC, n.d.), 4.

⁴ Elisa Mosler Vidal and Frank Laczko, *Migration and the SDGs: Measuring Progress - An Edited Volume* (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2022), Vii-Xiv.

achievement.⁵ In the second section, alternative interpretations of the Trinity from a migrant perspective are proposed. God the Father is understood as the creator of all, including the contexts in which migrants live, becoming the God for migrants. Jesus, the Son of God, is depicted as a migrant, with the incarnation viewed as a form of "migrational incantation." Similarly, the Holy Spirit is associated with the migrant experience, as the Spirit's movement is symbolic of migration itself. In conclusion, this presentation affirms that the Triune God is a God of migration. In this sense, the Trinity is not only characterized by *perichoresis* but also by the essence of migration.

1. Contextual Triune God

A contextual approach serves as a stepping stone for reinterpreting the Trinity in relation to migration. The Nicene Creed emerged from the cultural and theological diversity of its time, with the Council of Nicaea marking the beginning of debates "among geographically diverse Christian bishops and theologians."⁶ Although the terms "western" and "eastern" Christianity today differ from their usage in the early church, at that time both were united under the Roman Empire. The Nicene Creed was shaped by evolving social and cultural contexts over several years.⁷ Rather than viewing these differences as negative, the Council of Nicaea can be seen as a positive outcome of cultural conflict, facilitating dialogue between distinct cultural backgrounds.⁸

Steve Bevens, in his renowned book *Models of Contextual Theology*, categorizes contextual theology into six distinct approaches.⁹ The "synthetic model" is particularly relevant to doctrinal development, such as that of the Triune God in the Nicene Creed. Bevens explains that "the synthetic model might rely as well on theories of doctrinal development that understand doctrine as emerging from the complex interaction of Christian faith and changes

⁵ Stephen B. Bevens, *Essays in Contextual Theology* (Boston: Brill, 2018), 6-7.

⁶ Rebecca Lyman, "The Theology of The Council of Nicaea," *St Andrews Encyclopaedia of Theology*, ed. Brendan N. Wolfe et al (2024), 7.

⁷ Wolfram Kinzig, *A History of Early Christian Creeds* (Paris: CPI books GmbH, 2024), 213-354. Also, in chapter 20, The author summarizes the trajectory of Nicaea creed on the history of Christian creeds. Ibid., 609-612.

⁸ Kinzig, 213-354.

⁹ Synthetic model might be called to other titles; dialogical model, analogical model, both/and model, and middle-of-the-road model. In Stephen B. Bevens, *Essays in Contextual Theology*, 19-22.

in culture, society, and thought forms."¹⁰ In other words, the doctrine of the Triune God at Nicaea "may have travelled owing to the bishops' mobility or for political reasons," as they came from both western and eastern Christian regions, each with its own social context.¹¹ Consequently, the development of Christian doctrine can be seen as part of the heritage of the Council of Nicaea, laying the foundation for a contextual understanding of the Trinity.

Several Asian theologians have already sought to reinterpret the Trinity through a contextual lens. For example, Jung Young Lee and Heup Young Kim draw on Eastern Asian philosophical concepts like *Yin* and *Yang*, and *Tao*, to understand the Trinity.¹² Other Asian theologians explore the Trinity through their lived experiences in contexts of poverty and insecurity. Kosuke Koyama, a pioneer of Asian theology, addresses the Trinity through the lens of suffering in his book *Water Buffalo Theology*, focusing on the Son of God and His solidarity with the Thai people. Similarly, Korean Minjung theologians interpret the Trinity in light of Koreans' suffering, which they refer to as *Han*. C. S. Song, another prominent Asian theologian, emphasizes marginalized experiences as a key to understanding the Trinity contextually.¹³

Reinterpreting the Trinity as contextual theology is not a departure from tradition but rather a reinforcement of Nicaea's heritage. To establish a contextual understanding of the Trinity for the present day, it is essential to address current social issues, with migration serving as a core concern for Christian communities across national and ethnic boundaries. The following sections will address each person of the Trinity from a migrant perspective.

2. Trinity from a Migrant Perspective

Traditionally, the Trinity is often explained in terms of love: God the Father as the origin of love, the Son as love extended toward the world, and the Holy Spirit as the force that transforms Christians and the world through love.¹⁴ Building on this, Daniel Migliore offers a metaphor

¹⁰ Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* (New York: Orbis Books, 2002), 88-89; Bevans, *Essays in contextual theology*, 19-22.

¹¹ Kinzig, *A History of Early Christian Creeds*, 158.

¹² Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996); Heup Young Kim, *A Theology of Dao* (New York: Orbis Books, 2017).

¹³ Choan-Seng Song, *Third-Eye Theology: Theology in Formation in Asian Settings* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002).

¹⁴ Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2014), chap. 4, ePub.

using the words "indwell, make room, and hospital[ity]," which provides a basis for reinterpreting the Trinity from a migrant perspective.¹⁵ The following sections explore each personhood of the Trinity in this light.

2.1. God the Father from a Migrant Perspective

In the Nicene Creed, God the Father is described as the Creator of all things, both in heaven and on earth. Notably, the Nicene Creed emphasizes God as the "Maker of all things, both visible and invisible," more explicitly than other early Christian creeds, such as the Roman, Apostles', and Constantinople Creeds.¹⁶ This focus on creation and the relationship between Creator and creation forms the foundation for reinterpreting God the Father from a migrant perspective.

From this viewpoint, God's creative work is understood as the beginning of migration. As Sam George notes, God's act of creation involves the processes of "separated and gathered," terms that are deeply meaningful in the context of migration.¹⁷ The Lausanne Movement captures this idea with the phrase "Scattered to Gather," emphasizing that migration (or diaspora) can be viewed as part of God's divine action to establish His reign.¹⁸ Thus, God the Father, as Creator, can also be understood as the divine source of migration, transcending the specific covenant with Israel. God's creative works reflect the characteristics of migration.

Peter Phan expands on this idea, describing God as a being who is infinitely migrant: "God *is* a migrant; God is *not* a migrant; and God is *infinitely* a migrant."¹⁹ While God the Father is not a migrant in a human sense, He participates in a kind of migration within the eternal

¹⁵ Migliore, chap. 4.

¹⁶ Kinzig, *A History of Early Christian Creeds*, 616. In 616-618, Wolfram Kinzig compares four early Christian creeds on a chart which is an easy checking the same and differences among Creeds.

¹⁷ M. Daniel Carroll R. and Vincent Bacote, *Global Migration and Christian Faith: Implications for Identity and Mission* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2021), 167.

¹⁸ Lausanne Diaspora Leadership Teams. *Scattered to gather: Embracing the global trend of Diaspora* (Manila: LifeChange Publishing, 2010). And in 2017 a book published under the Lausanne Movement. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, *Scattered to Gather: Embracing the Global Trend of Diaspora* (Philippines: Lausanne Movement and Global Diaspora Network, 2017).

¹⁹ Peter C. Phan, "God, the Beginning and the End of Migration: A Theology of God from the Experience and Perspective of Migrants," in *Christian Theology in the Age of Migration: Implications for World Christianity*, ed. Peter C. Phan (UK: Lexington Books, 2020), 103.

relationship between the persons of the Trinity. This migrant nature is also reflected in God's creative acts.

The Old Testament, particularly the Book of Genesis, is often the primary source for understanding God's role as Creator. It reveals how God, through creation, builds relationships with His creatures, which is a result of God's dynamic, migratory nature. Israel's history exemplifies God's relationship with "the electing grace," rooted in the covenant.²⁰ Some theologians, including Daniel Migliore, highlight this relationship to explain the Trinity, particularly in terms of God the Father's covenant with Israel.²¹

However, if we interpret God the Father exclusively as Israel's God in the Trinity, this traditional approach risks limiting God's nature to a specific ethnicity.²² Such a view narrows the scope of God the Father from Creator of all to merely a national deity. In contrast, the Nicene Creed emphasizes God as the Creator of "visible and invisible things," a broader scope that transcends ethnic and geographic boundaries. This distinction between the visible and invisible was formulated in opposition to early heresies like Gnosticism and Marcionism, reinforcing that God's reign encompasses the entire universe. So, many missiologists claim the universal God beyond Israel's God such as a creator.²³

As these interpretations evolve from past to present, it is necessary to reflect on what "visible and invisible" means today. Migration, as a global megatrend, offers a fresh lens through which to reinterpret these terms. The concept of Israel as a nation may shift from an ethnic identity to a migratory movement. This reimagining is possible because Israel's history can be understood as a journey of migration, from Egypt to Babylon.²⁴ For instance, the covenant between God and Abraham marks the beginning of Israel's history, and Abraham's obedience, particularly in response to God's command to migrate, is emphasized in Hebrews 11:8-9.²⁵ As Peter Phan illustrates "The climax of the Israelites' migration is the covenant

²⁰ Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, chap. 4, ePub.

²¹ Migliore, chap. 4.

²² John N. D Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (London: Longman, 1972), 215.

²³ Walter C. Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament: Israel as a Light to the Nations* (USA: Baker Books, 2012); Arthur F. Glasser, *Announcing the Kingdom: The Story of God's Mission in the Bible* (USA: Baker Academic, 2006).

²⁴ Daniel G. Groody, *A Theology of Migration: The Bodies of Refugees and the Body of Christ* (New York: Orbis Books, 2022), 65-100.

²⁵ Phan, *Christian Theology in the Age of Migration*, 105.

God.”²⁶ Furthermore, God is depicted as journeying with Israel, even dwelling in a tent as they wandered through the desert.²⁷

Thus, God the Father, as Creator, can be reinterpreted as a migrant Creator - not human, but a divine migrant within the Trinity, who creates, protects, and sustains migrants. Also, God the Father provides migrant cultures with God’s covenant and His ongoing presence through migrating and dwelling together.

2.2. The Son of God from a Migrant Perspective

Christology is a prime focus in the Nicene Creed, with an emphasis on the divine nature of the Son of God, especially compared to earlier creeds like the Roman and Apostles' Creeds. Wolfram Kinzig explains that the second part of the Nicene Creed, related to the Son of God, highlights “the relation between Father and Son and summarizes their respective actions in salvation history” as well as “incarnation” with *homooúsios* is the core.²⁸ In other words, the Nicene Creed emphasizes the Son of God’s incarnation; His journey from heaven to earth, from invisible divine being to visible human being, through the life of Jesus Christ. This concept serves as a foundation for reinterpreting the Son of God as a *migrational incarnation*.

Ross Langmead offers two emphases in his explanation of incarnation; *incarnation* and *the incarnation*. First, *incarnation* refers to “the process of embodiment,” stressing the transition from the invisible to the visible, not only in terms of human life but also the material aspects of all creation.²⁹ Second, *the incarnation* signifies the salvation of the world, where God, while remaining fully divine, became fully human in the person of Jesus Christ.³⁰ These two nuances are found in the Nicene Creed’s portrayal of the Son of God, with the first part emphasizing the relationship between the Father and the Son, and the latter part illustrating the events of Jesus Christ’s life. Therefore, the Son of God can be reinterpreted through two perspectives: *migrational incarnation* and *the migrational incarnation*.

Migrational incarnation can be understood as the Son of God migrating from heaven to earth, as expressed in the Gospel of John, where the Logos became flesh. The Word of

²⁶ Phan, 110.

²⁷ Phan, 108.

²⁸ Kinzig, *A History of Early Christian Creeds*, 621.

²⁹ Ross Langmead, *The Word Made Flesh: Towards an Incarnational Missiology* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2004), 17-18.

³⁰ Langmead, 18.

God is "incarnate in certain ways in creation," moving from the invisible to the visible.³¹ However, as John 1:10-11 indicates, humanity did not recognize this incarnate being: "He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him." Thus, the Son of God as *migrational incarnation* serves as a unique bridge connecting the invisible divine realm with the visible material world. Miroslav Volf explains that Christ's personhood serves as "a relationship between uncreated and created reality."³² As such, *migrational incarnation* of the Son of God becomes the primary means through which the invisible divine reality interacts with creation, particularly with migrants.³³

The migrational incarnation also directly relates to the experiences of migrants, as Jesus Christ's life reflects the journeys of many migrants.³⁴ From His birth, Jesus was a political refugee, fleeing to Egypt with His family to escape persecution.³⁵ Later, He became a domestic migrant, traveling from the rural village of Nazareth to the urban center of Jerusalem, symbolizing urban migration. Additionally, Jesus lived as a marginalized figure in Roman society, embodying the experience of colonized peoples. Marginalization is a significant issue for migrants, who often lose their relationships, culture, careers, and communication in new contexts. In this way, the historical Jesus lived as a marginalized migrant.

These themes are explored in contemporary theological works on migration. For instance, Daniel Groody, in *A Theology of Migration*, delves into the concept of *the migrational incarnation*. Jesus' migrant journey also serves as an example for the Church to follow in protecting migrants. The parable of the Good Samaritan, asking "Who is my neighbor?," becomes a critical question in relation to migration. The World Council of Churches' 11th Assembly report calls on churches to stand with migrants, following Jesus' own migrant journey.³⁶ Biblical studies on Jesus' journey as a migrant provide meaningful sources for

³¹ Langmead, 21.

³² Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 85.

³³ Migliore, *Faith seeking understanding*, chap. 8.

³⁴ Sammy Alfaro, "Incarnation and Redemption: Jesus the Migrant," in *The Church and Migration: A Theological Vision for the People of God*, ed. Daniel Montanez and Wilmer Estrada Carrasquillo (Cleveland, TN: Centro para Estudios Latinos Press), 69.

³⁵ Alfaro, 66-67.

³⁶ WCC, *Christ's Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity Report of the WCC 11th Assembly Karlsruhe Germany 2022* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2022), 169-174.

churches to stand in solidarity with migrants of all kinds.

In summary, the Son of God can be reinterpreted through two lenses. First, as *migrational incarnation*, focusing on the migration of the divine from invisibility to visibility, which serves as a foundation for understanding migrant experiences. Second, as *the migrational incarnation*, reflecting on Jesus Christ's life journey as a model for the experiences of migrants. Through this dual perspective, the Son of God becomes both a symbol of divine migration and a bridge for understanding the human migrant experience.

2.3. The Holy Spirit of God from a Migrant Perspective

This section explores the Holy Spirit from a migrant perspective, focusing on its characteristics of movement and activity. Simply put, the Spirit of God can be seen as *migrating Spirit of God*. While the Holy Spirit did not play a central role in the Nicene Creed, its significance was amplified in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.³⁷ The Creed evolved from a brief statement, “and in the Holy Spirit,” to “and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver, who proceeds from the Father, who is jointly worshipped and glorified with the Father and the Son, who spoke through the prophets.”³⁸ Thus, this analysis will draw on both the Nicene and Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creeds.

Migliore describes the Spirit of God as “life-empowering,” while Amos Yong speaks of the *missio Spiritus*.³⁹ Both emphasize the theme of *solidarity* between God and creation, particularly with marginalized people.⁴⁰ Ahn Il-sup expands on Yong’s concept of *missio Spiritus*, explaining it as “the holistic integration of both migrants and citizens as well as the socio-economic and politico-legal transformation of global society.”⁴¹ Solidarity is closely linked to the Holy Spirit's role as the “life-giver” in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.

The Spirit of God serves as a life-giver, especially to marginalized people enduring difficulties and suffering. The Holy Spirit fosters a harmonious life between the Trinity and all

³⁷ Phillip Cary, *The Nicene Creed: An Introduction* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press), Article 3, ePub.

³⁸ Kinzig, *A History of Early Christian Creeds*, 617.

³⁹ Migliore, *Faith seeking understanding*, chap. 10; Amos Yong, *The Missiological Spirit : Christian Mission Theology in the Third Millennium Global Context* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2015), chap. 10, ePub.

⁴⁰ Migliore, chap. 10.

⁴¹ Il-sup Ahn, *Theology and Migration* (Leiden: Brill 2019), 62.

creation, supporting the fulfillment of God's covenant and the restoration of *Imago Dei*. A harmonious life can be achieved through crossing boundaries, which are often the root of discrimination and dehumanization. The Pentecost event in Acts 2 demonstrates how the Spirit of God reconciles divisions, between God and people, and between different groups of people, by crossing various lines: linguistic, cultural, religious, and social.⁴²

Traditional interpretations of Pentecost emphasize overcoming human limitations caused by sin (Acts 2:11). Humanity, in its imperfection, cannot directly encounter a holy God, but through the Spirit, even sinners can commune with God. The Holy Spirit's work focuses on fulfilling God's covenantal will, embracing all nations and peoples.⁴³ In this way, the Spirit of God empowers marginalized individuals, allowing them to reclaim their identity as bearers of the *Imago Dei* by transcending human limitations.⁴⁴ The Holy Spirit migrates alongside us, enabling us to move from instability to completeness.

The term "proceeds," as used in the Nicene Creed, holds significant value. Phillip Cary interprets *proceed* as *missio*, a term that emphasizes movement and activity, extending God's mission throughout the world. The Holy Spirit has been "the sending of the Holy Spirit into the world and into our hearts" since the early days of Christianity.⁴⁵ The word "proceeds" conveys the dynamic nature of the Spirit, often compared to wind, breath, or energy.⁴⁶ Peter Phan suggests that "proceeds" can be understood as mission, sending, or even "push and pull," reflecting the Spirit's energy for transformation.⁴⁷ This notion of "push and pull" is essential in migration studies, as it speaks to the forces that cause migration. The Spirit of God, as the *proceeding* Spirit, could be seen as the original source of migration.

Phan explains that the Holy Spirit "pushes" migrants out of poverty and inhumane living conditions and "pulls" them toward their final eschatological goal, heaven.⁴⁸ The Spirit of God is continuously migrating, proceeding, and giving life to migrants, just as it sends prophets to proclaim God's will throughout the world. Migrants, in turn, serve as a barometer of equity, freedom, and harmony in society. Historically, migrants have occupied marginalized

⁴² Ahn, *Theology and Migration*, 68-69; Yong, *The Missiological Spirit*, chap. 2.

⁴³ Ahn, 71.

⁴⁴ Migliore, *Faith seeking understanding*, chap. 10.

⁴⁵ Phillip, *The Nicene Creed*, Article 3.

⁴⁶ Peter C. Phan, "Deus Migrator - God the Migrant: Migration of Theology and Theology of Migration," *Theological Studies* 77, 4 (2016): 864.

⁴⁷ Phan, 864.

⁴⁸ Phan, 864.

spaces in communities, facing challenges in securing basic rights such as mobility, employment, voting, and marriage. Their life journey, however, holds a divine purpose, to proclaim God's love and justice towards the world, much like Israel's role in God's plan for Palestine. In this sense, migrants act as agents of God's word, and the Spirit of God stands with them, empowering them as life-givers. The Spirit not only supports migrants but also aligns with them in their role as God's messengers.

The Holy Spirit, when viewed through a migrant perspective, can be described with terms like *life-giver*, *solidarity with the marginalized*, *proceeding*, *missio*, *sending*, *moving*, *pulling and pushing*, *migration*, and *prophetic witness*. Ultimately, the Spirit of God is in constant motion, migrating and standing with migrants, serving as a source of life and justice.

3. A New Approach to Perichoresis

Perichoresis has long been an influential concept in explaining the nature of the Triune God. The term derives from the Greek word meaning "mutual indwelling" or "interpenetration." "It was first used by patristic theologians to describe the mutual indwelling of the divine and human natures of the incarnate Word."⁴⁹ The essence of perichoresis lies in the idea of mutual indwelling, a shared existence among the three persons of the Trinity.

A fresh reinterpretation of *perichoresis* could consider migration as a central theme, similar to the traditional focus on love. As previously discussed, the Father of God is both the creator through migration and the protector of migrants. Similarly, the Son of God embodies migration, being the *migrational incarnation* who transitions from the invisible divine realm into the material world. Jesus Christ's life is itself a migrant journey. Likewise, the Spirit of God is continuously migrating with migrants, acting as a life-giver. All three persons of the Trinity share the characteristic of migration, which can serve as a new framework for understanding *perichoresis*. Furthermore, this shared characteristic extends to migrants who reflect the *Imago Dei*.

Najib George Awad highlights the significance of *perichoresis* in extending the relationship between the Triune God and migrants. He emphasizes that relationality can bridge the gap between refugees and host communities, transcending the barriers of identity and otherness.⁵⁰ Awad suggests that relationality can develop from coexistence into a

⁴⁹ Migliore, *Faith seeking understanding*, appendix E glossary.

⁵⁰ Najib George Awad, "Deciphering the Genome of 'Crisis' in the Syrian 'Refugee Crisis': Towards a Hermeneutic Tripod," in *The Church, Migration, and Global (in)Difference*, ed. Darren Dias et al.

deeper state of *symbiosis*. “A relationality that reaches first the stage of “co-existence,” but it does not (and must not) end at that stage. It rather moves deeper into a state of *symbiosis*: a state of mutual and reciprocal transformation and interpenetration.”⁵¹

Awad also notes that “Christian theology learns from its understanding of God’s inner life that the “triune God interacts within itself without losing distinction or equality and depicts how the created self and the other might interrelate on a created level.”⁵² In this context, *perichoresis* becomes a model for human relationships, especially among migrants, encouraging *symbiosis* and mutual transformation as they connect with others.

Implications and Conclusion

This paper bridges the traditional doctrine of the Triune God with the contemporary social issue of migration. The Trinity is not merely a doctrine captured in texts but a living reality, actively at work in our life journeys and societies. Therefore, our understanding of the Trinity can evolve and expand to reach the broader world, including both Christian and non-Christian contexts, without losing its core affirmation that God exists as three personhoods in one being.

In the context of the church today, this evolving understanding of the Trinity could be reflected by incorporating Migrational Trinity into the observance of Trinity Sunday in the lectionary. The first reading (from the Old Testament, excluding the Psalms) can emphasize God the Father as a protector of migrants in the history of Israel. The second reading (from the New Testament, excluding the Gospels) can highlight the Spirit of God as a supporter of migrants. The Gospel reading would focus on Jesus' journey as a migrant. This approach would encourage church members to open their hearts to newcomers and migrants, fostering a community where all types of migrants are welcomed.

To illustrate, I suggest the following readings for a *Migrational Trinity Sunday*: The first reading could be Genesis 1, interpreted to show God the Father as a creator through the acts of scattering and gathering. Exodus 15:1-21 or Ezra 2:1-2, 64-70 could highlight God the Father as a protector and guide during migratory journeys. The second reading would focus on the Holy Spirit as the moving force behind migration. Acts 2:1-13 exemplifies the Spirit’s power to transcend language barriers, while 1 Peter 1:1-12 connects the purpose of migration

(Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 178-179.

⁵¹ George Awad, 181.

⁵² George Awad, 182.

with the guidance of the Spirit. The Gospels offer a wealth of passages related to migration. For instance, John 1:1-18 and Matthew 1:1-17 present the Son of God's incarnation as a divine migration from heaven to earth. Matthew 2:13-23 and Mark 4:42-44 depict Jesus' life as one of constant movement, whether through forced or voluntary migration. These are just a few examples, and many other Gospel passages could be explored for a Migrational Trinity Sunday.

In conclusion, the doctrine of the Triune God is a significant achievement of the Nicene Council, serving as the foundation of the Nicene Creed. However, this doctrine is not static but can develop as contextual theology. Migration, like love, may be viewed as an essential aspect of the mutual indwelling within the Trinity. God the Father is seen as the creator who scatters and gathers, guiding the migratory journey, as Israel's identity is not just ethnically but migrationally defined. Thus, Israel becomes the ancestor of all migrants, and Israel's God can become the God of all migrants. The Son of God is reinterpreted in two ways: as the migrational incarnation and the incarnational migration. The former emphasizes the divine becoming flesh, while the latter highlights Jesus' life journey as one of constant migration. The Spirit of God, too, can be reimagined as the "migrating Spirit," illustrating the Holy Spirit's role in movement and as the giver of life. As such, the Spirit supports migrants and empowers them to be prophetic witnesses to the world.

This paper seeks to breathe life into the textual doctrine of the Trinity, making it relevant to our contemporary contexts. As a result, the doctrine of the Trinity emerges as a hopeful Gospel for migrants, offering solace and empowerment to those suffering from alienation, marginalization, discrimination, and other injustices in the world.