

# H o l i s t i c   v i s i o n   o f   t h e W o r l d   L a t i n   A m e r i c a n   A g e n d a ' 2 0 0 9

Happy 2009!

Once more—we are 18 already!—with great affection we dedicate the 2009 Agenda to all those who make up our large international family.

As our readers know, our objective is not to produce yet another “agenda,” something to just put on a desk... In our case, the adjective is the true noun: “2009 Latin American.” What is special about our Agenda is it chooses, suggests, and gives an account of where our “Latin American” hope is leading, combining it each year with an urgent topic for teaching and learning. The best signatures of our “spiritual continent” are united on these pages, meeting yearly with all of us who vibrate with the “Great Causes of the Patria Grande,” which is our global homeland.

As we announced in the last edition, Social Utopia is the focal point of this 2009 edition.

The “brotherly introduction” of Pedro Casaldàliga, as always, presents the theme and opens up the Agenda. The list of the most important martyrial anniversaries of 2009, the announcement of

the prizes won in the contests of last year, and the announcement of new (eleven this time!) contests for 2010 complete the introduction to this edition.

Unshakably faithful to the “Latin American Method,” we begin with SEEING reality through the analysis of the current situation by the masterful José Comblin. João Pedro Stédile contributes his perspective, and Eduardo Hoornaert tells us about the historical origins of Utopia.

The section on JUDGING brings together the perspectives of the most qualified specialists to examine the principal questions—classical and new—raised by the challenges of Utopia and “new socialism.”

We next call attention to a few HOT POINTS.

The third section, TAKING ACTION, seeks to focus our entire project on returning to the earth, landing, beginning our work.

The Agenda concludes with its habitual final section: the winning entries in the categories of “Latin American Short Story,” “Neobiblical Pages,” and “Gen-

der Perspectives,” a link with pedagogical resources on the theme, several smaller notices, information on Servicios Koinonia—sponsors of this agenda, and the unforgettable “Points of Encounter” with our readers.

The 2010 Agenda will take up a topic that has been critical for many years, a “holistic ecology” that goes far beyond simple “conservation” of the environment. Several thousand years ago, human civilization broke its communion with the Earth and with Nature, converting them into “objects” of use and abuse, and, in the process, losing a nourishing source of wisdom for our spirituality. This has caused us to destroy our environment and we now are realizing we have nearly reached the point of no return. Our most basic and fundamental cry is “Let’s Save the Planet,” because, unless there is a change, all types of Life will no longer be possible.

We await your commentaries, suggestions, and even criticisms. Thanks, until then.

Fraternally/sororally yours,

José María VIGIL

### **Pedagogical Use of the Agenda**

In addition to personal use, this Agenda is designed to be a pedagogical instrument for communicators, public educators, pastoral agents, group leaders, and activists...

The texts are always brief and agile, presented under the pedagogical concept of one page, formatted such that they can be directly photocopied and distributed as “work material” in schools, group meetings, adult literacy programs, or on literature tables. They can also be published in the bulletins of organizations or in local magazines.

The format of the texts is dictated by an “economic” criterion which possibly sacrifices aesthetics in the form of white spaces and illustrations in favor of a greater volume of message. This also allows us to keep a low price so the Agenda is more accessible.

### **Ecumenicism**

This agenda is dictated by a “total ecumenicism,” not a “remainder ecumenicism.” Because of this, we do not eliminate what is only Catholic or only Protestant, but we unite the two. Thus, in the list of the Saints, the Protestant and Catholic commemorations have both been included. When they do not coincide, the

Protestant commemoration is in cursive. For example, the Apostle Peter is celebrated by the Catholic Church on February 22 (“the Chair of Peter”), and for the Protestant Churches on January 18 (“the Confession of Peter”); the differences can be distinguished typographically.

Kindly, the Lutheran Bishop Kent Mahler, in an earlier version of the Agenda, presented us with the “Protestant Saints.”

The Agenda is aconfessional, and, above all, “macroecumenical.” The world of common references, beliefs, values, and utopias among peoples and men and women of good will—which Christians call “the Reign”—is shared by all who are partners in this humble, serving, brotherly, and sisterly search.

### **A Non-Profit Work**

In many countries, this Agenda is edited by popular and non-profit organizations that use the money received from the sale of the agenda to support their work for popular service and solidarity. These centers ensure the non-profit character of each edition.

In all cases, the Latin American Agenda, in its central coordination, is also a non-profit initiative. It was born and developed without help from any

agency. The money generated by the Agenda, after adequately compensating the authors who write in its pages, is dedicated to works of popular alternative communication and international solidarity.

Servicios Koinonia, permanently maintained, constantly improved, and freely accessible around the world, the “Tiempo Axial” Collection, and some of the prizes financed by the Agenda are the most well-known.

### **A Collective Agenda**

This is a collective work. Because of this, it has gotten to where it is today. We continue to gladly receive suggestions, materials, texts, documents, and new bibliographic material as we enter into the process of creating the 2010 Agenda.

We welcome and will make a space in these pages for those entities that want to offer their service to the Continent by sponsoring a prize or contest to stimulate whatever aspect of our continental consciousness.

In this way, it will continue being a “collective work, a community patrimony, an annual anthology of the memory and hope of our spiritual Continent.”