



HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE

SYNODUS EPISCOPORUM BULLETIN

**of the Commission for information of the
SPECIAL ASSEMBLY FOR AMERICA
OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS**

16 November-12 December 1997

*"Encounter with the Living Jesus Christ,
the Way to Conversion, Communion and Solidarity in America"*

The Bulletin of the Synod of Bishops is only a working instrument for journalistic use and the translations from the original are not official.

English Edition

24 - 03.12.1997

SUMMARY

- **TWENTIETH GENERAL CONGREGATION (CONCLUSION)**

TWENTIETH GENERAL CONGREGATION (CONCLUSION)

- **RELATIONS OF THE SMALL GROUPS (SECOND STAGE - CONCLUSION)**

Herewith follow the summaries of the Relations presented during the Twentieth General Congregation of yesterday afternoon and not received prior to the deadline of Bulletin No. 23:

- **Spanish A** - H. Exc. Most Rev. Msgr. José María ARANCIBIA, Archbishop of Mendoza - **Relator**
- **Spanish D** - H. Exc. Most Rev. Msgr. Iván MARÍN-LÓPEZ, Archbishop of Popayán - **Relator**

RELATIONS OF THE SMALL GROUPS (SECOND STAGE - CONCLUSION)

Spanish A - H. Exc. Most Rev. Msgr. José María ARANCIBIA, Archbishop of Mendoza - *Relator*

After compiling a list of twenty topics the Spanish A Small Group voted for the following: the living Jesus Christ, the parish,, the permanent diaconate, the American reality and, finally, holiness and martyrdom. Lack of time prevented discussion on the reality of the continent.

1. The Living Jesus Christ. Encounter with the living Jesus Christ: this is the joy experienced by millions of men and women in America, an encounter that can become, indeed must become fuller day by day. We wish the present Synod to proclaim once more the complete truth about Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, the only One in whom "salvation is offered to all men and women, as a gift of grace and the mercy of God" (EN 23; IL 8). He is the evangelizer par excellence; but even more, He is the "Gospel of the Father", Who shows us His face and delivers us the gift of the Holy Spirit. The announcement of Jesus Christ is the most solid foundation for proclaiming the inviolable dignity of the human person because it is through Christ that the mystery of mankind is revealed. Faith in Jesus Christ should be lived not as the mere memory of a historical figure, but as an encounter with the risen Lord, Who is seated in the glory of the Father and at the same time lives and acts in His Church. He is alive in His Word, in the celebration of His mysteries, mainly in the Eucharist, in the heart of every believer, in the community that gathers in His name, and in the poor and suffering. And if Christ is the Way that leads us to the Father, it is Mary who brings us to Jesus. In America, the religious feeling of the people is deeply moved by Marian piety. It is a treasure we greatly appreciate and one which we must evangelize.

2. The Parish. In America we are experiencing a growing appreciation and renewal of the parish, especially after Santo Domingo: We journey ahead with enthusiasm toward a parish that becomes authentically missionary, evangelized and evangelizing. It is "the Church to be found in and among the houses of men and women". The Fourth Conference of the Latin American episcopate called it "community of communities and movements". Today the parish presents many challenges, among them we would first emphasize the opening of the apostolic movements and the right kind of insertion of these in the pastoral activity of the parish. Other challenges are: promoting basic Christian communities or church communities so that the parish comes to be an authentic community of communities: adapt it to urban life, especially in the big cities; offer special care for migrants, particularly in countries of the North; find forms of cooperation and coordination with Catholic schools and other specialized apostolates; rise above an exclusively territorial view that does not correspond to the needs of the functional spaces where many of our brothers and sisters are.

3. The Permanent Diaconate This topic was dealt with in the context of the ordained ministry. It has led us to share anxieties and proposals concerning the training of seminarians and the priestly apostolate. As for the permanent diaconate, we wish to express our concern that this matter has been absent from the interventions we have heard in the Synodal Hall. We consider that this "proper and permanent grade of the hierarchy" is experienced in many countries of America as a special grace for Christian communities. Our Small Group has prepared a list of important points relating to the training of priests, and their attitude towards themselves, relations between deacons and the laity, the complete harmony between family, worker and pastoral responsibility, etc. One aspect to which we attach special importance is the danger that the enthusiasm some show for the permanent diaconate slows down the promotion of the committed laity in the transformation of the world, or that it relegates to a secondary place the need to work towards increasing vocations for the priesthood.

4. Holiness and martyrdom. We include the topic of holiness and martyrdom, especially

inspired by the Holy Father's appeal, which asks us not to forget the martyrs of our century (TMA 37). Together with the author of Revelation we may speak of an immense multitude of witnesses, many of them known only to God; simple, generous people who gave their lives for Jesus Christ and His Gospel. The reality of martyr witnesses is particularly remarkable in some of our countries. Also, brethren from Canada and the United States have shed their blood on Latin American soil. At heart, all these baptized faithful are witnesses of the Resurrection. Their memory must be a stimulus to the faith of our peoples.

[00284-02.04] [CM10] [Original text: Castilian]

Spanish D - H. Exc. Most Rev. Msgr. Iván MARÍN-LÓPEZ, Archbishop of Popayán - *Relator*

I-GENERAL ASPECTS

1-The Synod and the Historic Moment

-The Group considers it necessary that the post-Synodal document contain, even if it is in summary form, the historical context that we are living with its important changes and the challenges which post-modernity brings; with the disposition of the Great, Christian Jubilee entering into the third millennium.

2-General Structure

-One must maintain, and very happily, the general structure of the *Instrumentum Laboris*: "Encounter with the Living Jesus Christ: the Way to Conversion, Communion and Solidarity in America".

3-Emphasis that Must Prevail

-An invitation to the encounter with the living Jesus Christ,

-A universal call to holiness in life, to surmount the scandalous divorce between faith and life,

-The character of universality and globality: new evangelization must present THE GOOD NEWS FOR ALL, individuals, environments, realities, structures: ALL MUST BE REDEEMED.

4-Language

Newness also must be reflected in the language used, incarnated in the new categories of thinking and of modern language.

That it harmonizes with the necessity felt today of a new spirituality; that indicates the way to conversion, communion and solidarity in such a way that it hits the emptiness and the frustrations of globalization and keeps hope alive in peoples.

II-THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

1-Challenges to new evangelization

-It must be clear, integral, convincing, individual and communitarian. That follows the line traced by *Evangelii Nuntiandi*.

-It must be global and cut into all social reality and the "structures of sin".

-It must reach everyone, to those already evangelized so that they activate their capacity to be leaven in the mass; to all the multitudes that form the Church on the continent.

-It must be reconstitutive of the institutions which are the crib of values, as is the family, etc.

2-Newness of the New Evangelization

-For America, one of the newest aspects is that it becomes the expression of the communion of the Bishops of the continent.

-That it becomes the joyful and glad announcement of the Good News.

-That it successfully carry out evangelical inculturation regarding the poverty of the great masses of the continent.

3-Pedagogy of New Evangelization

-It must give a central place to the Word of God, to his meditation, to the Divine Office, etc.

-Integrate adequately the religiosity of the people and the great veneration of the Most Holy Virgin Mary.

-It must have the design of a great mission which covers the entire continent.

-In the pedagogy, it must help to describe and to recognize personal and social sin.

4-New Evangelization and Its Agents

-One insists, thus, that in order to attain the conditions that new evangelization requires, it is necessary to assay in every sense, the life of the evangelizers.

-This formation of the agents requires a continuous revision of the formation, which one gives in the seminaries.

-In equal measure, it must give priority to the formation of the laity.

-They must invest greater resources in the formation of the laity.

III-COMMUNION

1-Communion and Conversion

-One treats of a communion that finds its source in Jesus Christ.

-This communion is above globalization.

-This conversion is not something added to being human, it is the essential part through which people can respond to their vocation.

2-Communion and Mission

-The dimension of communion is inseparable from the Church as "mystery," as "sacrament," and as "mission," sign of the unity of the human species, and means to construct it, and to live as "gift" and as "task".

3-Communion and Ecumenism

-Communion one gives in Christ, one lives in Christ and in his Church. First come obligations *ad intra* and *ad extra* of the same community; then with the orthodox and with other Christians.

-In distinct latitudes, the exercise of ecumenism is naturally different in its disposition and in its rhythm.

4-Kerygmatic Announcement of Communion

-Communion must be the object of a kerygmatic announcement, beginning from its Trinitarian sources, it must be accompanied by external signs.

5-Communion and Its Signs

There exist many signs of communion. This Synod is one sign.

In the Church, there are many signs of communion which issue forth from the family "domestic Church," they are given in the parish, in the diocese and its intermediary structures; they are given at the regional and continental level.

6-Communion and Its Agents

-Communion is the task of everyone; however, the primary one responsible for communion is the Bishop and, joined with him, the priests.

This requires formation of all the members of the Church, for communion.

7-Communion and Solidarity

From the intimate communion with the living Jesus Christ, in all encounters, in his Word, in his sacraments, especially in the Eucharist, one receives the impulse of mission and solidarity with the entire world and without bounds.

8-Communion and Pastoral Pedagogy

-Faced with the anguish and suffering which fractures humanity of today, divided by so many and such painful contrasts, the plan of the Church is communion.

IV-PRIESTS

1-The Priest and New Evangelization

-One wishes, with great pastoral interest, that the Synod consider and give a special message to the priests, especially to those who work as parish priests.

-One asks to cultivate, and to make the most of all of the rich doctrine of the Church concerning the formation and the life of priests.

-One wishes that the Synod will say a word concerning priests and militancy in partisan politics.

2-Priests and Formation

-One wishes that the seminary prepares for community life and that it helps to surmount

loneliness and isolation.

-It is necessary to stay attentive to the quality of formation that the seminaries give.

-Diocesan, provincial, and international structures, in order to enhance the spirituality and the communion of priests must be fomented.

3-Priests and Spirituality

-One requires that the priest be a contemplative, be open, a builder of communion and unity.

V-MOVEMENTS

1-Their Importance

-Movements, properly tested and approved, are a gift of the Holy Spirit.

-Some see authentic movements as a response to the emptiness left by the crisis of traditional movements.

One wants to evaluate also the small movements of parochial and diocesan scale, which capillary-like, vitalize the life of the Church.

2-Discernment

-Among the principal signs of discernment, are enumerated the option for Christ and for his Church, the option for brethren, for unity, for communion, for solidarity, for service and for obedience to the bishop.

3-Their Dangers

-That they wish to realize individual approaches that question the unity of the Church and that they do not serve the Church but rather take advantage of it.

VI-Education

1-Tendencies

-There exists a serious preoccupation with certain globalizing tendencies that orient education toward economic values, work and the market in a materialist sense.

-One wishes that the Synod denounces this tendency that intends to colonize all the continent.

2-Education and New Evangelization

-One emphasizes the capital importance that Catholic education holds for new evangelization.

3-Education and Liberty

-It must reiterate the duty of the State to guarantee education for everyone and the duty to respect and protect the freedom of instruction.

VII-ON THE PROPOSITIONS OF THE "RELATIO POST DISCEPTATIONEM"

1-Obstacles to Evangelization (p. 29, 7)

-Of general character, are identified:

. the future culture

. epochal change and the process of secularization

-from within the Church one recognizes:

.presentation not inculturated according to the gospel,

.conversion must be accompanied by believable signs.

.new evangelization demands new agents that surmount anti-witnesses.

2.On Creation of an Inter-American Organism (Nos. 4, 5 of the Propositions, p. 29)

-The Group is in favor of making the most of and giving strength to already existent organisms, and not to create new structures.

-It considers that CELAM and the Episcopal Conferences of the North can be the organisms that give greater strength to Inter-American activities and that should be responsible for following up on the accords of the Synod.

[00285-02.05] [CM12] [Original text: Castilian]

Return to:

- **[Index Bulletin Synodus Episcoporum - Special Assembly for America - 1997](#)**

- **[Index Holy See Press Office](#)**

[\[English\]](#), [\[French\]](#), [\[German\]](#), [\[Italian\]](#), [\[Portuguese\]](#), [\[Spanish\]](#)

