

TOWARDS A NEW EVANGELIZATION

Message

by the Permanent Council

of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

on the 500th Anniversary

of the Evangelization of the Americas

1. Five hundred years ago, Christopher Columbus erected a wooden cross on a small island in the Bahamas, which he called San Salvador. The gesture of a European explorer planting a cross is one which was repeated many times throughout the Americas. Europeans arriving on Canadian soil were also inspired by this sacred and traditional symbol. John Cabot chose a cross to mark his June 24, 1497, arrival on our shores. Jacques Cartier erected a cross in 1535 at Gaspé. It was with a cross 350 years ago that Paul de Chomedey, sieur de Maisonneuve, climbed Mont Royal and dedicated the settlement that would become Montreal.

2. Even before the October 12, 1492, arrival of Columbus in the Americas, Europeans had already visited our continent. Scandinavians had established settlements in Newfoundland, Labrador and Quebec around the year 1000; later, Basques and Bretons were to fish off the Grand Banks and travel up the Saint Lawrence River.

Yet the voyages of Columbus remain decisive in world history – from then on, the Americas would be irrevocably changed and Europe opened to a new understanding of the world.

3. The 500th anniversary thus becomes an occasion for all citizens of the Americas to consider their past accomplishments and failures, as well as to look forward to the kind of future they wish to create. It is an opportune moment for reflecting on Western culture, which with the coming of Columbus was to evolve from a European to an intercontinental and eventually a dominant world culture.

This is also an occasion to reflect on the presence of the Church, both in the Americas and in Western culture itself. As well, this 500th anniversary provides Canadians with a special perspective for evaluating their own role in the Western hemisphere.

I. Witness of history

4. We often forget in our day the incredible changes which the Americas made to European culture. The two "new" continents materially enriched and thus changed Europe. More importantly, however, interaction with the aboriginal peoples of the Americas, and the development of Latin and North American societies, would eventually oblige Europeans to redefine their ideas and their ideals.

The reality of the Americas opened Europeans to a much larger vision of the world, while it also encouraged emigration and outreach. The discussions and controversies which ensued from collisions with the aboriginal peoples and the enslavement of Afro-Americans were significantly important moments in the evolution of our understanding of universal human rights and international responsibilities. Possessions in and wealth from the Americas contributed to the growth of European states and the consequent, although at times contentious, evolution of nationalism.

The experience and achievements of Latin and North American societies helped shape our contemporary ideals of democracy, tolerance and freedom of religion. Even the natural wonders and novelty of the Americas helped transform how we see and appreciate both physical and human nature.

It is not only Europeans who have benefitted from these developments, but all of humanity.

5. If the interaction of the Americas with Europe can be described in terms of accomplishment, exploration and progress, it must also be said that it involved a tragic degree of intolerance, exploitation and cruelty. Millions of aboriginal Americans were to die as a result of encountering the Europeans. Some social scientists believe that the original population of

Latin America was decimated within 75 years after the arrival of Columbus. It has been estimated that in 1492, the aboriginal population of Latin America and the Caribbean was at 100 million; in 1570, at no more than 10 to 12 million. Death was the result certainly of new diseases to which there was no natural immunity, but culture shock, oppressive working conditions, poverty, slavery, starvation and war too often took their terrible tolls.¹

6. Even though the European presence in a certain sense was Christian, too often its behaviour was unchristian. Cruel, unjust and exploitive actions, whether by administrators, soldiers or settlers, were lamentably the actions of those who called themselves Christians. Yet we must recall there were numerous and constant condemnations and appeals made by Christians in the name of love and justice, sometimes at the cost of exile, imprisonment and even death -- forms of Latin American witness which continue even into our own day.

As a few examples from among the many in the 16th century who denounced the injustices inflicted on the aboriginal peoples can be named Antonio de Valdivieso, bishop of Nicaragua, stabbed to death because of his criticism against the exploitation and dispossession of aboriginal peoples. Franciscan friars Jerônimo de San Miguel, missionary in Colombia, and Alonso Maldonado de Buendia from the Mexican and Caribbean territory of New Spain, were imprisoned because of their prophetic courage. Among those exiled for their outspokenness were Dominican friars Tomas de Ortiz, missionary in Nicaragua, and Gil Gonzalez de San Nicolas, founder of his order's Chilean province.

Perhaps the best known of these 16th and 17th-century "intrepid champions of justice and proponents of the Gospel message of peace"² was the Dominican friar, Bartolomé de Las Casas. Friend of the Columbus family and eventually bishop of Chiapas, Guatemala, Las Casas has been called the "Apostle to the

Indians". A zealous advocate on behalf of aboriginal peoples, he was instrumental in ensuring that they would eventually no longer be enslaved. After seeing blacks from Africa condemned to become the alternatives to aboriginal slaves, he condemned all forms of slavery, and finished his days attacking the colonization policies in general of the "New World".

7. The reality of the "New World" was recognized initially by the Holy See in a 1493 bull from Pope Alexander VI, who attempted to ensure that colonization would be as peaceful as possible and that there would be full opportunity for the evangelization of the aboriginal peoples. It soon became evident, however, that there was need to examine more closely the question of justice for the native peoples.

The first papal message actually to address the Americas was *Sublimis Deus*, the 1537 bull of Pope Paul III, which was also the first European policy statement to condemn slavery. Declaring that the aboriginal peoples were truly human, his message denounced those who held that the inhabitants of "the West and Southern continents" could be treated as animals and used for profit. The Pope's message stated that "Indians as well as any other peoples whom Christianity may come to know in the future," should "truly and legitimately enjoy their liberty and the possession of their property, and should in no way be enslaved."

So concerned was the Holy See at the time by the implications of the Americas for Church and society, that in the first one hundred year period after the arrival of Columbus, the modern equivalent of 1,500 pages of papal documents were issued on the subject.³

8. The Church did not limit itself to denunciations and attempts at regulating the conditions of the aboriginal peoples and the conduct of colonizers and administrators. Missionaries adapted the customs of aboriginal Americans to Christian

rituals, learned and wrote down their languages, and preserved accounts of their ceremonies and traditions. New forms of religious education were introduced, while Christian worship found vibrant expression in new cultural expressions which engaged native Americans, Europeans, and Africans who soon after arrived.

Missionary attempts to document and adapt Indian customs – as noted in the Jesuit *Relations* of New France – today might be viewed as culturally disruptive or even destructive. Yet if it had not been for these efforts, how much less would we today know and be able to experience of the agricultural, artistic, spiritual and technical accomplishments of native American civilizations?

9. So intimate was the uniting of Christianity in Latin America with the spirit of the native peoples, that less than forty years after the arrival of Columbus the Virgin Mother of Jesus completely took on the symbolism of an indigenous American. Appearing to an Aztec Indian in 1531, Mary's message incorporated Aztec religious imagery; her symbols and colours were those of the local Indian culture; she spoke not Spanish but an aboriginal language, and she appeared as a woman of mixed race, on a mountain already sacred to the Aztecs.

Our Lady of Guadalupe remains a most popular devotion. Mary, the "Mother of the Poor" who is also symbol of the Church, was to find local expression in numerous historic shrines throughout the continent, while devotion to her is a constant theme in Latin American spirituality.

10. Already in the earliest settlements in the Americas we can see the first of the thousands of schools, hospitals and orphanages which were eventually founded by the Church and would be the beginnings of our contemporary systems of education, health care and social work.

Efforts such as these find heroic expression in the 17th century throughout Latin America. Among many others were Saint Peter Claver, a Jesuit who devoted his life to alleviating the conditions of Africans being imported as slaves to the Americas; Saints Rose of Lima and Martin de Porres – the latter, part Spanish, part African – both Dominicans from Peru who dedicated their lives to prayer and caring for the poor; the Franciscan saint, Francis Solano, whose music, preaching and work with the sick earned him the title of "Apostle of South America"; Saint Mariana de Jesus Paredes y Flores, the "Lily of Ecuador", a lay woman who lived in austerity and ran a clinic and school room for Indian children; and Blessed Roque Gonzalez with his two companion martyrs, all Jesuit missionaries who worked among the Indians of Brazil.

The same heroic spirit of pastoral concern, compassion and generosity which manifested itself in Latin America and the Caribbean has also been at work throughout North America. One needs only to recall the examples of the men and women who laboured among the native peoples and settlers of Canada, and how Christian charity and devotion found expression among our own saints, such as Kateri Tekakwitha, the 17th-century "Lily of the Mohawks".

Seventeenth and 18th-century missionaries also recognized the importance of economic self-sufficiency and self-government, if the Indian peoples were to be protected from the most destructive consequences of colonization. Such efforts found their best known and most developed expression in the Jesuit "reductions" of Paraguay, although similar ideas also influenced Jesuit Canadian missions such as Huronia. These settlements, not open to European colonists, were a creative attempt to ensure that native peoples could take their place with dignity and self-respect in the new Latin and North American societies.

11. Throughout the Americas, concerns about evangelization were not solely those of bishops and missionaries. The proclamation of the Good News; the construction of churches, schools and hospitals; even the attempts of the Church to defend aboriginal interests and limit the ill effects of black slavery, were in general recognized, although not always supported, by civil authorities. Spanish missionary efforts, especially in the beginning, were financially underwritten by the monarch, who even appointed bishops as "Protectors of, the Indians". Indeed, historians have observed that it was because of Spain's passionate preoccupation with justice and human rights at the time, that the abuses and controversies in the Americas were recorded in such detail and so vehemently debated.

12. The story of Christianity in the Americas is not a *leyenda negra*, a "black legend", but neither is it an impeccable tale of glory. Indeed, as Pope John Paul II has noted, the evangelizing process over the years was uneven and limited.⁴

If there were bishops and missionaries championing aboriginal rights, there were also theologians and Church leaders defending colonial exploitation. While some missionaries attempted to protect and understand native cultures, others failed to value native beliefs and customs as seeds of the Word of God. There were popes and missionaries who attacked the slave trade, while other Church leaders and religious were prepared to accommodate slavery. Evangelization was closely linked to colonization; missionary concerns became political matters. At first, the Church accepted close collaboration between evangelizing and colonizing, but with time it was involved in a lengthy effort to distinguish "evangelical" from "political" endeavour.

Evangelization was too often hindered by greed and the exploitation of others for personal gain. In one of the most important silver mines of the time, the Potosi in Bolivia, it is said that during three centuries approximately eight million

people, Indians and Afro-Americans especially, were cruelly submitted to harsh labour in order to provide wealth for Europe. It has been estimated that as many as 12 million Africans were transported, in the most inhuman conditions, as slaves into the Caribbean, Latin and North America, in order to serve various vested economic interests. Popes and others in the Church did attempt to limit and even forbid the slave trade. However, as some 17th-century Capuchin missionaries in Africa observed, these efforts were futile since slavery at the time was supported by market forces.⁵

13. No matter whether our perspective on the history of the Americas be "black" or "rosy", one must eventually accept the fact that history cannot be changed. Nor can it be judged solely from the standards and sensibilities of our day. Readily critical of the failures of the past, we tend to be comfortably unaware of our own cultural biases and even prejudices.

II. Judgment of our time

14. Today, 500 years after Columbus arrived in the Americas, we are being challenged to consider not the shape or size of the world, but the shape our world is in and how we all share responsibility for its condition. Once more, the reality of the Americas calls into question our notions of human dignity and human rights. Again, millions of Latin Americans are being exploited by various forms of oppression for the sake of profit and prestige – only this time it is we in North America who often benefit by the exploitation.

15. Over the last decade, South and Central American economies have either stagnated or regressed, in large measure because of debt payments as well as North American and European trade restrictions against traditional Latin American exports.

In order to pay its creditors, and on the insistence of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other financial institutions, the continent has resorted to new export crops. These often involve products grown at the expense of staple foods needed for the local people, and on new land cleared by destroying huge areas of forest. The export crops have enriched a small minority, often those already wealthy from owning most of the land – the same landowners who, in order to maintain control and ownership, have favoured dictatorships, military juntas, torture and other forms of organized violence, almost always with North American and European support.

More recently, there has been movement towards elected governments; however, the human rights situation and living conditions have not noticeably improved for most Latin Americans. The environment deteriorates; millions live in extreme poverty; hundreds of thousands of children, many of whom live homeless on city streets, die as a result of disease and poverty.⁶

Despite these difficult circumstances, Latin American countries have been obliged to send billions of dollars in interest and loan payments to North America and Europe. Some economists estimate that if one were to include the \$160 billion of Latin American capital exported in the form of payments to the Northern hemisphere, plus the \$100 billion lost because of deteriorating trade conditions, Latin America's financial losses during the past decade are comparable to all the years of colonial pillage.⁷

The past ten years have also seen the number of Latin Americans living in poverty increase by over sixty per cent (from 112 to 184 million people); at the same time, their share of world trade has fallen from seven to four per cent. By the end of the century, it is estimated that three-fifths of the continent's population will be living in dire poverty.⁸

Much of this suffering is caused, as Bartolomé de Las Casas explained 500 years ago, by an idolatrous worship of wealth which is so dehumanized that it exploits and desecrates human life itself. The social oppression and economic slavery of Latin Americans today serves to keep our standard of living comfortable and to sustain our economic structures. Our greed and indifference are not unlike the drug habits so common in our society. It is our callous dissipation which is depraved and enslaves. But rather than confronting and changing our North American habits, we attack Latin America as the source of our problem, be it drugs or the world debt crisis.

16. The indignities that our society inflicts against human life and rights are not limited to the peoples and the lands of Latin America.

Native peoples proportionately represent the largest number of Canadians who are impoverished, suffer from alcohol and drug dependencies, are imprisoned, and die from suicide or other violent deaths. They suffer from discrimination, intolerance and the loss of their own identity and respect. Almost five centuries after Pope Paul III declared the "Magna Charta" for Indian peoples, our own native peoples are only beginning to obtain recognition of their rights.

Although our native peoples are the most obvious example of those who are discriminated against and excluded from full participation in our society, we also unfortunately find among us other instances of racism and xenophobia, which are expressed by distrust, hostility and intolerance towards other peoples and cultures.

17. Our culture and our society stand under judgment. We uncritically and passively accept a socio-economic system that enslaves our sister continent; a political tradition that subordinates and humiliates our own native peoples; a fragmented, materialistic culture that fosters isolation,

passivity and self-centredness. For all our "progress" since the human rights debates of the 16th and 17th centuries, our culture has not yet grasped the full implications of the dignity, equality and interdependency of human beings. Indeed, not even accepting this basic reality, we are unable in our country to recognize the rights of our own unborn.

III. Challenge for the future

18. We must not, however, let our past and present failures destroy our future. As Pope John Paul II has noted:

There is no justification for despair, oppression or inertia. Though it be with sorrow, it must be said that just as one may sin through selfishness and the desire for excessive profit and power, one may also be found wanting with regard to the urgent needs of multitudes of human beings submerged in conditions of underdevelopment, through fear, indecision and, basically, cowardice. We are all called, indeed obliged, to face the tremendous challenge...: a world economic crisis....⁹

What is essentially at stake, Pope John Paul II went on to note, is "the dignity of the human person".

19. If our future is to be different, there must be "an evangelical struggle" for human dignity. A future of hope, or what Pope Paul VI referred to as a "civilization of love",¹⁰ will only come about through liberty, liberation, and a just distribution of the riches of creation.

For Canadians, this must necessarily involve sustained international collaboration, as well as every effort to shape a society which is tolerant, inclusive and just. One major test for evaluating our success in transforming Canadian society will be the extent to which the economic, political and social situation of our native peoples changes.

But this cannot be accomplished if an even more basic change does not come about: the recognition of the dignity and values of other cultures. Our present society is much in need of deepening its awareness and acceptance of moral values which have traditionally been associated with our native peoples: respect for nature and the earth, responsibility to family and community, communal decision-making, a profound awareness of the sacred, and reverence for the elders of the community.

20. As Pope John Paul II has repeatedly proclaimed, Christians are summoned to help create a new civilization which is a new and inspired harmonization of freedom and truth, justice and solidarity. This synthesis will unite spiritual and temporal, ancient and modern, involving both what we have inherited and our own original creative efforts.

However, in order for this new civilization to become a reality, there must also be a new evangelization, with its own new enthusiasm, new methods and new expression. Our world is waiting for a renewed witness from us, an energetic witness – neither uncertain nor weak, but one which is just, strong, and truly Christian.¹¹

Recognizing the actual fact that the majority of Catholics today are not white Europeans and North Americans, the new evangelization must be capable of involving all peoples – African, Asian, European, Latin American, and North American – no matter the colour of skin, language, or ethnic origin.

It is not only a matter of extending the membership of the Church by what we might consider "traditional" missionary approaches. It is rather the creation of a new community. The new evangelization must involve a personal and profound experience of God in the mystery of Jesus Christ, and for that reason is neither introverted nor self-centred. It demands a dialogue not only with individuals but with cultures. It is to transform hearts, as well humanize political and economic

systems. It must respect not only each person and all humanity, but Creation itself. It means the Church is to be present in every field of human activity.¹²

The new evangelization is not to be feared by those who do not share the Catholic faith, for the task of the Church is to promote and elevate all that is true, good and positive on earth, no matter the culture, religion or age where it is found. As Church, we are called to oppose whatever threatens the authentic good of humanity; to enter into dialogue with and listen to all, and to demand for all freedom of religion and respect for conscience.

Involving the collaboration of clergy, religious and laity – women and men – the new evangelization is our task as the universal Church. It is the primary responsibility of each local Church, under the direction of its bishop and aided by his presbyterate. This renewed evangelization will especially involve the laity, living and working in communion with their bishops, for it is only with the laity that the Church can witness how Christian faith today can be lived and shared.

21. Among the special challenges within the Church confronting this new evangelization is a lack of dialogue and respect which we find at times, and which has led to disunity among Christians. Every effort must be made to deepen common witness and collaboration, with the full engagement of the laity, and to foster understanding and charity.

Other challenges, which have also been noted by Pope John Paul II in a number of discourses, include the problems of cities, migrants, refugees, youth, and those who depend for their formation and information almost entirely on the mass media.

IV. Solidarity in faith

22. As we contemplate the 500th anniversary of the evangelization of the Americas, let us remember those agencies and individuals who have helped us become more aware of the special bond that exists between our country and Latin America. These include Canadian missionaries, among whom are priests, religious and lay volunteers; ecumenical task forces and other forms of inter-church cooperation; and the work of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, which is currently involved in its educational and development program, "Rebuilding the Americas".

It is appropriate on this occasion for us, the bishops and Catholic faithful of Canada, to salute and express solidarity with all our sister churches, the 700 dioceses throughout Latin America, and especially those from among their bishops who later this year will gather in Santo Domingo for the fourth general CELAM assembly, with the theme, "New Evangelization, Human Advancement and Christian Culture".¹³

Let us as well endeavour at this time to become more conscious of those who could be most affected by the economic, social, cultural and environmental impact which might follow from a Mexican, Canadian and American free trade agreement.

This year is also a significant opportunity for welcoming in our midst recent immigrants and refugees. We wish to note especially the growing numbers from the Caribbean and Latin America who come to our country, often in order to seek a better life, yet also bringing to us dynamic forms of community relationships, religious conviction, extraordinary hope and, generally, a faithful awareness of Mary, whose song continues to ring out with trust in God and solidarity with the poor and oppressed.^{1A}

23. The cross planted by Columbus 500 years ago is a symbol of how his time and age, with all its accomplishments and failures, has become linked with the mystery of Christian faith itself. "Through the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."¹⁵ Our own age, too, with its multiform failings and challenges in regards to human dignity and human life, is likewise caught up in the life and death of Jesus Christ.

In this Spirit, together let us shape the culture of tomorrow, which will be so intimately entwined with evangelization. For only with a true sense of the transcendent can this culture be dynamically open to the future, capable of engaging all its members as equals and encouraging them in their pursuit of truth, justice, goodness and beauty.

Let us, then, proceed with humility, without either triumphalism or false modesty, in order to give thanks to God for past and present successes, and to draw from our errors the motives we need for launching ourselves, renewed, towards the future.¹⁶

Feast of the Triumph of the Cross, September 14, 1992

+ Marcel A. J. Gervais,
Archbishop of Ottawa,
President,
and the members of the Permanent Council,
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

Notes

1. See Pablo Richard, "1492: The Violence of God and the Future of Christianity", *Concilium*, 1990, No. 6, pp. 59-60, published as *1492-1992: The Voice of the Victims*, edited by Leonardo Boff and Virgil Elizondo (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990). Also, Carlos Fuentes, "The Conquest and Reconquest of the New World", *The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992), pp. 119-147.
2. Third General Conference of Latin American Bishops, Conclusions, 8 (Puebla, Mexico, 1979) [published as *Evangelization at Present and in the Future of Latin America* (Washington, D.C.: Committee for the Church in Latin America, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1979)]. Also, John Paul II, Apostolic Letter to Latin American Religious, 5 (July 26, 1990) [published as "The Ways of the Gospel", *Catholic International*, Vol. L, No. 3; November 1-15, 1990, pp. 102-114].
3. See *America Pontifical: Primi Saeculi Evangelizationis, 1493-1592* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992), 2 volumes.
4. John Paul II, Apostolic Letter to Latin American Religious, 4. See also the final communique of the international seminar, "The History of the Evangelization of America: Trajectory, Identity and Hope of a Continent", held in the Vatican under the auspices of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, May 11-14, 1992; published as "Symposium Asks for Greater Attention to the History of Evangelization, Afro-Americans and American Women", *L'Osservatore Romano* (English-language weekly edition), No. 21, May 27, 1992, p. 9.
5. See "Gorée Island: Twin Symbol", *Catholic International*, Vol. 3, No. 8; April 15-30, 1992, p. 357. Also, Egidio Picucci, "Early Leaders in Fight against Slavery", *L'Osservatore Romano* (English-language weekly edition), No. 30, July 29, 1992, p. 4. Also, Pontifical Commission "Justitia et Pax", *The Church and Racism: Towards a More Fraternal Society*, 2-4 [Ottawa: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1988].
6. For current summaries of the effects of the economy on human rights in Latin America, see the 1990 and 1991 Annual Reports of the Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America: "The Economic Crisis: Latin America's Most Serious Threat to Democracy and Human Rights", published as the Committee's *Newsletter*, Special Issue, Nos. 1 and 2, 1991, pp. 7-9; and *General Concerns on the Human Rights Situation in Latin America in 1991* (Toronto: January, 1992), 21 pp.
7. See X. Gorostiaga, speech to the Conference of the Latin America Sociology Association, Havana, May, 1991; published as "Latin America in the 'New World Order'", *Envio* (Managua, Nicaragua: Universidad Centroamericana), Vol. 10, No. 121; August, 1991, p. 33. Also, during a Rome press conference at the end of the recent Vatican seminar on the history of the evangelization of the Americas, Mr. Belisario Betancur, former president of Columbia, noted that the restructuring of foreign debts has eased problems for international creditors rather than for Latin American debtors (see "Latin America's Debt Produces Social Debt, Says Former President", news story by Agostino Bono, Catholic News Service, Washington, D.C., May 15, 1992). See also, "Cardinal Says Brazilian Debt Grows Despite Payments", report on a February 12 speech in Rome by Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns; news story by Agostino Bono, Catholic News Service, February 13, 1992.
8. See Jenny Pearce, "Listening to the Voices of Latin America", *Catholic International*, Vol. 3, No. 9; May 1-14, 1992, p. 437. Also, Jon Sobrino, "The Crucified Peoples: Yahweh's Suffering Servant Today", *Concilium*, 1990, No. 6, pp. 120-121.
9. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Sollicitudo Rn Socialis*, 47:2 (December 30, 1987) [Ottawa: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1988].
10. Paul VI, Message for 1977 World Day of Peace, "If You Want Peace, Defend Life" (December 8, 1976) [*The Pope Speaks*, Vol. 22, No. 1; Spring, 1977, pp. 38-45]. Also, Third General

Conference of Latin American Bishops, Conclusions, 642 and 1188; and John Paul U, Encyclical Letter, *Centesimus Annus*, 10:2 (May 1,1991) [*Catholic International*, Vol. 2, No. 12; June 15-30,1991, pp. 552-589].

11. John Paul II, Address in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 3:4; 1:1 (October 12, 1984) [published as "Building a New Latin America", *Origins*, Vol. 14, No. 20; November 1,1984, pp. 305,307-310]. Also, Paul VI, Homily at the Ordination of Priests for Latin America (July 3,1966) [published as "Serving the Church in Latin America", *The Pope Speaks*, Vol. 11, No. 3; Summer, 1966, pp. 253-258].

See also, Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops, Introduction to the Final Documents, 7 (Medellin, Colombia, 1968) [published as *The Church in the Present-Day Transformation of Latin America in the Light of the Council*, Vol. 2: *Conclusions*, 2nd edition (Washington, D.C.: Division for Latin America, United States Catholic Conference, 1973)]. Also, Third General Conference of Latin American Bishops, Conclusions, 4.

12. John Paul II, Address to the College of Cardinals, 2:4 (December 23, 1991); published as "New Evangelization Needed Everywhere", *L'Osservatore Romano* (English-language weekly edition), No. 1, January 8, 1992, p. 5.

13. See attached Appendices 1 and 2 for the prayer for the Fourth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America, and a prayer of Pope John Paul II for the fifth centenary of the evangelization of the Americas.

14. John Paul II, Apostolic Letter to Latin American Religious, 31.

15. Galatians 6:14.

16. John Paul II, Address in Santo Domingo, 2:3.

PRAYER FOR THE FOURTH GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BISHOPS OF LATIN AMERICA

Holy and merciful Father,
you direct the lives of your children who live in Latin America.
We give you thanks for the message of the Gospel
which, for five hundred years,
has been proclaimed in this continent of hope.
We praise you, Father, for your Son Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world:
for planting the seeds of faith,
and establishing your holy Church
under the protection of our Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Look with loving kindness upon the pastors of your Church,
gathered in Santo Domingo for the Fourth General Conference
of the bishops of Latin America.
Pour out upon them the Spirit of wisdom and love
that they may guide your people in a renewed evangelization.
Grant that the spirit of your Son may be present
in the hearts and lives of all who live throughout Latin America.

Renew the faith of our communities
and strengthen our love for your holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

Unite all in your Church
that pastors and laity may be one with the successor of Peter.

Preserve in each family the gift of that life which has its source in you and protect this
continent from violence and destruction.

May we work together for the benefit of our brothers and sisters, especially for the poorest
and the abandoned.

Grant that peoples of all cultures will be open to the message
of the Gospel so that love, unity and peace will transform both
individuals and society.

Under the guidance of Mary,
we make this prayer, Father,
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever. Amen.